

pronounce on the facts which we shall adduce, and the principles to which we shall appeal, we shall be content to abide.

SIN OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

To understand the sin of the Church of Scotland, three things will require to be considered. *First*—The Scriptural constitution of that Church, as laid down in her standards, and sanctioned by the State in her establishment. *Second*—The claims, subversive of that constitution, to a right of interference with her ecclesiastical procedure, which have been made by the Civil Courts, and sanctioned by the Legislature. And, *third*—The action of the Church in regard to these claims, and the position in relation to the state in which she now stands.

First.—CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND. To those who know any anything of the history of the Church of Scotland, it will be a familiar fact, that that Church has been specially distinguished among the Churches of the Reformation, for her testimonies and contentings on behalf of the crown rights of Christ as “King of Kings,” and “King of Saints.” On the one hand she has ever maintained, that it was the duty of the civil magistrate, as under law to Christ, the “King of Kings,” the Prince of the Kings of the earth, and bound to act within the civil province committed to his care, in accordance with His laws, and for the promotion of His glory, to countenance, protect, and establish the Church. And, on the other hand, she has no less uniformly and zealously maintained, that the Church, as a kingdom, not of this world,—the spiritual kingdom of Christ, as “King of Saints,”—is entitled to the enjoyment of perfect liberty, and the unfettered exercise of exclusive spiritual jurisdiction; that in respect of doctrine, discipline, and worship, she is responsible to Christ, her Head, alone, and can lawfully own no other rule than His Word, and no other government than that which He hath instituted; and that, in the discharge of the duties which he owes to her, the civil magistrate has no right or warrant whatever to encroach upon her liberty, to interfere with her jurisdiction, or, in any way, to intrude into the spiritual province, and to usurp authority over her in things with respect to which she is responsible to Christ alone. And these principles which the Church of Scotland has thus been distinguished for maintaining, have ever been held by her members to be fundamental parts of her constitution, found as they are distinctly and unequivocally laid down in her standards.