

have ventured to interfere with what, had the views of Dr. Chalmers prevailed, would have been a purely ecclesiastical question. But the leaders in the movement not only refused to follow the safe course he had pointed out; they took another, and one more dangerous. When he saw that it was determined to pass the Veto Law, he urged, by all the arguments it was in his power to adduce, that they should make immediate application to Government for an Act to sanction the change of law, which he felt it was beyond the power of the Church to make. But this, on the advice of Lord Moncrieff, who unfortunately was allowed to mislead the General Assembly, they refused to do, ostentatiously setting at defiance the laws of the land, which in every free country must be observed by clergy and laity alike, or all liberty is in danger. It is possible that before men's passions became aroused the Veto Law might have been sanctioned. That would not have made it better, but it would have prevented the unseemly contests between the Civil and Ecclesiastical Courts. It would have removed the patronage from the hands of the lay patrons, but would have transferred it to the clergy, a more dangerous body than the other to be entrusted with such powers. Founding upon the Veto Law, when a presentee asked to be put on his trials, the Church Courts might refuse. In such a case he would then, as every man is entitled to do whose civil rights are threatened, apply to the Civil Courts. They would, thereupon, issue injunctions to the Presbytery, *not* to induct the presentee into the charge, as has so often and so falsely been alleged, but to put him on his trials. Had that been done—and, I repeat, that was the course recommended by Dr. Chalmers—no conflict could have arisen. The presentee, if rejected, could have appealed to the Synod, and from that Court an appeal would lie to the General Assembly. Had the Church Courts adhered to the law of the land their action would have been unchallengeable, but they persisted in breaking and disobeying the law of the land, and were compelled to submit, as all other individuals or bodies of men must do. The fight was for an ecclesiastical tyranny on the part of the clergy, carried on under the pretence that it was for the rights of the people. It was resisted by those who held that to