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INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN THE WORSHIP OF GOD.

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It was our purpose to follow up the article, published last winter, on Psalmody, with a series upon some points connected with our practice as Reformed Presbyterians: That purpose we have not entirely abandoned, although we have been let hitherto.

On the subject of an inspired psalmody the argument is plain and easy. If we admit the Word of God to be a perfect rule of practice in all things, worship included, we have not much difficulty in dealing with hymns of human composition; they are simply unknown to the Word of God, and if employed in His worship, must seek justification from some other source. The question of instrumental music is of a somewhat different character; we find its use warranted by God Himself, at a certain time and under certain circumstances, and no direct condemnation or absolute prohibition of its use anywhere in the Scriptures. That much can be said for the use of instrumental music in the worship of God, no candid person would think for a moment of denying, and to claim that an argument against it, amounting to a demonstration, could be made, would be to put forward a claim which could not be made good. As in all such cases we must weigh apparently opposing considerations, and decide according to the preponderating weight of evidence; it is one of those questions on which we can afford to be impartial.

We propose neither a learned nor exhaustive treatment of the subject in the present article. Our aim is to state, as simply and concisely as possible, the reasons which are deemed sufficient to justify the Reformed Presbyterian Church in our practice of praising God without the use of instruments.

In the outset a few considerations are worthy our attention. The *first* is, that the question of what is to be offered to God as worship, is one of very great importance. The devout mind will ask with deep concern, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before the high God?" It is as *really idolatry*, though not of so aggravated a character, to worship God in any way not appointed in His Word, as to make an idol and bow down to it. No sin is more sternly condemned in the Word of God, none has been more surely followed by the severest judgments, and it may be added that there is none to which the natural heart is more inclined, as the corrupt worship of Popery and the Baal worship of Masonry may testify, to say nothing of the almost universal prac-

Killen's Ancient Church, p. 216. The testimony of this authority as to Apostolical and primitive custom should be decisive.

PRINCIPLES OF THE SANQUHAR DECLARATION.

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Having, in a former paper, narrated the circumstances which led to the issuing of the Sanquhar Declaration, and which even rendered something of the kind necessary on the part of those who would be free from the sins of the times, and having given the Declaration itself in full for the sake of such readers as may not have access to the paper, we now proceed to point out and vindicate the great principles it contains, especially in respect to civil government and civil and religious liberty, and what an approbation of our fathers' act would seem to imply.

First. It is a principle, assumed in the Declaration, that all civil rule and social order should be regulated by the relation of nations to God, His Word and will.

The men who dared to issue such a paper knew well that they would be charged with being disorganizers of society, anti-government men, and the like, because they could not accept or continue to recognize the rule of Charles II., as the moral ordinance of God, having power to bind the conscience. And against this charge they guarded themselves by stating: "Therefore, though we be for government and governors, such as the Word of God and our Covenants allow." In this expression, they affirmed a great principle and aim of the Second Reformation, namely: that civil government, being an ordinance of God, in lands enjoying the light of revelation, those setting it up and conducting it should have strict regard to the will of its author "such as the Word of God and our covenants allow." Their views of civil government come out here very clearly in three distinct particulars: 1. That they had no sympathy with the purely secular or social compact theories of civil government. Indeed, it is not clear that such theories had yet had any place in the world. The government of Israel was founded on, and regulated by, the will of God in progressive revelation. The ancient heathen nations, as Egypt, Babylon, Greece, Rome, all claimed the gods as the authors of their institutions, and acknowledged themselves bound, as far as possible, to ascertain and follow their will. Even Popery, Prelacy, and Erastianism, with which the Covenanters had so long and fierce a struggle, all admitted the principle that regard to God's will should regulate the exercise of civil rule. But, as we shall afterwards show, they "held this truth in unrighteousness," so as not only to neutralize its influence, but, in their arbitrary way of applying it, it became an excuse for the most terrible oppression and crime. Not so the men who held by the principles of the Second Reformation. With them, a nation without God was as great an anomaly as a man without God; and God, in His relation to the nation, was not only a matter of obligation but a source of unspeakable blessing.

2. That nations, as such, are now in Christ Jesus privileged to enter into very close and near relation to God. "Such as the Word

of God and our Covenants allow." The views of the Reformers here were very simple and direct; they held that all who believe in Christ do thereby renew their relation to God, and are in covenant with Him, on the basis of the covenant of grace; and that when such are associated in civil relations, they are warranted to renew their relation to God, as nations, as well as individuals. The basis of such a privilege is the same covenant of grace, in which God has given to Christ "the heathen for His inheritance," and "power over all flesh." This, they agreed, made all nations, *de jure*, rightful subjects of Christ, and gives Him a kingdom in them. And the recognition of this fact, on the part of nations, would make them, *de facto*, His kingdom, and secure to Him formally their subjection, so that "the kingdoms of this world would literally become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ." This, they held, would be, as in the case of believers, substantially entering into covenant with God, and though, in the one case, as in the other, this covenanting might be more or less formal, yet that it was a distinguished privilege, for a nation, as Great Britain had, to assume this relation to God in Christ, with all those formalities that made it a national deed.

And it will be observed that the Reformers in taking this position reached two very important, practical conclusions. The one is that nations can only *in Christ*, that is by accepting Him in what He is made to them by the Father, just as individual believers do, renew their relations to God; thus cutting off occasion for all that vague, theistical way of speaking about God in His dealing with nations, so common in our day. The other is that such covenants, when entered into by nations in defining the relation of every part of the community to God, also define and regulate the relation of one part of the community to the other. Common relationship to God becomes the bond of union among the parts, and the relation of parts is a relation *in God*. Consequently the ruler is as much bound as the ruled, and can no more set up his own will, as in all matters supreme, than can the subjects, both being equally under the law to God. This great principle the many emergencies and difficulties of their position forced upon the attention of the Reformers, who were so often in conflict with the civil powers, and it was weighed, and pondered, and discussed, and applied, as only men, so terribly in earnest as they were, could consider any principle, having an important bearing upon both their duty and safety. And it is not too much to say that it is a great principle to which prophecy often points, as to be realized in the latter day, when "men shall be blessed *in Him*."

3. In this first principle of the Declaration, the Reformers also laid hold of the right idea of civil and religious liberty. They reached in it this fact, that it is not enough that a government should own subjection to God, and its obligation to rule for Christ, and in the interests of the Christian religion; for Charles did that, and so does the Pope. But Charles and the Pope agreed in one thing, which, notwithstanding all their professions, rendered liberty impossible, namely, in claiming, not only to rule for Christ, but to be, by divine right, clothed with Christ's prerogatives, and authorized to prescribe, in all matters of religion, to those under them, what they were to believe, how they were to worship, what was duty and what

was sin. Nay, they both claimed powers, which would exceed the power of God himself, namely, to make what was immoral moral and right, and, on the other hand, what was dutiful and right to be unlawful and wrong. They "held the truth in unrighteousness." The men who issued the Declaration of 1680, however, detected the cheat, resented and fought the false assumption of King and Pope to the bitter end; and by their faithful contendings, and long sustained sufferings, smote civil and religious despotism, so that it has never since recovered its former power. They taught the world that those claiming to be the ministers of God cannot bind the conscience by any edict or ordinance, when God has not bound it; and that they may even be lawfully resisted when they leave the place and rank in administering His government, which he has assigned them, as Uzziah, the King, was resisted by the priests when he attempted to burn incense before the Lord; and also that subjects have rights of conscience, of which no human being can lawfully deprive them. Their whole struggle illustrated the fact that "where the spirit of the Lord is there is liberty." And a curious proof that tyranny and despotism and oppression are the same in all ages, not only reckless of all human rights, but ready to clothe themselves with divine prerogatives, and pretended authority from God to make right wrong, and wrong right, and only to be successfully resisted as our fathers resisted Charles, is furnished in the measures often resorted to in some parts of the United States of America, to maintain and perpetuate the institution of slavery. It was no uncommon thing in those days to prosecute, under unrighteous laws, persons who dared to teach the slaves to read the Scriptures, on the charge that in so doing they had been guilty of a crime "highly offensive to God, and injurious to the welfare of the community!" This was to make a new moral law, and punish, as crime against God, the very thing God had commanded; and that was exactly what Charles and his High Commission Courts did. They created crime unknown to the moral law, and then pretended their obligation to punish it, and the sin of resisting the ordinance of God (forsooth) in so doing. On the other hand, in the struggles maintained for many years by the Abolitionists for the extirpation of slavery, the very same principles of right, truth and liberty were adopted and exemplified, as by the Covenanters 200 years before, and more formally embodied in the Sanquhar Declaration. In fact this, and other papers issued during the struggle, show the authors to have been men far in advance of their age in understanding the principles underlying true liberty. Their circumstances compelled them to study questions hitherto but little investigated, and as the historian observes, "their leading propositions have, by degrees, been received into the national mind, and form essential elements in the British Constitution. These were, at the time, far beyond the general sentiments of the age, and loftier, nobler, and more true than those, the defence of which rendered illustrious the boasted Hampdens and Sydneys of England." (*Hetherington.*)

Secondly.—Another great principle in the Declaration is, that when parties on scriptural grounds have entered into mutual, civil or ecclesiastical relations, if one party breaks away from its engagements, the other party does not continue to be bound. This is put very strongly

in the Declaration: when speaking of Charles II, it is said, "We do by these presents disown Charles Stuart that has been reigning (or rather tyrannizing, as we may say) on the throne of Britain these years bygone, as having any right, title to, or interest in the said crown of Scotland for government, as forfeited several years since, by his perjury, and breach of Covenant both with God and his church, and usurpation of his crown and royal prerogatives therein, and many other breaches in matters ecclesiastic, and by his tyranny and breach of the very *leges regnandi* in matters civil." These words evidently refer to a fact, well known during the Second Reformation period, namely: that the covenants were regarded, at least in Scotland, as part of the coronation oath taken by the monarch, and of the oath of allegiance and office on the part of the subject. And Charles II. had repeatedly sworn these covenants, under the most solemn circumstances, and with the most awful pledges and assurances of his intention faithfully to fulfill all their obligations to Church and nation, and yet had not only most outrageously violated the same in his own person, but, like Jeroboam, sought to make the nation sin, by leading it away from its covenant relation to the true and living God. And as if all that was but a light thing, he made faithfulness to covenant engagements the highest crime known to law, and subjected all who would not join him in his perfidy to the most terrible penalties. Now, one party having thus broken his contract, on what reasonable grounds can we hold the other party to be bound? In the Solemn League and Covenant, the Covenanters had engaged to support the king's government in "the preservation and defence of the true religion and liberties of the kingdom," and would it not be contrary to all the laws of obligation in other things, to hold them still bound by that deed, when the monarch had not only utterly failed to fulfill his part of the engagement, but declared its observance to be immoral and wrong? We know that both our Lord and Paul teach that breach of the marriage covenant dissolves the contract, and sets the parties sinned against free. Breach of ordination vows dissolves the pastoral relation, which also rests on a covenant. And why should not the same principle apply to civil government? It would be monstrous, and contrary to all our instinctive sense of right in other matters, to hold the Covenanters bound to Charles, when he had violated his coronation oath, acted in gross contempt of all the constitutional provisions of the kingdom, and perverted the very first ends of government. And that was the verdict the worthies of Sanquhar accepted, and which was sealed, eight years after, by the whole nation.

Besides, the language we have just quoted from the Declaration shows how clearly its authors had apprehended another aspect of this principle, closely allied to the above, but little thought of till their time, namely: that civil rule may become so changed in its exercise, as to cease to be the ordinance of God at all, and so utterly degenerate as to have no righteous claim on those who regard the law and authority of Christ. And here again they reasoned in strict harmony with the analogy of facts. They knew that our Lord speaks of Jews, who had become a "synagogue of Satan," and that Paul speaks of a church, whose faith was known throughout the whole world, by "falling away" becoming "the mystery of iniquity;"

and that even the Lord's Supper may, by being abused, cease to be a divine ordinance; and that both Daniel and John describe certain earthly governments—some of them better than that of Charles—simply as beasts of prey, having neither the divine or human element, by which they could be recognized as the ordinance of God. When, therefore, the men of Sanquhar declared that Charles had forfeited his right to reign, "by his breach of the very *leges regnandi*" (first principles of government), they took the safe ground that even what, in its original appointment, was divine, may, by disregard and contempt of the will of God in Christ, cease to have any element which He can recognize as His own. God never made a creature, physical or moral, but He immediately put it under law—law suitable to its nature—so that all things are "under law to God." It depends, however, on their remaining under law whether He can recognize them as in relation to Himself. When angels cast off law they became devils and enemies of God. When we cast off law we become "children of wrath." When a church, once pure in the faith, casts off law she becomes a harlot; and on a similar principle, must we judge an earthly government that casts off law. To call that a "minister, a servant of God," that repudiates all obligation to Him as a Master, and casts off His authority, and will give no recognition of His right over it, is such a contradiction in terms that common sense will soon detect the absurdity. So judged the men of Sanquhar.

Thirdly.—Another principle embraced in the Sanquhar Declaration is, that dissent, protest, and separation from all connection with unscriptural systems of civil government are the only means of keeping free from their sin and the judgments sure to follow.

This principle is clearly exhibited in the following words of the Declaration: "It is not amongst the smallest of the Lord's mercies to this poor land, that there have been always some, who have given their testimony against every course of defection (that many are guilty of) which is a token for good that He doth not as yet intend to cast us off altogether, but that He will leave a remnant in whom He will be glorious, if they through His grace keep themselves clean still, and work in His way and method, as it has been walked in and owned by Him in our predecessors of truly worthy memory, in carrying on of our noble work of reformation in the several steps thereof." In this and other expressions in the paper, there is evident reference to the sin and danger of accepting the wicked and ensnaring terms offered by Charles in the indulgence of 1679, and thus becoming active partakers in the guilt of the king and his government, to clear themselves from which they saw no other method but to publicly dissent, and separate from, disown him and "all the men of his practices." And we think that nothing can be clearer than that when men enter into close connexion with and direct allegiance to any system, civil or religious, they must be regarded as sanctioning, approving and adopting the principles on which the system is founded, and so become active supporters as to share the responsibility. Especially in constitutional governments, as that of Charles professed to be, and as many existing governments really are, in which the people have not only a voice in national affairs, but are really, in the policy of the nation, the

ultimate power to which to appeal, it is impossible to conceive active participation without responsibility. But if the system, and the policy flowing from it, be unscriptural and immoral, what a fearful thing such responsibility becomes. This the authors of the Declaration well understood, and, therefore, acted on the principle, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." And it is a noticeable fact in prophecy, that this is one of the most marked features which are to characterize the faithful followers of Christ, during the dreary period in which the world powers, under the influence of Anti-Christ, are to be in active rebellion against the Lord and His anointed. They act on the warning, "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God," &c. The *beast* in this passage, devotion to whom, and whose mark on any part is so dangerous, does not mean an ecclesiastical, but a civil system, opposed to God, and to the claims of Christ, and hating and persecuting His people; and not receiving its mark, is civil, not ecclesiastical dissent. And it was this kind of dissent the men of 1680 proclaimed at Sanquhar. In their covenants they had already abjured Popery and Prelacy, and everything ecclesiastical that was "contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness." But now they had another advance to make along the line of the testimony of the witnesses, and to declare to the world that to accept any civil privilege on unscriptural conditions, or to assent to, or be partakers in any worldly policy, opposed to the honor and will of Christ, is to compromise our fidelity to the Redeemer, His crown and covenant. And we cannot conceive how time or place can alter this principle. Where Christ's sovereign prerogatives, in relation to His Church, are assumed by those who rule; or His sovereign rights, as a lawgiver to the nations, rejected; or oaths of citizenship, office, or civil privilege imposed, that would bind the juror to an unscriptural, and therefore unlawful policy, we cannot imagine any other course to be open to those who would keep their garments clean, and "in whom Christ will be glorious," but like the men of Sanquhar, to cut loose from the whole thing, and adopt as their motto the language of the prophet, "Say ye not a confederacy to all them to whom this people shall say a confederacy."

Fourthly.—The Declaration also contains another practical principle of great importance, namely, the duty of God's people actively to resist, and by all proper and lawful means to seek the removal of all that is evil, and contrary to the will of God, in the land.

The manner in which they express this idea is very strong and decided, indeed so much so, as to have subjected them to considerable censure. It is in the following terms: "As also we, being under the standard of our Lord Jesus Christ, Captain of Salvation, do *declare a war* with such a tyrant and usurper, and all the men of his practices, as enemies of our Lord Jesus Christ, His crown and covenant; and against all such as have strengthened him, sided with, or anywise acknowledged him in his tyranny, civil or ecclesiastical; yea against all such as shall strengthen, side with, or any-

wise acknowledge any other in the like usurpation and tyranny, far more against such as would betray or deliver up our free, reformed mother-kirk unto the bondage of Antichrist, the Pope of Rome." These words may not have been very wisely chosen, nor the best that might have been employed to define the position they had assumed toward the King's government ; yet, we think, when understood in the sense originally intended, and interpreted by their own acts, they express nothing of which we cannot approve, stand over and defend, and take as an example of fidelity to Christ. The following considerations will help us here :

1.—That by the war they declared against the king and his abettors, they chiefly meant a *moral and spiritual war, to be waged with moral and spiritual weapons*. None knew better than they the meaning of the command, "Let the saints be joyful in glory ; let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand ; To execute vengeance on the heathen, and punishments upon the people ; To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron ; To execute upon them the judgment written ; this honor have all His saints." But they knew that the sword, by which all this was to be achieved, was the two-edged sword out of the mouth of the Son of Man, and that it was written, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death." By unwearied efforts to keep before the nation the great principles of the second reformation and the obligation of its solemn covenant engagements, by the numerous testimonies they issued against the defections and backsliding of the times, by the many papers, remonstrances and warnings they published, and by the faithful preaching through the length and breadth of the land, amidst unspeakable peril and innumerable dangers, of a pure gospel, from which many had departed ; by such weapons they made war, by these they sought to bind their kings and nobles from their evil courses, and when they failed in that, to bind them over to the judgment of God. Of this we have a striking example in the Torwood excommunication of the same year, as the Sanquhar declaration. In September of that year, after the death of Cameron, Cargill, at Torwood, in Stirlingshire, publicly, in the most solemn manner, pronounced a sentence of excommunication upon the King, his brother James, Duke of York, and upon five, by name, of the most notable instruments of the King's destructive policy. Some have questioned the propriety of such an act, but as the historian well observes, "Whether Cargill was entitled, on his own authority, to pronounce such a sentence or not ; it was one which these perjured and blood-stained men deserved. Nor was it regarded by the culprits themselves as an empty fulmination, deserving nothing but contempt. It roused their wrath in the first instance, and afterwards haunted several of them like the voice of doom, from whose indefinite terrors they could not escape. During the course of the following year the Duke of Rothes (one of the excommunicated) fell dangerously ill, and perceiving the hand of death upon him, he sent for some of the persecuted Presbyterian ministers, not for his own cherished prelates, to seek instruction from them. To one of them he said :

“We all thought little of what that man did in excommunicating us, but I find that sentence binding upon me now, and will I fear bind to eternity.” (*Hetherington.*)

2.—That when the Covenanters did, at any time, come into conflict with the King’s troops, it was always *acting in defence of their own lives*. On this ground we claim that they stand acquitted of many things laid to their charge, and rise superior both to the calumnies of their enemies and the weak apologies of their friends. Some have not been backward to brand them as rebels, because sometimes found in arms; whilst their friends have often not found anything better to say on their behalf, than that “oppression will make even a wise man mad.” We hold, however, that right reason and common sense, judging from the admitted rights of parties in natural relation, will say that there is no need of any far-fetched apology on their behalf.

There were only two occasions, or rather two brief periods, during all those twenty-eight years of oppression, in which the Covenanters were in conflict of this kind with their oppressors. The following condensed statement gives a very clear view of these two periods: “During the continuance of the persecution, there were two occasions on which a considerable number of the Covenanters rose in arms, with the view of defending themselves against oppression. The first of these commenced near the village of Dalry, in Galloway, 1666. It originated in the act of a few individuals, who, prompted by humanity, interposed to rescue an unhappy fellow-creature, whom some barbarous soldiers were preparing to torture with fire. The whole district had, for a long time, been suffering extreme hardships, both from the ravages and from the brutal insolence of the soldiers, who had been quartered among them, under the command of Sir James Turner. In the excitement produced by the incident above mentioned, the people rose suddenly and disarmed the troops, and having marched to the neighborhood of Edinburgh, were attacked and defeated with much slaughter at the Pentland hills.

“The second attempt, which was followed by still more disastrous consequences, took place after an interval of nearly thirteen years. At this period the soldiers had orders to disperse by violence every meeting for religious worship, not authorized by law; to seize the property and even the garments of the worshipers, and were indemnified for whatever blood might be shed in the execution of these orders. From this state of the law it had become the practice among the persecuted Covenanters, when they met for worship, to assemble in large numbers, and to come armed for their own defence. One of these meetings was held at Loudon Hill, in Ayrshire, on the first Sabbath of June, 1679, and while public worship was proceeding, notice was given that Claverhouse was approaching, carrying along with him a number of prisoners, including Mr. King, one of the ministers. To prevent an attack on the promiscuous congregation, a resolution was adopted by the men to stand on the defensive. On this occasion Claverhouse was repulsed and the prisoners liberated. Knowing that this would be visited by terrible vengeance they kept together, and being attacked by the

King's forces, at Bothwell Bridge, on June 22d, after a spirited resistance were overpowered by the troops and dispersed.

"It deserves to be remarked that both these efforts of the Covenanters were, in their origin, wholly unpremeditated. The first was occasioned by a revolting outrage on an individual; the second by a hostile aggression of an armed force on a peaceable congregation, met for public worship on the Lord's day. In the circumstances in which they were placed, the Covenanters may not have acted prudently; but the principle on which they acted we cannot disown, namely, that there is a point beyond which it is not required of Christians by the divine law, nor can be justly required of them by any human law, to yield themselves up as the unresisting victims of wanton oppression. Nor can it be reasonably questioned that such a crisis had come in Scotland, where murder was sanctioned by statute, hospitality was a capital crime, and even the common courtesies among the nearest relations were punishable with death; to petition was treason, and to talk of legal redress, or even to utter a complaint, was the sure way to prison." (*Scottish Hist. Test.*)

These statements put the much-talked of resort to arms, on the part of the Covenanters, in its true light, and show that they never dreamed of making aggressive war against the King, so as thus to put an end to his government, but were simply acting on the defensive. And do we not admit the principle in other relations? For example, a wife is to be obedient to her husband in all things; but suppose he brutally assails her by violence, and attempts to take her life, is she not justified when, in self-defence, she resists him? And so of a child, if a parent would make upon him a murderous assault. The mistake in condemning the Covenanters on this point consists in taking for granted that, in resisting Charles, they were resisting a lawful power and the ordinance of God; and therefore the fiercest assaults upon them have been made by those who have preached the divine right of kings and the duty of passive obedience. But the pungent remarks of an historian apply here: "What more right had Nero to take away the lives of innocent men, than any other assassin? What more title to their fortunes than any other robber? What better right to spill blood than any other tiger? And is it unlawful to resist robbers and assassins and beasts of prey? Did the Almighty ever say of that beastly tyrant, 'Touch not Nero, mine anointed, and do his ruffians no harm?'" (*Cruikshanks.*) In fact it only requires to bring the case home, and ask what would men do—what would we do—if the government under which we live, would act toward us in the use and enjoyment of our civil and religious liberties, as Charles II. and after him James, his brother, treated the Scotch Covenanters? The reply of Renwick, when, six years later, he was on his trial before the justiciary, settles the whole question, and is unanswerable. When asked "if he owned that he had taught his hearers to come armed to their meetings, and, in case of opposition, to resist?" his answer was, "It were inconsistent with both reason and religion to do otherwise. *Yourselves* would do it *in like circumstances*. I own that I taught them to carry arms to *defend themselves and resist your unjust violence.*" In the same unanswerable way he disposed of another silly objec-

tion against the Covenanters, namely, their refusing to pay taxes. When asked, "If he taught it to be unlawful to pay cesses or taxes to His Majesty?" his answer was, "For the present cess, exacted for the present usurper, I hold it unlawful to pay it, both in regard it is oppressive to the subjects, and because it *is imposed for suppressing the Gospel*. Would it have been lawful for the Jews, in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, to have brought every one a coal to augment the flame of the furnace to devour the three children, if so they had been required by the tyrant?" Such matter-of-fact views of the question are unanswerable, so that, considering their circumstances and the fact that in their struggles with tyranny they were affecting our liberties, this part of their record is their glory, not their shame. There could be no nobler record than that of Richard Cameron. A month after the declaration of Sanquhar was issued, surprised with a small party at Ayrsmoss, preparing for the conflict, he cried, in holy consecration, and prayer for the good of the cause in the future, "Lord take the ripe and spare the green;" and having fallen in the struggle, and his head and hands being taken to Edinburgh and fixed up as a terror to others, the man who put them in their place could not help exclaiming, "These are the head and hands of a man, who lived preaching and praying, and died fighting and praying."

3.—In the fullest extent, in which they opposed Charles II., the Covenanters have been vindicated by the course of more recent events. In the first place the whole nation, only eight years after, followed their example and disowned and rejected James II., brother of Charles, precisely on the same grounds. And yet ignorant and foolish men speak of the rebellious Covenanters, and, in the same breath, of the glorious Revolution! The historian in the following noble words has done more justice to the oft-abused Covenanters. Speaking of different declarations they had issued, he says, "When we read these papers, and compare them with the great national declarations which form the basis of the Revolution, we cannot resist the conviction, that in the former we see the small germ out of which arose British liberty. Almost the only real difference betwixt the declarations of the Cameronians, or rather the true Presbyterians, and that of the Convention of Estates at the Revolution, consisted in the former being the act of a small band of enlightened and determined patriots, the latter that of the nation. While none who approve the latter, can consistently condemn the former, every generous heart will bestow the meed of warmest approbation upon those, who in the midst of reproach, danger and death, laid the foundation-stone, and began the structure, cemented with their blood, of civil and religious liberty, which men of less heroic mould were permitted in calmer and brighter days to rear." (*Hetherington.*)

And coming to still more recent events, if the Covenanters were wrong in disowning and resisting Charles II. for his tyranny, persecution and horrible oppression, how can the revolt of the Colonies, now forming a principal part of the American Republic, be justified? The Declaration, issued by many of these colonies, was as strong in denouncing the British Government, and in proclaiming their wrongs, as that of Sanquhar; indeed, in some of them, the Scottish paper may have supplied the model. And yet it is safe to say that

none of the American colonies suffered, in respect of liberty, or in oppression, cruelty, and misgovernment, a tith of that endured by the persecuted remnant in Scotland. And it was from the Scottish apostles of liberty that they, who inaugurated the American struggle, had chiefly caught their spirit of freedom, the power and influence of which so much contributed to the success which their noble, patriotic struggles have achieved.

Had not this paper far exceeded the bounds originally intended, it would be profitable to look at the practical bearing of this subject. A word or two must suffice. Having in our testimony, terms of communion, and recent action of Synod, so clearly and definitely homologated—to use an expressive Scottish term—the deed of our fathers, at Sanquhar, we may well be reminded, by our bi-centenary commemoration of the same, of the great importance of cultivating, in the members of our Church, a more full and perfect knowledge of the facts of our own history. Moreover, our renewed approval of their deed may well be regarded as a renewed pledge to steadfastness, in maintaining all the parts of that distinctive position, more clearly defined and taken at Sanquhar, than ever before. Besides, should it not inspire new courage? If the small germ, as the historian terms it, has in two hundred years grown up to so large a tree of liberty, what may we not hope, pray, and work for, in coming time? In eight years the Sanquhar declaration gave birth to the Revolution in Great Britain, and to many a noble struggle since, and the light, liberty and glory of the latter day will be only the outgrowth of the great principles, civil and ecclesiastical, it contains. Let us “thank God and take courage.”

THE OLD GREYFRIARS CHURCHYARD.

BY JOSEPH BOWES, ESQ., WASHINGTON, D. C.

Besides the signing of the Covenant, this old churchyard is rich in other memorials of the services and sufferings of our ancestors, and we desire, therefore, to linger a little longer within its hallowed precincts.

For over three centuries the principal burying-ground in Edinburgh was in connection with the collegiate church of St. Giles. Here the great Reformer, Knox, found his humble resting-place, and here, also, James, Earl of Murray—the Good Regent—and many other heroes of the First Reformation, are buried. But in 1566, Mary, Queen of Scots, conveyed by charter to the town of Edinburgh all the lands and property belonging to the Black and Grey Friars in the vicinity, and from that time forth the latter became the city burying-ground. The first person of note interred here was the famous George Buchanan, a distinguished reformer and scholar; and after him comes a long array of heroes, martyrs, warriors, poets, painters, men of letters, scientists, statesmen, and philanthropists, which has made the old Greyfriars surpassed only by Westminster Abbey in its custody of the dust of illustrious dead. The church in which the Covenant was signed was erected in 1613-4, and was a very plain structure, devoid of architectural beauty and