

THE
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN
Catechism.

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And three words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."—*Deut. vi. 6, 7.*

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Preface.

THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CATECHISM is, to a considerable extent, a compilation. The author, without hesitation, has laid under contribution every author to whom he had access, of any distinction, who has written upon the peculiar principles of the REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH. He is indebted chiefly to Drs. WM. SYMINGTON, McLEOD, J. R. WILLSON, Mr. McRENNY, and others. Yet there is a large portion of it original matter, drawn from manuscripts long since written. The compilation has been the most difficult part of the performance. He has not declined to adopt the precise form of expression, or style of the respective writers. He does not consider the work a perfect performance. It may call forth some one more competent to the complete execution of such a work. It may serve, however, until a better work is produced, the purpose of a manual of instruction, and a collection of arguments and facts confirming and illustrating the "Distinctive Principles" of the church of which he is a minister. The author is aware of its defects, and will not be vexed by criticisms: but earnestly requests those who find fault to labor diligently for the production of a better, which he will hail with pleasure.

WM. L. ROBERTS.

A
CATECHETICAL EXPOSITION
OF THE
PECULIAR AND MORE PROMINENT
PRINCIPLES
OF THE
Reformed Presbyterian Church.

INTRODUCTION.

Question. How many are the peculiar and more prominent principles of the Reformed Presbyterian church?

Answer. TWELVE.

Q. What are these?

A. The doctrines of

1. Christ's Mediatorial Dominion in general.
2. His Exclusive Headship over the Church.
3. The supremacy and ultimate authority of the word of God in the church.
4. Civil government a moral ordinance of God.
5. Christ's headship over the nations.
6. The subjection of the nations to God and to Christ.
7. The word of God the supreme rule in the state.
8. The duty of nations to acknowledge and support the true Christian religion.
9. The spiritual independence of the Church of Christ.
10. The right and duty of dissent from an immoral constitution of civil government.

11. The duty of social covenanting, and the permanent obligation of religious covenants.

12. The application of these doctrines in the form of a practical testimony, to the civil governments where Reformed Presbyterians reside.

Q. What is meant by "peculiar" principles?

A. Those which distinguish Reformed Presbyterians from other Christian denominations.

Q. What is meant by "prominent" principles?

A. Those which, though held by some other denominations, are not made practically a part of their testimony.

SECTION I.

On Christ's Mediatorial Dominion in general.

Q. What is the import of the title *mediator* given to Jesus Christ?

A. It is an official title, which exhibits Christ as transacting between God and man for man's salvation; and in the discharge of the functions of this office, he acts in the capacity of the Father's servant. 1 Tim. ii. 5. There is but one mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ. Heb. xii. 24. To Jesus the mediator of the new covenant. Isa. xlii. 1. Behold my servant whom I uphold: applied to Christ, Matt. xii. 18. Isa. liii. 11. "My righteous servant."

Q. What is the *dominion* of Christ?

A. The authority, or unlimited power, which he possesses over the creatures.

Q. What is his *mediatorial dominion*?

A. Not that which essentially belongs to him as God, but that with which he has been officially invested as the Messiah, by the authoritative act of the Father.

Q. What is the *essential* dominion of Christ?

A. It is that which pertains to him as the Son of God, a Person in the Godhead, and is the same with that of the Father and the Holy Ghost, original, inherent, and undivided.

Q. His *mediatorial dominion* is, then, that which was

delegated, conferred by gift, bestowed by the Father, in short, "the government" which was "laid upon his shoulders,"—that "power" which was "given him in heaven and in earth"?

A. Yes. Because, as the Son of God essentially viewed, he cannot be the recipient of a gift, "but is equal in power and glory with the Father."

Q. Do his *essential* and *mediatorial* kingdom differ in matter or extent?

A. No. They are really the same, both in matter and extent; the difference consists in this: The kingdom over which he, as the Son of God, rules by inherent and original right, he is, as mediator, authorized to manage and direct, for a new end, namely, the salvation of men, and the best interests of the church.

Q. By whom was Christ appointed to this mediatorial dominion?

A. By the Father. Ps. ii. 6. "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." Luke xxii. 29. "My Father hath appointed unto me a kingdom." See John v. 26, 27.

Q. When was he appointed?

A. From all eternity. Prov. viii. 23. "I was set up from everlasting." See Ps. ii. 6, 7. Mal. v. 2.

Q. In what transaction?

A. In the covenant of grace. Ps. lxxxix. 3, 4. "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations."

Q. What is this covenant?

A. It comprises the whole scheme agreed upon by the divine persons for the salvation of fallen man.

Q. In what capacity did the Father make this appointment?

A. As the representative of Deity in the economy of redemption.

Q. Did not this appointment proceed from the Father necessarily and originally by an inherent right?

A. No. This would be at variance with the perfect equality subsisting among the divine persons.

Q. Were the divine persons designated to their respective economical characters and offices by a sovereign act of the divine will, essentially considered?

A. Yes. For this presupposed act preserves inviolate the essential equality of the persons in the Godhead.

Q. Has not all power and authority been, by this sovereign act of the divine will, economically vested in the Father?

A. Yes.

Q. Does this appointment of the Son proceed *formally* from this economical authority with which the Father is thus invested?

A. Yes.

Q. Is it not necessary to suppose that the Son was designated to his mediatory office and dominion by the above mentioned sovereign act of the divine will?

A. Yes. For this view of the case preserves inviolate the voluntariness of the Son in the whole transaction, as well as his equality with the Father.

Q. What is the *first* source of proof of the *reality* of Christ's mediatorial dominion?

A. Several interesting *prefigurations* of his royal authority.

Q. Was not Melchisedec one of these instructive types of Christ's dominion?

A. Yes. He was a distinguished type of Christ. Ps. cx. 4. "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

Q. How is it evident that he was a type of Christ's royal dominion?

A. In three ways. 1. The import of his name, Heb. vii. 2. "King of righteousness." Beautifully prefiguring Christ as the Sun of righteousness—the sceptre of whose kingdom is a right sceptre. 2. His designation "King of Salem," Heb. vii. 2. That is "King of Peace"—fitly representing *Him* who is designated the Prince of Peace. 3. His combining in his own person the royal and sacerdotal offices. He was a royal priest—a sacerdotal King, and suitable type of Him who, exercising his power upon the footing of his purchase, sits "a priest upon his throne."

Q. Was Moses an eminent type of Christ in his mediatorial dominion?

A. Yes. As "King in Jeshuran." Jeshuran, which signifies "upright," refers to the people of Israel, who were required and understood to possess this character. The Jewish legislator thus typified Him, who, being "King in Zion," at once rules among the upright in heart, and governs them in integrity and truth.

Q. Was David another of these royal types?

A. Yes. Particularly in his signal overthrow of Goliath, the vaunting champion of the Philistines, in his valour in war, and wisdom and humanity in peace, in the principles and character of his administration, in which he led his people, according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands, and in the covenant of royalty made with him and his seed forever.

Q. Wherein does David's typical character most remarkably appear?

A. 1. In the fact that the Messiah himself is repeatedly spoken of by the prophets under the very name of David. Jer. xxx. 9. "They shall serve the Lord their God, and David their King, whom I will raise up unto them." Hos. iii. 5. "Afterwards shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God and David their King; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days." See also Ezek. xxxiv. 24. **2.** In the fact that Christ in his incarnation is described as recovering the throne of David his father, according to the flesh. Luke i. 32, 33.

Q. Was not Solomon the most illustrious type of Christ's mediatorial dominion?

A. Yes. In the wisdom of his administration—the extent of territory over which he reigned—the wealth of his subjects, and the peacefulness of his reign, he was a remarkable type of the Messiah—so much so that in Song iii. 11, Christ is designated by his name, "Go forth ye daughters of Zion and behold King Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart."

Q. What is the *second* source of proof of the reality of Christ's mediatorial rule?

A. Prophecy is a fruitful source of evidence in favour of his royalty.

Q. Which is the *first* proof from this source?

A. The very first prediction, Gen. iii. 15. "It," the seed of the woman, "shall bruise thy head," is conceived in terms which allude to the ancient mode by which victorious kings expressed their conquests, namely, by placing their feet upon the necks of their vanquished foes.

Q. Which is the *second* proof from prophecy?

A. The language of the patriarch Jacob, Gen. xlix. 10. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh come," clearly imports that, on Christ, at his coming, shall devolve that judicial and legislative authority which had been previously exercised by others.

Q. Which is the *third* evidence from this source?

A. The prophecy of Balaam, Num. xxiv. 17. "There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre (the emblem of regal power) shall rise out of Israel."

Q. Which is the *fourth* proof from prophecy?

A. The declaration of David in the second psalm, "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." Applied to Christ, Acts iv. 25, 26.

Q. Which is the *fifth* proof?

A. The forty-fifth psalm, which undoubtedly refers to the Messiah, and in which the royal character is sustained throughout: verses 1, 3, 6. "I speak of the things which I have made touching the King—gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre." Applied to Christ, Heb. i. 8.

Q. Which is the *sixth* proof, among many others which may be adduced from prophecy?

A. The forty-seventh psalm, which undoubtedly refers to the Lord Jesus in his ascension from the mount of Olives, "God is gone up with a shout," and in which also the regal character is sustained throughout: verses 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, &c. "The Lord most high is terrible; he is a great King over all

the earth—he shall subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet; sing praises unto our King, for God is the King of all the earth; God reigneth over the heathen; God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness.

Q. Do not the *titles* given to Christ afford another source of proof in favour of his mediatorial dominion?

A. Yes. They afford ample and conclusive testimony.

Q. Which is the *first* title?

A. He is designated “Lord.” Acts ii. 11, “God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

Q. Which is the *second* title?

A. Leader and Commander. Is. lv. 4, “I have given him for a witness to the people; a Leader and Commander to the people.”

Q. Which is the *third* title?

A. He is entitled Judge. Is. xxxiii. 22, “The Lord is our Judge.”

Q. Which is the *fourth* title?

A. He is denominated a Ruler. Mic. v. 2, “Out of thee, (Bethlehem Ephratah,) shall he come forth unto me that is to be Ruler in Israel.”

Q. Which is his *fifth* title?

A. He is called the “Captain of the Hosts of the Lord.” Josh. v. 14.

Q. Which is his *sixth* title?

A. “Prince of the kings of the earth;” “King of kings.” Rev. i. 5, xvii. 14, xix. 16, “Jesus Christ, the Prince of the kings of the earth,—the Lamb is Lord of lords, and King of kings,—he hath on his vesture and thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords.”

Q. Does not Christ himself claim this dominion?

A. Yes. John xviii. 37, “Thou sayest, (Pilate,) I am a king. To this end was I born.”

Q. Does not the Father acknowledge his claim?

A. Yes. Ps. xxi. 3, Phil. ii. 9, 10, 11, “Thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head.” “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee

should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Q. Do not angels proclaim his sovereignty?

A. Yes. Luke i. 31—33, Rev. v. 11, 12. Gabriel thus proclaims his glory: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

Q. Did not the wise men of the east recognize his royalty, and perform an act of homage?

A. Yes. They proclaimed him "King of the Jews," and unfolding their gifts, laid them at his feet. Matt. ii. 2.

Q. Did not Nathaniel witness this good confession?

A. Yes. He confessed he was "the King of Israel." Jno. i. 49.

Q. Does not Paul make the like confession?

A. Yes. He proclaims him "the King eternal." 1 Tim. i. 17.

Q. Do not his enemies proclaim his great dominion?

A. Yes. The Jewish multitude rent the air with their shouts as he entered into Jerusalem, crying, "Hosanna! Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord!" The Roman soldiers unwittingly bore their part as they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And Pontius Pilate inscribed upon his cross the unalterable title, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews," Jno. xix. 12,—a title which was, perhaps, the principal means of conveying to the malefactor that knowledge of the Saviour's character which led to his conversion.

Q. Are not royal appendages assigned him?

A. Yes. He has a kingdom, a throne, a radiant crown. He sways a sceptre, the symbol of royal authority, and hatl

a numerous and glorious retinue. Ps. xlv. 5, 6; cii. 2; ii. 9; xxi. ; viii. 5; cxxxii. 18; Rev. iii. 21; Deut. xxxiii. 2; Luke ii. 13, 14; Ps. lxviii. 17; Dan. viii. 10; Jude, 14.

Q. What is the extent of Christ's mediatorial dominion?

A. It is universal.

Q. Is it not limited to the church?

A. No. The church is the special kingdom of Christ—the great central province of his empire, around which all other provinces are made to revolve. Therefore the dominion of Christ necessarily extends beyond its hallowed precincts. Eph. i. 22, "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church."

Q. Why is it necessary that Christ's mediatorial dominion should extend beyond the limits of the church, or be universal?

A. It is necessary, 1. That he might give a general commission to his ministers to go forth among the hostile nations and preach his gospel. Mat. xxviii. 18, 19, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth; go ye, therefore, and teach all nations." 2. That he might gather from among them his elect. Jno. xvii. 2, "Glorify thy Son, as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." 3. As a reward of his mediatorial sufferings. Rev. iii. 21, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father on his throne." See also Phil. ii. 8, 9. 4. To subdue all his own and his people's enemies. "He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet," 1 Cor. xv. 25.

Q. Is not the gospel call, as it is *general* to all that hear it, founded rather upon Christ's kingly than his priestly office?

A. Yes; for Christ says, Matt. xxviii. 18, 19, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth: go ye, therefore, and teach." The commission to teach, or preach, proceeds evidently from his universal dominion.

Q. Does not this view of the matter obviate the objection made to the doctrine of a definite atonement, derived from the fact of the call being general?

A. Yes. Because the ambassadors are not authorized to declare, as the ground of Christ's invitation to those addressed, to believe, that Christ died for them, but that he died for sinners, and, as Lord of all, Christ, by them, commands all men, who hear the voice of the gospel, to believe and repent.

Q. In how many ways can you prove the universality of Christ's mediatorial dominion?

A. Two. 1. From those passages which assert its universality in general terms. 2. From those which describe the various departments or provinces of his dominion.

Q. Which are the passages of the first class?

A. They are, 1. Mat. xi. 27, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father." 2. Mat. xxviii. 18, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." 3. Acts x. 36, "He is Lord of all." 4. Eph. i. 22, "And hath put all things under his feet." 5. Col. ii. 10, "He is the head of all principality and power." 6. 1 Cor. xv. 27, "He hath put all things under his feet." 7. Heb. ii. 8, "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet."

Q. Is it not Christ's essential dominion of which these passages treat?

A. No. It is his mediatorial dominion.

Q. How does this appear?

A. The terms "delivered," "given," "put," designate his mediatory office; because, as the Son essentially considered, he cannot have authority conferred upon him, for as such he is equal with the Father, and all power belongs to him originally and inherently; but as mediator, the Father's servant, he is properly the subject of a gift.

Q. How do these passages prove the universality of his mediatorial dominion?

A. 1. The word *all* occurring so frequently designates this universality. 2. There is but one exception made—the Father, "who put all things under him," which confirms the doctrine, as all beside the Father, (even the Spirit, who is called the Spirit of the Son), are made subject to Christ for mediatorial purposes.

Q. Is not this subjection of the Spirit in the fullest sense voluntary?

A. Yes. As that of the Son to the Father, it is altogether economical; a part of that covenant arrangement from all everlasting between the Persons in the Godhead. He is still the "free Spirit."

Q. Of how many provinces does Christ's mediatorial dominion consist?

A. It consists of seven. 1. The inanimate creation. Ps. viii. 6, "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet." Mat. viii. 27, "But the men marvelled, saying, what manner of man is this, that even the winds and sea obey him?" 2. The irrational tribes. Ps. viii. 7, "All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field." Heb. ii. 6—8. 3. All good angels. 1 Pet. iii. 22, "Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject unto him." See also Is. vi. 1, 2; Heb. i. 4; Rev. v. 11, 12; Heb. i. 14. 4. The wicked angels. Luke x. 17, 18, "And the seventy returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject to us through thy name; and he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." See Mat. viii. 28; Rev. xii. 9, 10; Col. ii. 15. 5. All men. Jno. xvii. 2, "Power over all flesh" (*flesh*, the human race at large). Ps. ii. 8, "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the *heathen* (THE NATIONS) for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." See ver. 10, 12; xviii. 43. 6. All associations, particularly civil and ecclesiastical. Ps. lxxii. 10, 11, "The kings of Tarshish and the isles shall bring presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts; yea, all kings shall fall down before him, and all nations shall serve him." Dan. vii. 14, "And there was given him dominion, glory, and a kingdom that all people, nations, and languages should serve him." Col. i. 18, "He is the head of the body, the church." 7. The kingdom of providence. Rev. v. The sealed book of the divine purposes, respecting the church and the world, is put into the hands of the Lamb, and he rules in their accomplishment.

Q. For what end is Christ invested with this universal dominion?

A. That he should render the whole administration of providence subservient to the erection, progress, and final perfection of his *special* kingdom, the church.

Q. What is the true nature of Christ's mediatorial kingdom?

A. It is a spiritual kingdom.

Q. What is the proper definition of its spirituality?

A. It is a kingdom not designed merely to promote man's corporeal and temporal interests, but chiefly the best interests of his immortal nature?

Q. In what respects is it spiritual?

A. It is spiritual, 1. In its origin. It is not from men by any mode by which men convey authority—but his dominion originates solely from the spiritual grant of the Father from all everlasting in the covenant of grace. 2. In its ends—which are, in substance, To gather his church—to protect it on earth—to sanctify the hearts and lives of her members, and to render subservient all secular things (even civil rule), to the spiritual and eternal interests of men. Eph. i. 22. And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church. 3. In its administration. As to the ecclesiastical department. Its officers are pastors and teachers, elders and deacons (spiritual officers to administer all the temporalities of the church), persons endowed with ministerial authority, whose weapons are not carnal but spiritual (instruction, advice, censure and remonstrance)—and as it respects the civil department, those who bear rule according to his ordinance are the ministers of God, and are just, ruling in the fear of the Lord—whilst the rule in both cases is the same—The Law of the Lord.

Q. Is *civil* government a spiritual dominion?

A. Civil government is not strictly spiritual as it is in a good measure occupied about man's temporal interests, but as it is subjected to Christ, among the all things put under his feet, it is designed to subserve, in his hands, the religious as well as temporal interests of the human race.

Q. Is the mediatorial dominion of Christ in such a sense spiritual that it can have no sort of connection with the world, or with things that are secular?

A. By no means; because, 1. Even a portion of the most spiritual of its subjects, regenerate men, for a time, have their residence on the earth, and are occupied with secular things; and their bodies are earthly and nourished by carnal things. 2. Besides, there are things specified in the grant of dominion, which are strictly and literally worldly and secular, Ps. viii. 6—8. "Thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passes through the paths of the sea."

Q. Is not his kingdom deprived of a portion of its spirituality, and secularized by this connection?

A. Not in the least. Because whatever is connected with Christ's kingdom, however carnal in its nature, is, in his infinite wisdom, and by his almighty power, somehow or other, rendered subservient to spiritual objects. Eph. i. 22. "And gave him to be head over all things to the church."

Q. Does not Christ himself in John xviii. 36, ("My kingdom is not of this world,") disclaim all connection between his kingdom and secular things?

A. By no means: Because, 1. His kingdom is *in* this world. Matt. xxviii. 18. "All power *on* earth, is given unto me." His Church, his peculiarly spiritual kingdom, is *in* this world. 2. The world itself, is a part of his kingdom. Eph. i. 20, 21. "Hath set him at his own right hand, far above every name that is named—*in this world*." 3. In its origin, (as stated above,) it is not of this world. This Christ himself affirms, in the disputed text. "But now is my kingdom, *not from hence*." (Men do not confer authority upon Him.) 4. It signifies that Christ is not to reign upon earth, seated upon a visible throne as earthly kings, defending his kingdom by armies—"else would my servants fight." 5. Its laws are not of this world. They are from heaven. "Its laws, its powers, are all divine." 6. It is not of this world, as to its benign moral influence upon society. Worldly kingdoms debase and enslave; this is designed to free, to

elevate and sanctify the subject, and subordinates all things to the eternal happiness of men. John viii. 32. 36. "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free. If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." 2 Cor. iii. 17. "Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." 7. It is not of this world, as it is designed to overthrow all the kingdoms of this world, and put them under the dominion of his saints, that they may subserve the spiritual interests of men. Dan. ii. 44. "And in the days of those (kingdoms) shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms." vii. 27. "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom, under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High." 8. The doctrine of the absolute spirituality of Christ's kingdom, would deny Christians the right of holding any worldly property—engaging in any secular enterprise—or entering into any political connection whatever; because Christ says of them, using precisely the same phraseology, "ye are not of this world!" now such an interpretation is manifestly contradictory to scripture and common sense, in this case—it follows that it is equally so in the other.

Q. Do not other religious denominations, besides the Reformed Presbyterian, recognize in their systems the doctrine of Christ's Mediatorial dominion?

A. Yes. A few others hold it in theory—but their theoretic profession is neutralized by a practical denial.—They do not make it a matter of testimony.

SECTION II.

Christ's exclusive Headship over the Church.

Q. What is the radical idea of the term *Church*?

A. It is derived from the Hebrew word *בֵּית* and the

Greek word *ἐκκλησία*, the roots of which signify *to call*; and denotes any assembly convened by invitation or appointment.

Q. How is it used in the scriptures?

A. It is variously employed in the scriptures, and imports,
 1. The whole body of the elect, Eph. v. 23, "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it." 2. A small worshiping society of private Christians; Col. iv. 15, "Salute Nymphas, and the *church* which is in his house." 3. Regularly organized congregations; Rev. ii. 1, "Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write." 4. The whole visible catholic society, consisting of all who, in every age, in every place, make a public and credible profession of the true religion, together with their children; Acts vii. 38, "This is he that was in *the church* in the wilderness;" Acts ii. 47, "The Lord added to *the church* daily such as should be saved;" Acts viii. 3, "Saul made havoc of *the church*."

Q. In what sense are the epithets *visible* and *invisible* applied to the church?

A. The catholic or universal church, which is *invisible*, consists of the whole number of the *elect*, that have been, are, or shall be, gathered into one under Christ the head thereof. 2. The *visible* church, which is also catholic or universal, under the gospel, (not confined to one nation, as before, under the law,) consists of all those throughout the world, that profess the true religion, together with their children. Eph. i. 22, 23; ch. v. 27; Acts ii. 38, 39, 41, 47; Matt. xix. 14.

Q. Are both of these views comprehended in the one church of which Christ is the Head, and over which he exercises mediatorial rule?

A. Yes; but it is the *visible* organic church of which we now principally treat.

Q. What are the marks by which the visible church catholic, as an organic body, may be known?

A. They are not those to which the Roman apostasy pretends, "antiquity," "universality," "continued succession," "power of working miracles," and the like, because these are not exclusive properties. 2. But the characteristics of the visible church catholic, are what belong to it, and to it *alone*.

They are—soundness in doctrine—a lawful and regular ministry—and the due administration of gospel ordinances. Acts ii. 43; xiv. 23; Mat. xxviii. 19, 20; Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xi. 2.

Q. Is the Lord Jesus Christ the *exclusive* Head of this visible catholic, ecclesiastical society?

A. Yes; He alone is Head of his body the church, and governs her with an absolute supremacy.

Q. In what is his title to exclusive dominion over the church founded?

A. His title is founded, 1. In the appointment of the Father, Ps. ii. 6, "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." 2. In the gift of the church to him, John xvii. 6, "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were, and thou gavest them me." 3. In his incorporating it by covenant. It is a covenant society; not founded in the covenant of grace, merely, but Christ hath made with it an express ecclesiastical covenant, as illustrated by the transaction with Abraham, Gen. xvii. 1–14, "I will be a God unto thee, and unto thy seed after thee"—which evidently has a respect to an ecclesiastical relation—hence Abraham is entitled the "Father of many nations,"—Gentiles as well as Jews. 4. It is founded on the *purchase* of the church with his own blood; Acts xx. 18, "Feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood." 5. This right is founded in the circumstance that he is the maker and builder of the church. Heb. iii. 3–6, "For this man was accounted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house is worthy of more honour than the house—and Moses, verily, was faithful in all his house as a servant—but Christ as a son over his own house." Also, 1 Pet. ii. 4, 5; Eph. ii. 22.

Q. By what passages of Scripture can it be established that the Lord Jesus Christ is the exclusive Head of the church?

A. 1. By Ps. ii. 6, "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." 2. Ps. cxlix. 2, "Let the children of Zion be joyful in their king." 3. Is. ix. 6, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given—and the government shall be

upon his shoulders—and he shall sit upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it and to establish it.”

4. Is. xxiv. 23, “The Lord of hosts shall reign on Mount Zion.” 5. Zech. ix. 9, “Rejoice, O daughter of Zion—behold thy King cometh unto thee.” 6. Zech. vi. 13, “Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne.” 7. Luke i. 33, “He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever.” 8. Acts v. 31, “Him hath God exalted a prince—to give repentance to Israel.” 9. Rev. xv. 3, “Just and true are thy ways, thou KING OF SAINTS.” 10. Eph. iv. 18, “Who is the *Head*, even Christ.” 11. Eph. v. 23, 24, “Christ is Head of the Church”—“The church is subject unto Christ.” 12. Col. i. 18, “And he is the Head of the body, the church.”

Q. Does not the Pope of Rome claim to be head of the visible church?

A. Yes; this is his blasphemous claim. 1. In the Creed of Pope Pius the Fourth, he claims to be “Successor of St. Peter, prince of the apostles, and vicar of Jesus Christ.” 2. The Council of Florence, A. D. 1438, decreed, “That the Roman Pontiff is head of the whole church, and to him, in St. Peter, was delegated, by our Lord Jesus Christ, full power to feed, rule and *govern* the universal church.”

Q. Is there any foundation in Scripture for this supremacy of Peter and his alleged successors?

A. Not the least; on the contrary, every aspiration after supremacy was decidedly rebuked and forbidden by our Lord, and the strictest fraternal parity enforced. 1. Mat. xx. 25–27, “And Jesus called them unto him and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them, but it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you let him be your servant.” 2. Mat. xxiii. 8, “But be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father, (Pope) upon the earth; for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters; for one is your master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall

be your servant." 3. Mark ix. 3, "And He sat down and called the twelve, and said unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all and servant of all."

Q. Are there not numerous arguments confuting this blasphemous claim?

A. Yes; many. 1. Paul rebuked Peter, and reckoned himself his equal. Gal. ii. 11, "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed." Also, verse 14. 2. If the dignity of the person left any authority with the city where he resided, then *Antioch* had equal claims with Rome; and *Jerusalem*, where Christ suffered, was to be preferred to all the world, for it was really the *mother church*. 3. Peter had a *limited province*—the *circumcision*, as Paul the *uncircumcision*; the latter being of the greatest extent. And hence, Peter was not considered the universal pastor. 4. This claim was denied by the primitive church writers. CYPRIAN and other bishops, wrote to the bishop of Rome, as to their "fellow-bishop," "colleague," and "brother;" they were opposed to appeals to Rome; and asserted that *all* bishops were equal in power, as the apostles had been. 5. When the Emperor Mauritius gave the title, "Universal Bishop," to the Patriarch of Constantinople, Gregory the Great, Bishop of Rome, complained of the ambition of that title, which he calls "equal to the pride of Lucifer!" 6. It was not till the year 606, that Boniface the Third received, from the brutal usurper PHOCAS, the title of "Universal Bishop." 7. This power was not, for centuries after, acknowledged in Germany, Scotland, England, &c., and even several sees, as Ravenna, Milan and Aquileia, plead exemption from the papal authority. From all this it is manifest, that the Pope's power is a usurpation; and the Pope is the "Man of Sin,"—"the Antichrist,"—"the son of perdition—who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." 2 Thess. ii. 4.

Q. Do not civil rulers claim a supremacy over the church?

A. Yes; They have often usurped this prerogative of

Jesus Christ, and exercised a despotic authority over his church.

Q. Is there any foundation in the scriptures for this claim?

A. Not the least. The scriptures exhibit civil rule as having for its object things external, relating immediately to the outer man, in subserviency to the religious interests of society, and as having no power *over* things ecclesiastical.

Q. Do not the scriptures substantially prohibit civil rulers from exercising ecclesiastical power?

A. They do. 2 Chron. xxvi. 16—20, "It appertaineth not to thee, Uzziah, to burn incense unto the Lord, but to the priests, the sons of Aaron, who are consecrated to burn incense; go out of the sanctuary." Yea, the Lord punished his presumption, and "smote him with leprosy, and they thrust him out of the temple." This instance clearly proves that civil rulers have no ecclesiastical power. Their whole authority is civil, and all they do in relation to the Church is in their capacity of civil rulers. They have no authority (as will be seen in another section,) *in* or *over* the church.

Q. What are some of the claims of our Lord Jesus Christ in relation to the church, as its exclusive and sovereign Head?

A. He claims the exclusive right to appoint to the church,
 1. Her doctrine; Gal. i. 11, "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man, for I neither received it of men, neither was I taught it but by the revelation of Jesus Christ;" also, verses 8, 9, and 2 John 10. 2. All her officers; Eph. iv. 2, "And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors, and some teachers—for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Phil. i. 1, "To all the saints that are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons." 3. All her institutions of worship; Mat. xv. 9, "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." 4. All her laws; Isa. xxxiii. 22, "The Lord is our lawgiver." Isa. ii. 3, "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain."

of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

Q. What are the officers which Christ, as her head, has appointed in the Church?

A. They are, 1. Extraordinary; Eph. iv. 11, "apostles," "prophets," "evangelists." 2. Ordinary; pastors and teachers, ruling elders and deacons. Eph. iv. 6, "Some pastors and teachers." 1 Tim. v. 17, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in word and doctrine." 1 Tim. ii. 8, "Likewise, must the deacons be grave."

Q. What are the respective functions of these officers?

A. The functions of the pastors are, to instruct and rule the church; Mat. xxviii. 19, 20, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations—teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Acts xx. 28, "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers—to feed the church of God." Heb. xiii. 17, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give an account." 2. The function of the ruling elders, is simply to rule; 1 Tim. v. 17, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour." 3. The functions of the deacons are, to receive and disburse the ecclesiastical funds, and exercise a care over all other temporalities of the church—giving a special attention to the poor; Acts vi. 1—6, "And in those days," &c.

Q. Are the ministers of the church clothed with a despotic and discretionary power?

A. No; their power is simply stewardly and ministerial.

Q. Is it not rebellion against Christ as the Head of his church, to reject any one of the officers of his appointment, or to deny any officer the exercise of any one of the functions of his office?

A. Undoubtedly; because Christ is jealous of his own authority in Zion, and will not give "His glory to another."

Q. Where do you find the divine warrant for the office of Deacon in the New Testament church?

A. In the following Scriptures: 1. Acts vi. Where we are informed of the origin and design of the office. 2. 1 Timothy iii. 8—12. Where the inspired apostle describes their necessary qualifications,—“Likewise must the DEACONS be grave,” &c. 3. Phil. i. 1. Where the apostle exhibits their existence in the church equally with the bishops—(“with the bishops and deacons.”)

Q. What are the duties of this office?

A. To take charge of and disburse the temporalities of the church, giving special attention to the poor.

Q. Where do you find the evidence in scripture that *all* the temporalities of the church are entrusted to the deacons?

A. In Acts vi.

Q. How does this passage prove that the temporalities of the church are confided to the deacons?

A. 1. The church had one common fund at that time, Acts ii. 44; iv. 34, 35. 2. This was laid at the apostles' feet, Acts iv. 34—37. 3. This business was more than the apostles could manage consistently with their higher employments, Acts vi. 2. 4. The seven were set over the same business, Acts vi. 3, 4.

Q. Did the apostles except any part of this common fund?

A. No. It was ALL delivered over to the deacons.

Q. Did this officer exist universally in the church in apostolic times?

A. Yes.

Q. What evidence have you from history?

A. Mosheim says, “That all the other Christian Churches followed the example of that of Jerusalem in whatever related to the choice and office of deacon.”

Q. Does any other historian confirm this?

A. Yes. Several; Brown of Haddington, Dr. Miller of Princeton, and others.

Q. What is the testimony of Brown?

A. He states in substance—That deacons were universal in the apostolic church.

Q. What says Dr. Miller ?

A. Dr. Miller states,—“For the first two hundred years every flock of professing Christians had its pastor or bishop, with its bench of elders, and its body of deacons.”—*TRACT on Presbyterianism.*

Q. What says Buck, in his *Theological Dictionary*, on the existence and duties of this office in the primitive church ?

A. Buck says, “The office of deacon originally was to serve tables—the Lord’s table, the minister’s table, and the poor’s table. They took care of the secular affairs of the church—received and disbursed moneys—kept the church’s accounts—and provided every thing necessary for its temporal good.”

Q. Did the Reformation Church of Scotland recognise this office as it existed in the primitive church, in the full extent of its duties as illustrated above ?

A. Yes. In her *Second Book of Discipline* she says : “The office and power of the deacon is to receive and distribute THE WHOLE OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL GOODS unto them to whom they are appointed, that the patrimony of the kirk and poor be not converted unto private men’s uses, nor wrongfully distributed.”

Q. Is there any evidence that this *Second Book of Discipline* was “binding law in said church after the adoption of the Westminster Standards ?”

A. Yes ; abundant. As a specimen, take the act of the year 1649, abolishing patronage ; in which patronage is said to be “contrary to the *Second Book of Discipline*,” in which, upon sound and good grounds, it is reckoned among abuses that are desired to be reformed. The Form of Church Government was adopted Feb. 10, 1645—four years before the passage of the act which quotes it as *authority*. *Cruikshank, vol. 1, p. 78.*

Q. Does the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States recognise the office in like manner ?

A. Yes. She declares that the “deacon’s power is about the *temporalities* of the church.”

Q. Do our brethren in Scotland thus recognise the office ?

A. Yes. In their Testimony they say : “Deacons are ordained upon the choice of the congregation, and are asso-

ciated with the teaching and ruling elders, in distributing to the necessities of the poor, and managing other temporalities of the church."

Q. Is this office perpetual in the church ?

A. Yes : 1 Tim. iii. 8, 12, and Phil. i. 1. Its perpetuity is the same with that of the bishop or pastor.

Q. What say the Standards of the Reformed Presbyterian Church respecting the perpetuity of this office ?

A. The Westminster Form of Church Government says of the "Deacon," "WHOSE OFFICE IS PERPETUAL."

Q. Has Christ instituted in his church, ordinances of divine worship and Christian fellowship ?

A. Yes ; Christ has sanctioned, either by express institution, or by his administrative example, 1. Public prayer. 2. Praise. 3. Reading of the scriptures. 4. Preaching the word. 5. Baptism and the Lord's supper. In the presence of his disciples he lifted his eyes to heaven, in solemn supplication to the Father. He sung with them a hymn before going out to the Mount of Olives. When he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, he "stood up for to read." "Go ye into all nations and preach the gospel to every creature," was among his last directions to the apostles and their successors. He commanded them also to "Baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." In reference to the ordinance of the supper, he said, "Do this in remembrance of me." And, as for that portion of time which is consecrated to the peculiar observance of all these institutions, it is written, "The Son of man is the Lord of the Sabbath." There is not an institution of divine worship by which the devotional feelings of the church are expressed, or the edification of the body promoted, which bears not the stamp of the Saviour's authority ; and in observing them all, the true saint has the satisfaction to know, that he is "serving the Lord Christ."

Q. Is it not daring presumption and an act of rebellion, to worship by an observance of our own invention ?

A. Yes ; for Christ, 1. Rebukes it. "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." 2. He gives us two alarming examples of his jealousy in

this respect. The cases of Nadab and Abihu, who, for offering "strange fire," were consumed by "a vehement flame," from the presence of the Lord—and the worshippers of the "golden calf" who were miserably slain.

Q. Does not the efficacy of ordinances depend upon the dominion of Christ in his church?

A. Yes; Christ, upon his ascension to the right hand of the throne of God, "received gifts for men, even for the rebellious—that the Lord might dwell among them:" among which gifts was the Holy Spirit, whom he sends forth as the Spirit of truth, to lead men into the knowledge of the truth; and it is by the word of Christ rendered "quick and powerful," by the energy of the Spirit that men are convinced of sin, enlightened in the knowledge of Christ, and their wills renewed—and are thus enabled to embrace the Saviour, as he is offered in the gospel.

Q. Has Christ instituted a form of government in his church?

A. Yes; He has not left his church in a state of anarchy or confusion, or to be modelled according to the fancies of men, as may best serve their political views and designs. Every piece of the Old Testament tabernacle was to be placed according to the pattern shown in the holy mount; much more the New Testament church, which is called "the true tabernacle of David." Compare Acts xv. 16, with Amos ix. 11.

Q. What texts demonstrate an established government in the New Testament church?

A. Many; as examples, 1 Thess. v. 12, "We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you." 1 Tim. v. 17, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour." And, Hebrews xiii. 17, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves."

Q. How many forms are there of church government, for which their advocates claim a scriptural warrant?

A. Four: the papal, or spiritual monarchy; the episcopal, or spiritual prelacy; independency, or spiritual democracy and presbyterianism, or spiritual republicanism.

Q. What is the distinctive characteristic of each ?

A. The *first* maintains the necessity of one supreme, universal, infallible *head* of the whole Christian body, and throughout the world, who is the authorized vicar of Christ. The *second*, contends for an order of clerical prelates, above the rank of ordinary ministers of the gospel, who are alone, in their view, empowered to ordain, and without whose presiding agency there can be no regular church. The *third* holds that all ecclesiastical power resides in the mass of the church members, and that all acts of ecclesiastical authority are to be performed immediately by them. The *fourth* maintains that Christ has made all ministers who are authorized to dispense the word and sacraments, equal in official rank and power; that in every church the immediate exercise of ecclesiastical power is deposited, not with the whole mass of the people, but with a body of their representatives styled elders; and that the whole visible church catholic, as far as their denomination is concerned, is not only one in name, but so united by a series of assemblies of these representatives, acting in the name and by the authority of the whole, as to bind the whole body together as one church, walking by the same principles of faith and order, and voluntarily, yet authoritatively, governed by the same system of rules and regulations.

Q. What is the first proof of the absolute *parity* of the ministers of the word ?

A. Mark x. 42—44, "But Jesus called them to him, and said to them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles, exercise lordship over them, and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you; but whosoever shall be great among you, shall be your *minister*, and whosoever will be the *chiefest* shall be the *servant of all*." (See also Mat. xx. 25, 27; xxiii. 8—12; Luke xxii. 25, 26.)

Q. What is the second argument ?

A. 1 Pet. v. 3, "Neither as being lords over God's *heritage* (literally *clergy*,) but being ensamples to the flock."

Q. What is the third proof ?

A. The highest *ordinary* officers mentioned in 1 Cor. xii.

28, and Eph. iv. 11, are "pastors and teachers," as given and set by Christ in the church, *for the work of the ministry.*"

Q. What is the fourth proof?

A. Presbyter and bishop are convertible terms; that is, they apply to the same individual, exercising one and the same office. Presbyter or elder is expressive of the *authority*, and episkopos, or bishop, of the *duty* of the pastor. Acts xx. 17—28, "From Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders (presbyters—Greek,) of the church, and charged them, saying, "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers," (or "bishops.") Also, 1 Pet. v. 2, "The elders which are among you I exhort, which am also an elder, feed the church of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof,"—episkopountes—episcopising, or watching, or performing the duty of a bishop. In both these passages, elder is the official title; and bishop the term expressive of the duties of the elder.

Q. What is the fifth argument?

A. The officers of the church are ordained by a plurality of elders, in which act they all stand on an equal platform. Acts xiv. 23, "And when they had ordained them elders in every church." 1 Tim. iv. 14, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the *presbytery*." Paul and Barnabas acted as presbyters in ordination, and as members of a presbytery, and Timothy was ordained by the same—a plurality of elders acting in these solemn transactions as equals, and not by a *lord* over God's clergy.

Q. What is the sixth argument?

A. The apostles, in ordaining elders, acted simply as presbyters. Timothy was ordained by a presbytery, of which presbytery Paul was a member, 2 Tim. i. 6.

Q. What is the seventh proof?

A. All the elders have equal authority as rulers. 1 Tim. v. 17, "Let the elders *that rule well* be counted worthy of double honour." According to this, all elders have equal authority as rulers—the only distinction which can justly

obtain among them, is not in the sense of rule, as superior or inferior—but of greater diligence and fidelity in the performance of presbyterial duty.

Q. What proof is there of the existence of a class of officers designated by the title, Ruling Elders, distinct from the pastor or teaching elder?

A. There is abundant proof; First, The New Testament church was modelled after the pattern, substantially of the Jewish synagogue. The order of the synagogue was substantially as follows. There was a *preacher* or *angel* of each synagogue; this angel was not the bishop of a diocese or province, but of a particular congregation, assembled in one synagogue or place of worship; there was associated with him a number of *rulers*, entitled, Luke xiii. 14, *the rulers of the synagogue*; and a third class—collectors and distributors of the funds.

Q. Did our Saviour sanction this order in his ministrations on earth?

A. Yes.

Q. Did the apostles and evangelists preach in the Jewish synagogues, and organise congregations upon this simple and efficient model?

A. Yes. Acts xiv. 23, “And when they had ordained them elders in every church,” or congregation. As there was a plurality of elders ordained in each congregation, it is a just inference, that, associated with the angel, Bishop, or pastor of the New Testament congregation, after the model of the synagogue, is a bench of elders, whose function it is to conduct its government. Second, 1 Tim. v. 17, “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.” Evidently, “Elders that rule well,” are justly denominated “ruling elders.”

Q. Is there a manifest distinction among these elders?

A. Yes; There are some whose sole business it is to rule another class who, besides ruling, “labour in word and doctrine.” Because, if this distinction be not observed, the passage would run—substituting equivalent expressions, thus strangely: “Let the elders *that do their duty well* be counted worthy

of double honour, especially the elders that do their duty?" This passage, therefore, requires distinction into ruling elders and teaching elders; that is, a class who rule only—another class which, besides ruling, *teach*, in which only they have a pre-eminence.

Q. Are not those who labour in word and doctrine contrasted with those who only rule?

A. This is the force of the word *μαλιστα*. It is used in several passages evidently with this view. Gal. ii. 10, "Let us do good unto all men, *especially* (malista) unto them who are of the household of faith." 1 Tim. iv. 10, "Who is the Saviour of all men, *especially* (malista) of those who believe." All elders that *rule well* are worthy of regard—but there is a reason why some elders should be regarded which does not belong to all; their duty, besides ruling, is *labouring in the word and doctrine*; therefore they are to be particularly honoured for this *peculiarity*, by which they are distinguished from the others who *rule only*. It would indeed be strange if it was the duty of each and all elders, besides ruling, to labour in word and doctrine, that Paul should account men worthy of *double honour*, who neglected the chief part of their duty! For the text plainly shows that some *rule well*, but do not labour in word and doctrine; others, in addition to ruling well, are commended for labouring in the word and doctrine. It is evident, therefore, that there are two distinct classes of elders properly designated by the appellations of RULING ELDERS and TEACHING ELDERS. The former *rule only*. The latter, besides ruling, *teach* the words of eternal life.

Q. What other proof have you for the office of Ruling Elder.

A. Rom. xii. 7, 8, "Let us wait on our ministering—he that teacheth, on teaching—he that ruleth, let him do it with diligence." Paul compares the church, in this chapter, to the human body—and as in that body all the members have not the same office, so all the members of the church have not *the same office*. There are gifts differing according to the grace given to each. In the passage quoted, evidently the *ruler* is distinguished from the *teacher*—*ruling* from

teaching. The elders that rule are distinct from those who have, besides, the office in the body of *teaching*, and have grace distinguishing them for this work.

Q. What further proof?

A. 1 Cor. xii. 28, "Teachers—governments." In addition to the standing ministry in the church, whose chief office is to teach, there is a class of officers endowed with authority to *govern* (as the word means,) as assistants to the teachers in the government of the church.

Q. What additional proof?

A. James v. 14, "Is any man sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church," or congregation. These elders are evidently over the same congregation. If they are remote from each other, the afflicted individual could not have access to them in his exigency; and taken in connexion with Acts xiv. 23,—the ordination of a plurality of elders in each congregation—it is evidence in favour of the distinct order of officers entitled RULING ELDERS.

Q. Is there a series of judicatories, rising one above another, by which the church is bound together as one homogeneous community?

A. Yes; First, the congregational session. Second, Presbytery. Third, The synod, general assembly, &c.

Q. What proof in scripture is there for the congregational presbytery or session?

A. There is sufficient proof. First, The New Testament churches, or congregations, were modelled after the Jewish synagogue, which was governed by an estate of elders. Acts xviii. 8—17; Mark iv. 35, 36, 38. Second, Christ refers with approbation to the order of government among the Jews, (which we will show again,) Mat. xviii. 15—21: "Tell it to the church." Now the Jews had a lesser court of sanhedrim, called "The assembly of three," in every place of the number of one hundred and twenty inhabitants. There must be something similar in the New Testament church. The congregational court to which we *tell* the offences of the offending brother. Third, Heb. xiii. 17, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves," relates first in order to the congregational rulers, as

is plain from the reason assigned for submission, for they "watch for your souls." The immediate rulers who had the care of the particular flock; confirmed by ver. 7. Fourth, 1 Th. v. 12, "Know them which labour among you, and *are over you in the Lord, and admonish you.*" A plain proof of a number of congregational rulers who immediately governed the people, clothed with the power of authoritative admonition, and to whom they were to be in meek subjection.

Q. How can you prove the divine right of presbyteries?

A. The arguments are numerous. We select *one*—the church of Antioch. First, there were several single congregations in this one church. 1. The multitude of believers:—Acts xi. 21, "A great number believed." By the preaching of Barnabas "Much people were added to the Lord;" (verse 24.) Barnabas and Saul, for a year together, taught much people, and disciples there so mightily multiplied, that there they were first designated "Christians;" verses 25, 26. 2. From the multitude of preachers at Antioch: Acts xi. 20, "Divers preached" there—three or four at least. There Barnabas was sent, verses 22—24. He went for Saul to help him, so great was the harvest; verses 25, 26. There came a number from Jerusalem; verses 27, 28. *Five* more are to be added, who are named Acts xiii. 1—3. "Yea, Paul and Barnabas continued in Antioch teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, *with many others also*;" xv. 35. Now sum up all. What a multitude of believers, and what a college of preachers, were here at Antioch! How is it possible that all these preachers should be occupied in one congregation (and they were not idlers,) dispensing the ordinances of Christ to them only? Or how could so many members meet in one single congregation at once, ordinarily, to partake of all ordinances. Now these numerous believers and preachers are called, Acts xiii. 1, "*The church that was at Antioch*;" evidently in regard of one joint administration of church government among them, by one common presbytery.

Q. What other proof?

A. In Antioch we have clearly *two* examples of presbyterial meetings. 1. Acts xiii. 1—3, "Now there was in the

church that was at Antioch, certain prophets, (who prophesied by preaching or expounding the word,) and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon, that was called Niger, and Lucius, of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they *ministered* to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away." This was evidently a *presbyterial* act. Paul and Barnabas were separated to missionary labour, by "the laying on of the hands of the presbytery," with all due formality. 2. Acts xv. "And certain men which came down from Judea, taught the brethren and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When, therefore, Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and *disputation* with them, they *determined* that Paul and Barnabas, and certain others of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this *question*." Can anything be plainer than that the *question* of circumcision was brought before the assembly of the elders of Antioch, and reasoned at length, but they came to no decision upon the *merits* of the question, but, as it concerned the *whole church*, wisely "*determined*" to refer it to the highest ecclesiastical tribunal for its decision—to which synodal assembly they appointed their delegates? They decided, decreed or ordained, as the Greek for "*determined*" means—to send Paul, &c. Jerusalem, Corinth, Ephesus, &c., offer equally forcible and conclusive arguments to the same point.

Q. Is there any proof for the divine right of *synodal* assemblies?

A. Yes; The proof is conclusive. First, The *unity* of the church is a valid argument. The fourth chapter of Ephesians discusses this unity, and any one who will candidly examine it, will be convinced that the *ministry* is given for the purpose of governing it as a unity, until the end of time. There is but "one Lord, one faith, one baptism;" and there is but "one body." To this one body the pastors and teachers—as the ordinary ministry—are given—given, moreover, to

preserve this unity, "till we all come in the unity of faith—unto the perfect man." Being with this view given to the church, how can they preserve this unity, but by assembling in a judicatory, where they can act for the whole—take the oversight; feed, govern, and direct the whole church of God? A synod is, therefore, demanded by the *unity* of the church: and this unity is preserved where Christ is really recognised as the Head, and his laws are honestly administered by a synodical assembly. If synods have failed to preserve this unity, it will be found that they have deliberated upon the principles of a carnal expediency, and were not governed by the word and truth of Christ.

Q. What is the second proof for synodal assemblies?

A. Christ refers with approbation to the forms of procedure in the Jewish courts, in which the synagogues were subordinate to the sanhedrim. There were *three* judicial assemblies among the Jews. The first consisted of one hundred and twenty; the second of twenty-three, and the third of three judges. The former was called the great sanhedrim; the second the sanhedrim of twenty-three, and the latter the assembly of three. The great sanhedrim sat in Jerusalem; the lesser in every place containing more than one hundred and twenty inhabitants, and the assembly of three, in every place of the number of one hundred and twenty inhabitants. This is the system of which our Redeemer approved, as we have his judgment in the eighteenth of Matthew; and he intimates very clearly from the 18th to the 20th verse, that the *principle* embodied in these judicial tribunals would be extended throughout the New Testament dispensation. This system was rigidly observed until after the destruction of the second temple. The assembly of three, and the sanhedrim of twenty-three, were subordinate to the great sanhedrim, which had both appellate and original jurisdiction. From the recommendation of our Saviour, we may safely conclude, that a supreme assembly after the example of the great sanhedrim, will meet his approbation. He commends the court of two or three. "For where two or *three* are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." And when he says, "Tell it unto the church," he shows explicitly his appro-

bation of the judicial system by which the body of his people, under the former dispensation, were governed; for he gave the law which is recorded in Deut. xvii. 8—12, and which seems to lay down the principle of appeal according to this simple and essentially righteous judicial system.

Q. What is the third proof?

A. At Jerusalem a synod composed of the rulers of the several churches met, debated, and determined a point of controversy in the church. We have a record of the fact—and the transactions of this synodal assembly in the fifteenth of Acts. We have here, 1. An authoritative decree; 2. Enacted by a representative body; 3. Exercising ecclesiastical jurisdiction over churches and presbyteries.

Q. Where is the proof of the first position?

A. As to the first, Acts xvi. 4, is conclusive. "As they went through the cities they delivered them the *decrees* for to keep which were *ordained* by the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem." Τα δογματα τα κειρημενα. Dogma does not mean *advice*, but a decree that must be obeyed. The decrees of the Roman emperor are designated by the same word; Luke ii. 1; Acts xvii. 1, "There went out a decree (δογμα,) from Cæsar Augustus." "These all do contrary to the decrees (δογματων,) of Cæsar." The decrees of the Cæsars were not simple advice—but authoritative, and to be obeyed at the peril of the subject: so the acts of this synod were authoritative decrees—binding the conscience of the members of the church.

Q. What is the proof of the second position?

A. As to the second, the synod was a representative body. The apostles were not alone in this grand assembly—nor did they as members act in their apostolic character—but as elders, (1 Pet. v. 1,) in their presbyterial capacity; verse 6, "The apostles and elders came together for to *consider* this matter." The whole church; verse 22, The brethren; verse 23. Those who are styled the whole church in the 22d, are called "the brethren," in the 23d verse. The latter signifies, as a technical term, *men of equal rank* to others specified, (Acts xxii. 5, and xv. 40, xx. 32.) The equals of the elders of Jerusalem at Damascus. The elders of Ephesus, officially

—and the members of the synod—equals in authority—delegates from the churches that were not of Judea. The “whole church” is the church representative. The private members of the church at Jerusalem could not be styled the whole church—and upon the principles of independency, could not bind by their acts the church in Corinth, &c.; and upon the principles of presbyterianism the members of the church in one city could not bind by their acts the members in another city. The whole church universal was not present in Jerusalem in its collective members. It was the church representative in her delegates—the *brethren* from the distant cities and provinces of the church. Antioch sends, as we have seen, her delegates—and other presbyteries are there in the person of their delegates—so that the decree is the act of the *ὅλη ἐκκλησία*,—the *whole church representatively*.

Q. How do you prove the third position?

A. As to the *third*, these decrees were sent down to the whole church, to be *kept*—as decisions binding the conscience of all its members, officially or personally considered. Acts xvi. 4, “They went through all the cities and delivered them the decrees for to *keep*.” The decrees respected, and bound all the churches. Paul was now in Derbe or Lystra, in Lycaonia, having passed through Syria and Cilicia, and from Lycaonia he travelled through Phrygia and Galatia into Macedonia. Through whatever cities he passed where there was a church, he delivered them the decrees of the synod of Jerusalem “to keep.” The word *φυλάσσω*, rendered “to keep,” signifies not only to keep in safety with care as a deposit, but to *observe*, so as not to violate, as a command; Matt. xix. 20; Mark x. 20, “All these things have *I kept*, (the same Greek word,) from my youth up.” These decrees of the synod were to be observed as the commandments of Christ. Second, We have seen the question was referred from the presbytery of Antioch, which, as will be seen, acquiesced in the decision of the synod. Third, All the churches submitted to the decree; Acts xv. 30, 31, “So when they (commissioners of synod,) were dismissed, they came to Antioch, and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle, which, when they

had read, they rejoiced for the consolation." And in the 46th verse, Paul and Silas are said to have "gone through Syria and Cilicia confirming the churches." How *confirming* them but by giving them the decrees of the synod deciding the question by which they had been unsettled in their judgments? This is clearly made out by the 4th and 5th verses of the sixteenth chapter: "And so as they went through the cities they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem—and so were the churches *established* in the faith, and increased in number daily." The whole church submitted cheerfully to the decision of the supreme judicatory: even the gainsayers seem to have been silenced by the authoritative decision of so august a body, acting in the name of the church's exalted Head; and peace, establishment, and prosperity, were the happy results of this judicial decision, and the submission of the church to those who had the rule over them in the Lord, whose "authority was for edification and not for destruction."

Q. What principle is the basis of the presbyterian system of church government?

A. The principle of *representation*—and from the church the nations have derived the elements of republican institutions wherever they exist.

Q. Will not this principle bind the church in the millennium—and even the nations respectively—throughout the earth—in one homogeneous community?

A. The principle will admit of any degree of extension. An assembly may be constituted to embrace the globe; and a just interpretation of the scripture seems to justify this opinion. Jer. iii. 17, "At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord to Jerusalem; neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their own heart."

Q. Has Christ as the Head of his church authorized the exercise of discipline upon the household of faith?

A. Yes. The Lord Jesus Christ hath instituted DISCIPLINE in order to remove scandals, and prevent their unhappy

effects, and no church can, without the faithful and spiritual application of it, hope for his countenance and blessing. First, Mat. xviii. 17, "If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it to the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." Second, "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." Third, "A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition reject." Fourth, Christ reproves the churches of Pergamos and Thyatira for laxity in discipline; Rev. ii. 14, 20, "But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam." "Nevertheless I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman, Jezebel, to teach and seduce my servants," &c. Fifth, He commends the church of Ephesus for fidelity in this respect; "This thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate."

Q. What are some of the characteristics of the discipline which Christ authorizes as the Head of the church?

A. First, It should be faithful—the guilty should not escape. 1 Cor. v. 5, "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such a one unto Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." Second, It should be administered in an *orderly* manner; 1 Cor. xiv. 40, "Let all things be done decently and in order." Third, In all meekness; Gal. vi. 1, "Restore such a one in the spirit of meekness." Fourth, In a solemn manner; 1 Pet. iv. 11, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." Fifth, It should be exercised impartially; 1 Tim. v. 21, "Doing nothing by partiality."

Q. What are the offences which should subject the members of the church to discipline?

A. They are, First, *Errors in doctrine*; Rom. xvi. "Mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them." Second, *Immorality in practice*; 2 Chron. xxiii. 19, "He set the porters at the gates of the house of the Lord, that none which was unclean in any thing should enter in." Eph. v. 11,

"Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." (See also Rev. ii. 20.) Third, *Despising the authority, order, or ordinances of the church*; 1 Cor. xi. 2, "Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances as I delivered them to you." 2 Th. iii. 6, "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which ye received of us." Fourth, *Neglecting the public, domestic, or secret duties of religion*; Heb. x. 25, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is." Jer. x. 25, "Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name." Mat. vi. "But thou when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret."

Q. What are the censures of the church?

A. They are for edification and not destruction, and are, First, *Rebuke*; Tit. i. 13, "Rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith." Second, *Suspension* from the privileges of the church; 2 Th. iii. 14, 15, "If any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed; yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." Third, *Excommunication or excision from the church*; 1 Cor. v. 13, "Put away from among yourselves that wicked person." Gal. v. 12, "I would they were even cut off which trouble you."

Q. What advantage may be derived from the impartial and prudent exercise of church discipline?

A. The impartial and prudent exercise of church discipline is useful for vindicating the honour of Jesus Christ, maintaining the dignity of his ordinances, preserving the purity of the church, averting the judgments of God, and for the benefit of the offender himself, that by the administration of this ordinance of Christ, through grace, he may be humbled and recovered; 2 Cor. x. 8, "Our authority which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction."

Q. Would not the full recognition of the Headship of Christ over his church, and humble and implicit obedience to his authority in all things, greatly promote the unity, peace, establishment, and prosperity of the church ?

A. Yes ; Divisions, contentions, and schisms, usually arise in the church from a forgetfulness or rejection of the mediatorial authority of our Lord Jesus Christ in his church. Men, even ministers of religion, are apt to act upon the principle—"Our tongues are our own, who is Lord over us ?" In contrast with such—"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Q. Do not all Presbyterian denominations, at least, recognise the doctrine of Christ's exclusive Headship over the church ?

A. Yes ; In theory—but many reject it practically, as they introduce inventions of their own into the worship of God—or adulterate republican presbyterianism by admitting into their administration many of the elements of democratic independency. The Reformed Presbyterians, more rigidly than all others, maintain Christ's exclusive Headship over the church, tolerating no invasion of his prerogatives in this respect by rulers on the one hand, or by the people on the other.

SECTION III.

On the Supreme and Ultimate Authority of the Word of God in the Church.

Q. Are the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament the only rule of faith and manners ?

A. Yes ; Is. viii. 20. "To the law and to the testimony ; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

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Q. Are the Scriptures of the Old Testament *equally* with those of the New—a rule of faith and manners?

A. Yes.

Q. What is the first proof?

A. Christ exhorted the Jews to search the Old Testament Scriptures, declaring that they testified of him, John v. 39. "Search the Scriptures—they are they which testify of me."

Q. What is the second?

A. Christ commends the Old Testament, and exhorts his disciples to attend reverently to Moses and the prophets. Luke xvi. 29. "They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them." Also, ver. 31.

Q. What is the third proof?

A. The Apostle Peter directs the attention of Christians to them as a rule, to be observed attentively until the day star of glory shall arise. 2 Pet. i. 19. "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto we do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day star arise in your hearts."

Q. What is the fourth proof?

A. The New Testament Church is erected upon the foundation of the apostles and *prophets*. The doctrines taught by the apostles and prophets. Eph. ii. 20. "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."

Q. What is the fifth proof?

A. What was recorded in the Old Testament was so recorded for the edification and comfort of the church in all subsequent ages. Rom. xv. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning (*instruction*), that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope."

Q. What is the sixth proof?

A. The Old Testament writings were the means of enlightening Timothy in the way of salvation; and still contain the instructions requisite to furnish the man of God for "every good work." 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16. "From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All

Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness—that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

Q. What is the seventh proof?

A. The doctrines of the Old are substantially the same with those of the New Testament. Rom. xvi. 25, 26. “Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith.” See also Rom. i. 2, 3. Acts xxvi. 22, 23. The law is the same. Mat. xxii. 37—40.

Q. What is the eighth proof?

A. Without the Old Testament we could not fully understand the New: nor demonstrate that Jesus of Nazareth is the promised Messiah. Luke xxiv. 27, 44. “And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. And he said unto them, These are the words which I spoke unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms concerning me.” Also Acts x. 43; xvii. 11; xxvi. 22. Rom. iii. 21.

Q. Are the Scriptures to such an extent the rule of faith, that there is nothing left to the wisdom and discretion of the rulers and teachers of the church?

A. In matters essential to salvation, and what relates to the institutes of worship, government, and order, the Scriptures are an absolute rule; but in carrying out the principles and putting into operation the ordinances of religion, there are some things left to the wisdom and prudence of the officers of the church—but here there is no latitude allowed beyond what is the evident meaning and design of the Scriptures themselves in these matters. 1 Cor. xiv. 40. “Let all things be done decently and in order.”

Q. Is everything pertaining to faith and manners reveal-

ed in the Scriptures directly and distinctly in so many words ? or are many things to be learned from them *inferentially* or by legitimate consequence ?

A. The Scriptures are a full and complete revelation, and great principles are directly and plainly taught ; yet many things of importance both of faith and manners are learned by legitimate consequence, from other truths distinctly revealed, and from approved scriptural examples, and such truths are equally a part of the Word of God with those principles, which are taught by explicit revelation.

Q. Can you give an example of the *inferential* mode of reasoning, or by implication, from the Scripture ?

A. Yes. The highest example—that of Christ himself ; who proved the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead by a legitimate consequence, from a fact revealed in the Old Testament Scriptures. Mat. xxii. 31, 32. “ But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have you not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob ? *God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.*”

Q. Are not the Scriptures a complete and adequate rule of faith and manners ? or is there a deficiency to be supplied from a treasury of unwritten traditions, intrusted to the alleged successors of the apostles ?

A. The Scriptures are a complete and adequate rule of faith and manners, and the alleged deposition of traditions is an invention of “ The Man of Sin,” in support of his “ lying wonders,” and “ doctrines of devils.”

Q. How is this manifest ?

A. It is manifest, 1. In the fact that the Scriptures are profitable for all theoretic and practical purposes, both in teaching matters of faith and moulding the manners. 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

Q. Where is found the second evidence ?

A. In the fact that God has expressly forbidden any addition to, or diminution of his revealed will. Deut. iv. 2. “ Ye shall not add to the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it.” Gal. i. 8. “ But though we, or an angel from Heaven, preach any other

gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Rev. xxii. 18. "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall *add* unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book."

Q. What is the third proof?

A. In that the Word of God is *perfect*, containing all that is requisite for the conversion of the souls of men. Ps. xix. 7, 8. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes."

Q. What is the fourth evidence?

A. In that they were given that men by them might be put in possession of eternal life, hence they can be deficient in nothing essential to this end. John xx. 31. "But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." Also, 1 John v. 13; Rom. xvi.

Q. What is the fifth proof?

A. The Scriptures are given *as a rule of faith*, hence they must be complete and adequate; for a *rule*, to answer its end, will not admit of diminution or addition. Rom. xvi. 24. The doctrines of the Scriptures are said to be "made known to all nations for the obedience of faith."

Q. What is the sixth evidence?

A. *Traditions* are distinctly rejected. Mat. xv. 6, 9. "Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your *tradition*. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men." Also, Is. xxix. 13 14; Is. viii. 20.

Q. What is the seventh argument?

A. No satisfactory reason can be given why God should commit one part of His word to writing, and the other part equally essential to the salvation of the church, to be transmitted *vivâ voce*—because the traditions of men are uncertain at best, and liable to be greatly corrupted in the lapse of time.

Q. What is the eighth argument?

A. There is no rule given by which can be determined

the genuineness of traditions, and all that can be pleaded is that such is the testimony and the authority of the church, which is itself a matter of controversy.

Q. What is the ninth argument against tradition ?

A. The origin of traditions is dubious, and their authority uncertain, their meaning perplexed and ambiguous, and the impossibility of discovering a reason for them ; the only safe course is, to adhere rigidly to the Scriptures as the only rule of faith and manners.

Q. Is it true that the Roman apostasy makes tradition a chief part of the rule of faith ?

A. It is undoubtedly true. 1. Thus speak the writers of the Catechism of the Council of Trent, p. 17 : " All the doctrines of Christianity are derived from the word of God, *which includes scripture and tradition!*" 2. Thus speaks the Roman Catholic authorised version : Note on 2 Tim. iii. 16, " If we would have this *whole* rule of Christian faith and practice, we must not be content with those scriptures which Timothy *knew from his infancy*, that is with the Old Testament alone ; nor yet with the New Testament, without taking along with it the traditions of the apostles, and the interpretation of the church, to which the apostles delivered both the book *and the true meaning of it.*" 3. And the creed of Pope Pius makes Holy Mother church the only judge of the *true* sense of the scripture. " I also admit the sacred scriptures, *according to the sense* which the holy mother church has held, and does hold, to whom it belongs to *judge of the true sense and interpretation* of the holy scriptures ; nor will I ever take or interpret otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers."

Q. Does not the Roman church in this matter of *traditions* follow the example of the apostate Jews, (before and at the time of our Saviour,) who made void the law by their traditions ?

A. Yes. The Jews divided the law into two parts, *written* and *oral*. The latter, they taught, was received by Moses on Mount Sinai, and delivered by him to the care of Joshua, who deposited it with the 70 elders, by whom it was communicated to the prophets, and these intrusted it to the

greater synagogue, and from them it was transmitted to future generations, until it was collected and treasured up in the Talmud. In like manner the Roman Pontiffs have invented a twofold revelation, the one *written* and the other *unwritten*, the substance of the latter being, as they allege, those things which Christ and his apostles taught and transacted, but of which they have transmitted *no written record*, but which are now exhibited in a tangible form in the peculiar doctrines and ceremonies of the Roman church.

Q. Is not the rise of this system of tradition easily accounted for?

A. Yes. Those who had seen and heard the apostles naturally treasured up in their memories many of their observations and opinions, and brought them forward in support of their sentiments. Great attention would be paid to a man who could affirm, "I heard the apostle Paul, or Peter, say so and so." In process of time, the true words of the apostles, by passing through so many hands, would be corrupted and gradually lost; for it is utterly impossible to preserve to any lengthened period what is dependent upon oral tradition. Nevertheless the plea was found too advantageous to be suffered to die away. When new opinions were broached, and new rites invented, an alleged apostolical tradition supplied the place of scriptural authority; the decree of some council secured its reception, and all objection would soon be silenced by the dread of incurring the vengeance of "Holy Church." But there is one who has said, "Ye have made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition."

Q. Is not this whole matter of tradition among Jews and Papists an artifice of Satan to seduce men from the simplicity that is in Christ?

A. Yes: The "Traditions of the Elders" was an artifice of Satan to seduce the Jews from the practice of the *written law*, to extinguish this lamp given to Israel. In like manner the tradition of the Romans is an invention of the adversary to lead men astray from the truth as it is in Jesus, and to extinguish its light in the church; and when men "love darkness rather than light," they are given up, judicially, to

follow in the devious path of their own "invention : " Rom. i. 28, " And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind." 2 Th. ii. 10—12, " Because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved ; for this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should *believe a lie* ; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

Q. Is not Timothy exhorted 1 Tim. vi. 20, to keep with care certain principles and observances intrusted to him ; and the Thessalonians—to hold fast the *traditions* which they had been taught ? 2 Th. ii. 15.

A. Yes. Yet in the case of the deposit made with Timothy, the *form of sound words*, or the gifts and graces specified in 2 Tim. i. 13, 14, and in the case of the Thessalonians, the *traditions* referred to designate simply a two-fold mode, then employed by the apostle, of delivering the will of God, viz : *vivâ voce* and by writing, both exhibiting the same " form of sound words."

Q. Are not the Scriptures, (or God speaking in the scriptures,) the supreme judge in all matters of controversy, and in the interpretation of scripture ? or is this the prerogative of the church or Roman Pontiff ?

A. The former is the truth. The holy scriptures, (or God speaking in them,) is the supreme and infallible judge in religious controversies.

Q. What is the first proof ?

A. God directs us to this tribunal only. Is. viii. 20, " To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Also Luke xvi. 29.

Q. What is the second proof ?

A. The example of Christ and the apostles, who in all their controversies respecting matters of faith, refer to the scriptures as supreme authority, from whose decision there is no appeal. Mat. iv. Christ repelled the temptations of the devil by " It is written." Also xxii. 32, He proves the resurrection by an appeal to the scriptures. Jno. v. 39, He directs to them as bearing testimony to his missionship.

Also Luke xxiv. 44. And the apostle Paul. Acts xxvi. 22, "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophet Moses did say should come." Acts xvii. 11, The Bereans are commended for resorting to the scriptures as the supreme and infallible judge. The Pharisees and Sadducees condemned for their ignorance of them as the infallible judge. Mat. xxii., xv. 3, "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? Ye do err not knowing the scriptures."

Q. What is the third proof?

A. All other judges (church and Pontiffs) are liable to err, but the scriptures are infallible. 1 Jno. iv. 1, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." Is. viii. 20; Acts xvii. 11.

Q. What is the fourth proof?

A. As God is the author of the scriptures, he alone can be their infallible interpreter. Men are prone to err. James iv. 12, "There is one lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy; who art thou that judgest another?" See Mat. xxiii. 8—10.

Q. What is the fifth proof?

A. Neither the divine author of the Scriptures, nor any of the apostles, have anywhere designated this infallible judge; distinct from and independent of the Scriptures themselves.

Q. What is the sixth argument?

A. The Roman Pontiffs have not exercised their alleged infallibility in composing the controversies which rend the unity of the Papal Church—between the Thomists and Scotists—the Dominicans and Jesuits—and the Jesuits and Jansenists, &c., so to quell which would quickly redound to the honour of the Papal See.

Q. What is the seventh proof?

A. The church cannot be constituted the infallible judge; this would give her the power of deciding in her own favour, as the controversy respects her own power and infallibility.

Q. What is the eighth argument?

A. The same argument applies to the Pope, councils and

the fathers. It would be to make them judges in their own case. Besides, they are prone to err, and have erred, and flagrantly contradicted each other, council against council, Pope against Pope, father against father. Besides, not a few of the Popes have been heretics and profane and abandoned men, the pontiffs themselves being witnesses.

Q. Does not Christ constitute the church the Supreme Judge in controversies? Mat. xviii. 17. "*Tell it to the church.*"

A. By no means: because the injunction does not relate to matters of faith but to private offences, matters of scandal according to the Jewish discipline, who were accustomed to excommunicate the contumacious.

Q. Do not all Protestants hold the doctrine of the supreme and ultimate supremacy of the Word of God in religious controversy?

A. It is a Protestant doctrine, and, whilst it is held in theory, it is often violated in practice by the adoption of many principles and practices, for which there cannot be given—a *thus saith the Lord*—and which are met by the challenge—who hath required this at thy hand?



SECTION IV.

Civil Government the Moral Ordinance of God.

Q. What is civil government?

A. It is a divine institution for the government of mankind in their outward secular relations, in subserviency to their spiritual and eternal welfare. Rom. xiii. 3, 4. "*For rulers are not a terror to good works but to the evil. Wilt thou not be afraid of the power—do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same—for he is the minister of God to thee for good.*"

Q. Is not civil government a matter merely of human

expediency, originating in the necessities and convenience of the human race?

A. No. It grows out of the relation that naturally and necessarily exists between God and intellectual moral creatures, and the relations existing between those creatures towards one another.

Q. How is this manifest?

A. In the fact that the essence of all civil power resided in Adam, upon whom God, at his creation, conferred the authority necessary for the exercise of civil government over subordinate moral agents, and over all earthly property. Ps. viii. 5—8. "For thou hast made him (man) a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet; all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passes through the paths of the seas."

Q. Is civil magistracy founded in grace?

A. Civil magistracy is not founded in grace, but proceeds from God, not as the God of grace, but as the God of nature. It springs from him as the supreme moral governor of the universe, having its foundation, as we have stated in substance, in natural principles, which belong to the constitution of man, and not in the mediatorial system; at the same time (as we have proved in general, and as will be shown in the next section in relation to civil government in particular) God has placed the management of the whole affairs of the moral universe in the hands of his Son as *Mediator*.

Q. Is God, indeed, the supreme moral governor of the human race?

A. Yes. Although man has by apostasy thrown off his allegiance to the Creator, yet God is the Lord of man, and claims his subjection. Ps. xlvii. 7. "For God is the king of all the earth." Dan. iv. 34. "I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honoured Him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation." Ps. xxix. "The Lord sitteth king forever." Jer. x. 10. "The Lord is the true God,

he is the living God, and an everlasting king." Is. xliii. 15. "I am the Lord, your holy one, *the Creator of Israel your king.*"

Q. Is civil magistracy, as a legitimate authority, the ordinance of God?

A. Yes. Rom. xiii. 1, 2. "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers, for there is no power but of God; the powers that be are *ordained of God.* Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth *the ordinance of God.*"

Q. Does not this passage teach, that any government which has a being in Providence, however immoral its constitution and administration, is the ordinance of God?

A. By no means, but describes a government possessed of *moral attributes*, consistent with the nature of an ordinance of God.

Q. How do you make this evident?

A. It is evident, 1. From the radical meaning of the term *power*, ἐξουσία, derived from ἐξέρει, and signifying *rightful, lawful authority*, that which is *licensed* of God as agreeable to his own moral nature, from whom all our rights are derived. 2. From the legitimate meaning of the phrase *higher powers.* By comparing the text with Phil. ii. 3, we find the word *higher* translated *better*, and thus learn the power to which obedience is demanded, is a moral, or more excellent power, excelling in moral character. 3. The moral character of the power, as the ordinance of God, appears from the characteristics of the ruler. He is entitled the "*Minister of God,*" a representative of the Most High in his rule, a "*terror to evil doers,*" a "*praise to them that do well.*" It is as possessed of these attributes only that He can claim to be the ordinance of God. The reverse exhibits the ordinance of the devil. 4. God cannot, without *denying* himself, ordain (in the sense of the text, as an institution that meets his approbation,) an *immoral power.* 5. The submission required is for *conscience sake*; conscience can never be bound by an immoral obligation. "*It is under the law to Christ.*"

Q. Do not many professed Christians interpret the passage as demanding allegiance, for *conscience sake*, to "the powers that then were?"

A. Yes. A number do; because it is agreeable to their worldly interests, and is correspondent with their false *theory* of civil government. But, says an eminent *Seceder*, "In this text we have obviously a general statement laid down of what magistrates *ought to be*."

Q. Is there not abundant evidence in the passage itself, that the apostle speaks *generally* of the character and duties of magistracy, and not with particular reference to the tyrannical and wicked rulers, who, at that time, swayed the sceptre of Rome?

A. Yes. The apostle says, "Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil." Did Nero answer this character? The apostle says, "Do that which is good and thou shalt have praise of the same." Had the Christians this? They were the best subjects in the Roman Empire. But had they "praise" for being so? Why, the merest tyro in ecclesiastical history knows that in spite of all the loveliness of their conduct, and their distinguished benevolence towards their very enemies, on *the simple ground of their being Christians*, they were deprived of their civil rights, and persecuted even to imprisonment and death. Was this on the part of the magistrates to be "*the minister of God*" to them "*for good*?"

Q. Is not the phrase *ordained of God* susceptible of a *twofold* interpretation?

A. Yes. Things are ordained either by the order of his council or *providential will*, or they are ordained by the order of His word, or *preceptive will*.

Q. Which of these is *our rule*?

A. The former is God's rule, the latter is ours. Deut. xxix. 29. "*The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.*"

Q. According to which of these is civil government "*ordained of God*?"

A. According to the latter, civil government is "*the ordinance of God to men for good*." "*Ordained* signifies that the powers are of God ordained; that is, are circumscribed by certain rules of right and honesty, within which

rules, unless they contain themselves, *they degenerate from the ordinance of God :*" *Pareus*. "The powers here (Rom. xiii.) are said to be ordained of God, and verse 2d, to be the ordinance of God. The apostle speaks in the general, without application to the Roman or any other, but on the contrary, it is stood upon that he intends *his precept of a lawfully called magistrate :*" *Herle*. -

Q. Can you give any scriptural examples or illustrations of this interpretation ?

A. Yes. 1. According to God's *providential will* Israel rejected Samuel, whilst according to God's *preceptive will*, they should have continued Samuel's government and not sought a king. Hosea viii. 4, "They have set up kings, but not by me ; they have made princes and I knew it not." Did not *approve* of the deed. 2. By the former Athaliah usurped the government, by the latter she should have resigned the government, and yielded obedience to the posterity of Ahaziah. 3. Adonijah the usurper, though he had the pretence of hereditary right, and also possession by providence, was, according to God's preceptive will, forced to yield the government to Solomon. 1 Kings ii. 13, "Thou knowest," says Adonijah, "that the kingdom was mine, and that all Israel set their faces on me, that I should reign ; howbeit the kingdom is turned about, and is become my brother's ; for it was his from the Lord."

Q. Have tyrants and usurpers no other right to rule than the fact of their elevation in God's sovereign providence, who sends them as he does the tempest and plague, to chastise the guilty nations ?

A. They have no other claim, as the scriptures abundantly testify. Zech. xi. 6, "I will no more pity the inhabitants of the land, saith the Lord : but lo, I will deliver the men every one into his neighbour's hand, and into the hand of his king ; and they shall smite the land, and out of their hand I will not deliver them." Is. xlii., "Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the *robbers*, did not the Lord, he against whom we have sinned." Also Is. x. 5, 6 ; Job xii. 6. Hence called by the holy spirit by the names of the most unclean ravenous beasts. 1. Lions : Prov. xxviii. 15 ; 2 Tim. iv. 17 ; Zeph

iii. 3. 2. Bears : Prov. xxviii. 15 ; Dan. vii. 5—17. 3. Bulls : Ps. xxii. ; Amos iv. 1. 4. Dragons : Is. li. 9. 5. Serpents : Is. xxvii. 1. Yea, leopards, wolves, foxes, dogs, fishers and hunters, &c., &c. See Concordance.

Q. Is civil government, then, a *moral institution* as it is the ordinance of God ?

A. Yes : It is designed of God to be a representation of his own moral authority and rule.

Q. How do you make this appear ?

A. In addition to what is stated above, it is evident, in the first place, that civil government is instituted for the preservation of moral order among the human race. Rom. xiii. 3. According to this text, rulers are ordained to promote "good works," by the exhibition of *the rewards* which follow them, and the pains which ensue upon the practice of the contrary.

Q. What is the second evidence ?

A. The great object of this ordinance of God is to promote the glory of God, inasmuch as the magistrate in the administration of this ordinance is *the minister of God*, and as *his* minister must give a representation in his rule of God's moral nature ; and of course have in charge the *honour* of God, and should suffer no encroachment upon the glory of *His* throne. Every species of immorality is dishonouring to God, and cannot be countenanced by *his minister*. 2 Samuel xxiii. "The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spake to me, *He that ruleth over men MUST BE JUST, RULING IN THE FEAR OF THE LORD.*"

Q. How is it further evident ?

A. In that magistracy as instituted of God to promote the *happiness of mankind*, for the ruler is not only the minister of God, BUT THE MINISTER OF GOD TO MEN FOR GOOD. God has ordained him to be the instrument in diffusing enjoyment among his subjects, by securing their obedience to the moral law, decreed by eternal wisdom. "Whose ways are pleasantness, and all her paths peace."

Q. What is the fourth evidence that civil government is a moral ordinance ?

A. Inasmuch as it is ordained to preserve the *rights of God* among the human family. The rights of God are ex-

pressed in the *first table* of the Decalogue, as will appear more fully in another section of this work. "Render unto God the things that are God's."

Q. Wherein does it further appear?

A. Its morality appears, moreover, in this, that in order to render it effectual in securing glory to God, and happiness to man, the magistrate is armed with rewards and punishments, to be dispensed with justice according to the law of God, of which he is the minister. 1. Rewards: Rom. xiii. 3, "Do that *which is good*, and thou shalt have PRAISE of the same." The magistrate is the encourager of practical morality and piety. 2. Punishments: v. 4, "But if thou do that which is evil be afraid, for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." His power as a revenger appealing to the principle of fear, tends to prevent crime; and *he doth not bear the sword in vain*—he must actually take revenge on him that doeth evil. The object of this revenge is not merely the reformation of the criminal, nor the influence of terror to prevent crime. He is a *revenger* ordained as the *minister of God* to show the righteous indignation of Jehovah in punishing the guilty. In the capital punishment of the *murderer*, its object evidently cannot be his reformation; and whatever modern visionaries may dream, every Bible believer must admit that the judge of all the earth did once arm the civil power with the sword to take away life. He was, at least, then an *avenger*; but Paul says he is so *still*. The word *avenger* admits of no other interpretation. Could we say of a father who chastises his child that he is a *revenger*? Might we say of our redeemer, when he chastises those whom he loveth, that he is a *revenger*? The magistrate then is authorized to take vengeance, to execute wrath upon criminals; and thus in a righteous, but awful manner, illustrates the moral nature of civil government as it is the ordinance of God.

Q. Does not the principle upon which capital punishment is justified prove the morality of the ordinance of civil government?

A. Yes. Capital punishment is inflicted to *sustain the*

divine justice, which he exercises by the hand of the magistrate who acts as his minister; nothing is done here by the temerity of men, but everything by the authority of God who commands it; for we can find no valid objection to the infliction of public vengeance, unless the justice of God be restrained from the punishment of crimes, and who can lay restraints upon the Judge of all the earth, who will do right? Paul says of the magistrate, "That he beareth not the sword in vain, for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."

Q. Does not the dignity of the title with which God honours magistrates show the morality of the ordinance?

A. Yes. They are called "*Gods*." Ps. lxxxii. 1—6. This is not an appellation of trivial importance, for it implies that they have their command from God, that they are invested with his authority, and are altogether his representatives, and act as his vicegerents; and that their commission has been given to them by God, to serve him in that office, and, as Moses and Jehoshaphat said to the judges whom they appointed, to "*judge not for men but for the Lord*." If magistrates then are the vicegerents of God, it "behooves them to watch with all care, earnestness, and diligence, that in their administration they may exhibit to men an image, as it were, of the providence, care, goodness, benevolence, and justice of God," and in this manner beautifully illustrate the moral excellence of this ordinance of the Deity.

Q. Does not its moral nature further appear from the design of civil government as God's ordinance?

A. Yes. This design is thus forcibly stated by Calvin: "It is designed as long as we live in this world to cherish and support the external worship of God, to preserve the pure doctrine of religion, to defend the constitution of the Church, to regulate our lives in a manner requisite for the society of man, to form our manners to civil justice, to promote our concord with each other, and to establish general peace and tranquillity."

Q. Is not its moral nature finally evident, inasmuch as it is ordained to preserve and foster the rights and liberties of mankind?

A. "To this object," says Calvin, "the magistrates ought to apply their greatest diligence, that they suffer not the liberty, of which they are constituted guardians, to be in any respect diminished, much less to be violated. If they are inactive and unconcerned about this, *they are perfidious to their office and traitors to their country.*"

Q. To what kind of submission is this ordinance of God entitled?

A. It is entitled to *conscientious* submission. Rom. xiii. 5, "Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake:" from a love to God's ordinance, and respect for his authority, exercised by his vicegerent according to his law.

Q. It is not true, then, that every power that is set up by the *majority of the people*, and exists by the providence of God, is to be acknowledged and obeyed for conscience sake?

A. It is not true. For the will of the people is not the law in regard to the nature of magistracy, but the will of God; and as the will of the majority often sets up an *immoral* constitution of government, in violation of the *moral* character of magistracy, as it is the ordinance of God, hence a distinction must ever be kept up, *in respect of obligation*, between magistrates set up *by the preceptive will of God*, and such as exist *by his providential will only*; and the slavish dogma, "That all *providential* magistrates are also *preceptive*," is forever to be exploded. Hosea viii. 4, "*They have set up kings, but not by me. They have made princes, and I know it not.*"

Q. Which among the various forms of government approaches nearest the Scripture model, as to its outward constitution?

A. The *Republican* form—such as was possessed by the Israelites before they wickedly and rebelliously "*set up a king.*"

Q. Will this be the form in the millennium?

A. There are many arguments in favour of this opinion.
1. The gracious promise, Is. i. 26, "I will restore *thy judges as at the first*, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterwards thou shalt be the city of righteousness, the faith-

ful city." 2. From its adaptation to fulfil another prophecy—Jer. iii. 17, "At that time they shall call Jerusalem *the throne of the Lord*, and all nations shall be gathered to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem." This can easily be verified by *representation*. 3. The Scriptural principle, that the people have a voice in the election of their rulers: and though a monarchy may be elective, yet such a form will not so fully as a republic preserve the liberty of the subject. 4. The title *king*, in Scripture, does not signify a *king* in the vulgar sense, but any one possessed of the supreme power, and is applicable to the President of a Republic.

Q. Is not civil government, in one point of view, *the ordinance of man*?

A. Yes. It is in one view the ordinance of man, *a human creation*. 1 Pet. ii. 13, "Forms of magistracy, or the laws for the regulation of the commonwealth, are the ordinance of man." It is lawful for men to model their constitutions of government in such a manner as may appear most suitable to them, provided such constitutions, in their principles and distribution of power, be *in nothing* contrary to the divine law. Deut. xvii. 14–17, 20, "When thou art come unto the land, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me. Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee whom the Lord thy God shall choose. Thou shalt not set a stranger over thee. But he shall not multiply horses to himself: neither shall he multiply wives: neither silver and gold. That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment."

Q. Is this view of civil government, as being *the moral ordinance of God*, a *peculiar* doctrine of the Reformed Presbyterian Church?

A. It is. The prevailing sentiment is, that civil government is merely a matter of human expediency, to be regulated entirely by the will of the majority, and consequently, that every system which the majority sets up is to be sustained as a lawful power, even though in its principles and distribution of power it tramples under foot the rights of God, and robs the subject of civil liberty.

SECTION V.

On Christ's Headship over the Nations.

Q. What is meant by the term *nations*?

A. Civil associations—men existing in civil or political institutions; including the office bearers, by whom the laws are administered, as well as the people at large, for whose good they are appointed to govern.

Q. What is meant by *Headship* in the present application of the term?

A. A headship of *authority* and *moral supremacy*, not a headship of providential rule or physical control.

Q. Are we to believe that the Lord Jesus Christ exercises a moral supremacy over the civil or political associations of men, simply as such?

A. Yes. Directly in their secular or political character, he claims dominion over them, and demands their public recognition of his authority.

Q. Is Jesus Christ possessed of peculiar moral fitness to exercise dominion over the nations?

A. Yes. He is *the Son of God* and *the Son of Man*—God manifest in the flesh—and as such is qualified to exercise this authority. Is. ix. 6, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

Q. In what character does he exercise dominion over the nations in their political relations?

A. In his Mediatorial character, in which alone, as has been demonstrated, he is the subject of a gift.

Q. Is this authority conferred *as a gift* upon Him?

A. Yes. It is the gift of the Father. Christ himself says, "All power is delivered unto me of my Father." Luke x. 22. And the Father says, "I will make him my *first born* **HIGHER** than the kings of any land." Ps. lxxxix. 27.

Q. Is it necessary that Christ should possess this mediatorial dominion over the nations?

A. Yes. It is necessary that he should have power over the nations, that he might commission his ministers to go within their limits, and preach the everlasting gospel (Mat. xxviii. 18, 19). Unless his authority were paramount to existing governments, it would have been a usurpation inconsistent with divine perfection to have sent his ambassadors to negotiate with the inhabitants of the earth.

Q. For what other reason should Christ have power over the nations?

A. To make the Gospel efficient. The mediatory power to make his people willing could not reach into any nation over which his authority did not extend. The kings of the earth have sufficient forces to banish from their dominions the heralds of the cross; and there is enmity in the hearts of men sufficient to reject the Gospel of God, and to render its preaching altogether abortive, unless the mediatory efficiency accompany the ambassadors of Christ, and the message which they bring.

Q. What other reason makes it necessary?

A. It is necessary that he should rule the nations as the reward of his sufferings. Phil. ii. 8, 9, "Wherefore" (because he suffered) "God hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name," &c. Christ in his humiliation was subject to rulers. Is. xlix. 7. He sat before them to be tried and judged, and although perfectly innocent, the Lord of life condescended to suffer the sentence of death, passed by an earthly ruler, to be executed upon himself. In his exalted state he must be ruler in the kingdoms of men; have a right to demand *their* submission to *his* authority, and take such measures as *will* secure the fulfilment of all his purposes respecting them.

Q. Why is it further necessary?

A. It is necessary that Immanuel should have power over the nations and their respective governments, as the guardian of his Church in the midst of her enemies, and as the terror of all those who are his foes; otherwise his children might be in a situation in which he could not regulate them, and

his enemies might act with impunity against him. Ps. cx. 1—3, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."

Q. Are not the promises of the Father to the Son a forcible testimony to the truth of the doctrine of his mediatorial dominion over the nations?

A. Yes. The Father has given a number of promises to this effect, and they are conclusive proof of his dominion over the nations. 1. Ps. lxxxix. 19, 26, 27, "Then thou spakest in vision to my Holy one, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people. He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my Salvation. Also, I will make him my first born higher than the kings of the earth." 2. Ps. ii. 8, "Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen (nations) for thine inheritance, the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession,"—upon which grant the injunction of submission is issued to the rulers and judges—vs. 10—12, "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. *Kiss the Son*, lest he be angry." 3. Is. liii. 12, "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death."

Q. Does not the prophet Daniel proclaim the fulfilment of the promise of the Father, in his exhibition of the actual investiture of the Lord Jesus Christ with this royal dominion over the nations?

A. Yes. Daniel in the seventh chapter, verses 13 and 14 of his prophecy exhibits this sublime event. "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him." In the context we have an array of the fierce nations of the earth, as enemies of the

church, frowning upon her members. The Chaldean, Medo-Persian, Grecian, and Roman empires. The latter, especially under its antichristian form. The ancient of days, Jehovah, occupies the throne. The angels conveying into his presence the Son of Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, in our nature, and upon him, by the authority of Jehovah, the Father, dominion is conferred, which extends over all nations.

Q. Was not a similar representation of this sublime scene made to John the apostle while in his banishment to Patmos?

A. Yes. In Rev. v. 1, 2, 5, 7. 1. This *sealed book* contains the mind or purposes of Jehovah, or the outline of providential events, concerning the church and the nations of the earth, from the days of John in Patmos until the end of time. 2. The opening of the seals not only reveals the events recorded in the volume, but with a view also to their actual accomplishment. This is obvious from the next chapter in which the six seals are broken, by which judgments Pagan Rome is utterly subverted. 3. The placing of the book in the hands of the Lamb to loose its seals, gave the Lamb full power over the book and all its contents, not only as matters to be revealed, but as events to be accomplished. 4. The Lamb deserved this distinction. "He *prevailed*, conquered, to open the book and loose the seven seals thereof." By the merit of his blood as "the Lamb slain," he obtained the right to administer the kingdom of providence, in order to apply his redemption to its objects. The same idea is taught in Phil. ii. 8, 9. The conclusion is obvious. The Lamb, the Mediator, has a Lordship over the nations of the earth, as he is the administrator of the kingdom of providence.

Q. Is not the Headship of Christ over the nations implied in the universality of the mediatorial supremacy?

A. Yes. 1. The declarations, Mat. xxviii. 18; Col. ii. 10; 1 Peter iii. 22. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Christ—which is the head of all principality and power. Who is on the right hand of God. Angels, and authorities, and powers being made subject unto him,"—imply very distinctly his dominion over the nations. 2. The idea of universality is often expressed not merely by a gen.

eral term, but by the enumeration of particulars, and by the exclusion of all exceptions. Eph. i. 21; Heb. ii. 8; 1 Cor. xv. 27. "And set him at his own right hand—far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named not only *in this world*, but also in that which is to come."—"For in that he put all things in subjection under him, *he left nothing that is not put under him.*" When he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that "He is excepted which did put all things under him." It must be passing strange if, after these statements, the nations are excepted from the mediatorial rule.

Q. Do not the titles given to Christ clearly demonstrate his headship over the nations?

A. Yes. They are most satisfactory and conclusive, because it cannot be conceived that the Holy Ghost would dishonour the Mediator with a series of unmeaning titles. He is "the spirit of truth," and does not bear false witness.

Q. What is the first title?

A. He is entitled, Ps. lxxxix. 27, the *FIRST BORN—higher than the kings of the earth.* To the first born belonged the dominion. It is not as the Son of God essentially considered, but as *Mediator*, that he is here described as "*made*" higher than the kings of the earth. Besides the words might have been rendered *Most High, or supreme over the kings of the earth.* מְלִיכִים, is often used to express the supremacy of God, and is translated "*Most High.*" Dan. iv. 32—34. The dominion of Messiah over civil rulers on the one hand, and the subjection of such to him on the other, are thus clearly implied in this title.

Q. Which is the second title?

A. In Ps. xxii. 28, he is designated "*Governor among the nations.*" This psalm unquestionably refers to Christ as Mediator. The preceding verse foretells the extension of the church of Christ. "All kindreds of the nations shall worship before him." And as what follows is introduced as accounting for the universal spread of the kingdom of Messiah, it must be considered as referring to the same illustrious personage. "For the kingdom is the Lord's, and he is the Governor among the nations." This eminent title, conse-

quently, must recognise the mediatorial dominion over the nations.

Q. Which is the *third* title?

A. In the prophecy of Jeremiah there occurs the following passage: "Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O Lord; thou art great, and thy name is great in might. Who would not fear thee, O KING OF NATIONS!" Jer. x. 4—7. *Nations* here means organized civil bodies. *King* is title of office, expressive of supreme rule, or government. He to whom the title belongs is the true and living God, the God of Israel, as distinguished from heathen idols. But as the God of Israel is God in Christ, the title may be regarded as equally applicable to the Redeemer.

Q. Which is the *fourth*?

A. The writer of the Apocalypse proclaims *Jesus Christ* "THE PRINCE OF THE KINGS OF THE EARTH." Rev. i. 5. There can be no room to doubt for a moment, that it is Christ as Mediator who is here spoken of as having the supremacy over civil rulers, supreme and subordinate—all in *civil authority*, whether in the legislative, judiciary, or executive branches of Government. Of such Jesus Christ is PRINCE, ~~ἡγεμὼν~~, ruler, Lord, chief, the first in power, authority, and dominion.

Q. Which is the *fifth* title?

A. The most splendid title of all remains to be noticed. It occurs twice in the Revelation of John xvii. 14; xix. 16. "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is LORD OF LORDS AND KING OF KINGS."—"His name is called the Word of God—and he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written—KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." This title teaches that the Lord Jesus Christ has authority over kings *as kings*. "King of kings" clearly implies a sovereignty over kings in their regal character, and not merely as private members of his kingdom. A parallel case illustrates this. Esth. vii. 12. "Artaxerxes king of kings." The empire of the Persian monarch was comprised of 127 provinces or minor kingdoms. Now, was Artaxerxes king of all the inferior kings of his empire *as men* only, and as ordinary subjects? or was he their

sovereign in their *royal character* as they occupied their regal thrones? In the latter certainly. Would one of those petty kings of his empire dared to have said, "I am your subject *as a man*, but as a king on my throne I am your equal, and independent of your authority." The Persian "King of kings" would have soon crushed him *as a rebel*. The title therefore, in its specific import, teaches that Christ is the sovereign of kings in their regal official character and station. The title further teaches, that kings and the nations which they govern bear the same political relation to Christ, that the nations bear to their immediate kings. That is, kings and their subjects are the subjects of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and should as such be obedient to his authority.

Q. Does not Rev. iii. 7, "He that hath the key of David," teach Christ's civil dominion over the nations?

A. Yes. "The key of David" is *the symbol of civil rule*. This is illustrated by the case of Eliakim, Is. xxii. 20—22, of whom it is said, "The key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder;" and, according to which promise, he was called to the government of Judah and Jerusalem. It was *civil power* that Eliakim exercised as *treasurer* to Hezekiah. He succeeded to the treasurer's robe and key of office. "The key is an emblem of *trust*; and the expression alludes to the fashion of keys, in old times, which were long and made like a hook, and then laid upon the shoulder, and worn there as a badge of office."—*Lowth*. "The key of the house of David," is, therefore, *the badge of civil rule*, and, as applied to Christ, presents him as the son of David according to the flesh, and as succeeding to David's throne, and exercising dominion *as the ruler of the nations*. David was not the *head of the church*, but of the state; although *as the minister of God*, he exercised a *guardian* but not a sovereign care over the church. He was the type of Christ, as the *governor* of the nations, making all things contribute to the good of the church—or of true religion.

Q. Was not human society, upon the apostasy of the first Adam, (whom we have seen the first example of civil sovereignty) subjected to another and more distinguished head—**THE SECOND ADAM, THE LORD FROM HEAVEN**, in order that

the race, under him, might be brought back to Jehovah, from whom they had revolted ?

A. Yes. Paul, in the second chapter of Hebrews, quotes the 8th Psalm, which we have adduced as proof of the original dominion of the *first Adam*, and applies it to Christ the *second Adam*—the Lord from Heaven thereby teaching, that the crown of dominion which fell from the head of rebel Adam, has been placed upon the brow of Jesus, constituting him "*king of the whole earth.*" "But now we see not yet all things put under him, but we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, *crowned with glory and honour.*"

Q. Do not "the four living creatures," the apocalyptic symbols of the faithful ministry, and the "four and twenty elders," symbols of the united congregations of the Old and New Testament saints, acknowledge Christ's dominion over the nations ?

A. Yes. They celebrate his praise with joy. Rev. v. 8, 9. "And when he (Christ) had taken the book, the four living creatures, and four and twenty elders *fell down before the Lamb*—and they sang a new song, saying, *thou art worthy to take the book and open the seals thereof.*"

Q. Do not the innumerable company of angels surrounding the throne of the Lamb, concur with the ministry and church in these praises of the Lamb as governor among the nations ?

A. Yes. They celebrate his exaltation to the throne of the kingdom of Providence, and the government of the nations, with notes of the highest praise. Rev. v. 11. "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne—and their number was ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, saying, with a loud voice, *worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*"

Q. Does not the united acclamation of all other creatures testify their acknowledgment of his exaltation to the dignity of king of kings, and ruler of the heavens and the earth ?

A. Yes. They concur with rapture in the song of the

Angels and of the Redeemed. Rev. v. 13. "And every creature which is in Heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, *blessing and honour, and glory and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, AND UNTO THE LAMB FOREVER AND EVER.*"

Q. Is not this doctrine of the moral supremacy of the Lord Jesus Christ, as mediator, the great matter of controversy with the nations; the *prominent* principle of the Apocalypse; and peculiar to the Reformed Presbyterian Church?

A. Yes. The whole book of the Revelation relates to Christ, as mediator; and his *headship over the nations* is its most prominent truth. In the preface to the splendid visions of the book, Christ proclaims himself "PRINCE OF THE KINGS OF THE EARTH; and *in the last conflict* with the nations his enemies, amidst the fury of the final battle, he exhibits conspicuously "on his vesture and on his thigh," the splendid title, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS;" intimating clearly, that the defence of his claims, *as ruler of the nations*, is the great object of his warfare, and its acknowledgment the result of the victory which he obtains over his adversaries; and is, consequently, the last article in the testimony of the WITNESSES, *and peculiar to them*, and remaining to be sealed by their precious blood. Rev. xvii. "THE LAMB SHALL OVERCOME THEM (*the kingdoms of this world*), FOR HE IS LORD OF LORDS, AND KING OF KINGS—AND THEY THAT ARE WITH HIM ARE CALLED, AND CHOSEN, AND FAITHFUL."

SECTION VI.

On the Subjection of the Nations to God and to Christ.

Q. Does not the mediatorial dominion of Jesus Christ over the nations, exclude Jehovah from the throne?

A. By no means. 1. The economical relation illustrated

in the first section, clearly shows that Christ reigns by the mutual consent of the persons of the Godhead, being designated to the office by an act of the Divine will, and constituted Lord of all by the appointment of the Father; and, consequently, the Father *rules by him*, as his delegate. 2. The mediatory person and the second person of the Trinity, is but one and the same person, and Jehovah reigns in the person of the Son. 3. The objection proves too much; for it may as well be argued that a work ascribed to the Son necessarily excludes the agency of the Father and the Holy Spirit; and consequently, that the first and third persons had nothing to do with creation (which is ascribed to the Son), as affirm, that the ascription of an act to the Messiah excludes the agency of Jehovah. 4. Christ himself, in order to anticipate every objection of this kind, taught, while on earth, that his agency did not exclude the constancy of his Father's working; nor did the Father's agency, about the very same object, imply the Son's idleness. Jno. v. 17, "*My Father worketh hitherto and I work.*"

Q. Upon the principle of the *economical arrangement* or covenant between the persons in the Godhead, is the acknowledgment of the mediatorial authority of the Son substantially an acknowledgment of that of the other persons in the Trinity, and so of the dominion of Jehovah?

A. Yes; this is manifest, 1. Upon the principle laid down by the inspired Apostle, 1 Jno. ii. 23, "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father; [but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also." If he that acknowledgeth that "Jesus is the Christ," acknowledgeth the Father: equally so, he that acknowledgeth the mediatorial dominion of the Son, acknowledgeth therein the dominion of Jehovah. 2. The subjection of Israel to the government of God, was to him in the mediatorial person and character; for the relation in which he stood to them was a gracious covenant relation—a relation which God absolutely considered cannot sustain to any of the guilty race of Adam, either individually or nationally. "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord."

Q. Is it the duty of nations to render national subjection

to Jehovah, by their national recognition of Christ's mediatorial dominion over them, as "Prince of the kings of the earth?"

A. Yes.

Q. Which is the *first* proof of this?

A. The example of the commonwealth of Israel. As it has just been stated, it was the true God in the person of the Messiah, whom they acknowledged, as is plain—1. From his frequent appearances *in human form* to the patriarchs, Abraham, &c., the progenitors of the nation in covenant with him. 2. Christ was the angel sent before them to guide them from the bondage of Egypt, as the uncreated "angel of the covenant" who had the power to "pardon transgression," and "in whom" was the name "Jehovah." Exod. xxiii. 20. 3. From the vision which the elders enjoyed upon Mount Sinai, Exod. xxiv. 10, "And they saw the God of Israel; and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of sapphire-stone, as it were the body of heaven in his brightness;" evidently a vision of the Mediator. 4. In the appearance of an armed warrior he led them to victory over the Canaanites. Joshua v. 13. 5. It was *by covenant* they submitted to him at Sinai, "All that the Lord hath said will we do," which is not made with God in his essential character. 6. It was Christ whom they tempted in the wilderness. 1. Cor. x. 9, "Neither let us *tempt Christ*, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents." 7. Now, as the Israelites had a civil government, a national territory and property, and civil relations and rights, all these were completely subjected to the government of the Son of God, in his character of Mediator.

Q. Is there any intimation in the whole volume of inspiration, that other nations should not copy after the example set them in Judea; or that the honors claimed by the Messiah and conceded to him, were peculiar to that territory, and that he doth not demand them in other quarters of the world?

A. There is no such intimation in the Scriptures, but their uniform teachings in this matter enforce the example; and all the passages already quoted in proof of his mediatorial do-

minion over the nations, imply the obligation of nations to acknowledge his authority by a formal national act of recognition.

Q. Were not the Jews under a *peculiar Theocracy*, and so, not an example in this respect?

A. We hold, with a modern writer, "that the Jews were, indeed, under a Theocracy; but so also are all baptized nations. They are as truly taught of God, and as firmly bound to serve him, as the Jews ever were. They have, at least, as great advantages for knowing his will, and for doing it, as the Jews ever had; and it is difficult even to imagine how Christianity could ever relax the obedience of nations, or remove farther away from them the eye and the hand of Providence, which so intimately superintended the affairs of the Jews. 'Is he the God of the Jews only, and not of the Gentiles? Yea, of the Gentiles also,' who have a greater abundance of his oracles and law, than the Jews, before the coming of Christ, ever enjoyed."

Q. But was there not something in the manner in which that government was managed, altogether unlike that which obtains in other nations?

A. The same author solves this query. "Besides, it must not be overlooked, that God's government of the Jewish nation was carried on by the usual and visible instrumentality of *human government*. All the orders of men were employed, as agents, in his government of the people, which have ever been employed in any civilized and well ordered state. There was among them a written statute-book of primary essential law. There were successions of supreme rulers. There were judges, priests, ministers of religion, prophets, teachers of the law, schools, places of worship, &c. God never was their king in the sense of appearing in person, sitting on a throne in the midst of them, and dispensing with the usual agents and instruments. So far was this from being the case, that all the while God was their king, the people had *complete forms* of government, in which they took part, and which they could and did change at their pleasure. At one time they were ruled by a military chief, as Joshua; at another, by judges; at another, by a pontificate, as

Samuel; again, by an elective monarchy, as under Saul; and afterwards, by a hereditary monarchy, from David down to the time of the captivity in Babylon, &c. But whatever form the supreme magistracy assumed, the law by which it was to be guided was always the same."

Q. Had not these rulers extraordinary helps of such sort, and to such an extent, as to render the whole administration God's and not man's?

A. "It may be objected, that the Jews had the Shechinah, the oracle, prophets, &c., to consult, which no other nation ever had, or can again expect. It is answered that Christian nations have the real Shechinah—the true Urim and Thummim—the whole Word of God or of Christ, speaking most clearly, whenever he is consulted, on every matter which it really concerns an individual or a nation to know. They have in *one book*, of easiest access, all the oracles, all the writings of their prophets, all the divine hymns, and all the wisdom of God, which the Jews ever had. They have them as near at hand, spoken in as plain a language, accompanied with as much solemn and impressive grandeur, verified by as many instances of performance, and assigning as clearly the reasons for the providential acts of the same God. In fine, what did the Jews of old know of God and of his government, that we, under the full light of the Gospel, have not the means of knowing greatly better than they?"

Q. Can you give any direct proof from Scripture of the duty of nations to submit to the Lord Jesus Christ as their king?

A. Yes, abundant. I adduce as the *first* proof Dan. vii. 13, 14, "And there was given him (the Son of man) dominion, glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should *serve* him." What stronger proof can be demanded of national subjection to Christ? *All nations* are his subjects, and if the subject is bound to submit to his lawful king, all nations are bound to acknowledge Christ as their king, and to "*serve*" and obey him. They must recognise his authority and engage themselves in his service.

Q. Is there any *command* issued to the constituted authorities of the nations to render this homage?

A. Yes. Ps. ii. 10—12, “Be wise now therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. *Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son* lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.” 1. The *kiss* here demanded is expressive of civil homage. 1 Sam. x. 1, “And Samuel kissed Saul and said, *Is it not because the Lord hath anointed thee to be Captain over his inheritance?*” 2. It is addressed to the constituted authorities of the nations—*kings* and *judges*—the whole national organization. 3. It is plain, therefore, that from the king, or *chief ruler*, down through all the departments of state, together with the whole national assemblage, there is to be an acknowledgment of the Son of God upon his mediatorial throne. He is to be *kissed* in token of subjection, and *served as the Lord of all*.

Q. Is there any *promise* that this homage shall be rendered the Lord Jesus Christ?

A. Yes; there is a direct promise to this effect. Ps. lxxii. 8—11, “He shall have dominion from sea to sea—*yea, all kings shall bow down before him, all nations shall serve him.*” None worthy of respect will dispute the application of this Psalm to Christ. Although David refers to Solomon in this Psalm, yet he has in view a greater than Solomon. When David intended to build a house unto the Lord, and was forbidden, God promised that a Son should be born to him who should build the house, and gave him the promise, 1 Chr. xxii. 10, “I will be his father,” which Paul applies to Christ, Heb. i. 6. With such authority we are in no danger of misinterpretation, in applying the text to the subjection of all kings and of all nations to the dominion of Messiah, and the duty *nationally* to acknowledge his authority over them. **ALL KINGS SHALL BOW DOWN BEFORE HIM, ALL NATIONS SHALL SERVE HIM.**

Q. Are not the nations threatened with destruction if they do not render this national homage?

A. Yes. Ps. ix. 17, “The wicked shall be turned into hell, *and all the nations that forget God.*” Men are contemplated in this passage individually, and in their associ-

ated capacity, as moral persons compacted by civil bonds, or organized national bodies; God is to be *remembered* by man both in his individual and national capacity. To remember God is plainly to recognise his being and authority, and to be obedient to his will. To forget God is not to recognise his being and authority, and to refuse obedience to his will. Every wicked individual that does so shall be literally *turned into hell*. Every *nation* that does so shall meet the like most terrible retribution—shall be cut off from the living, and covered in the grave.

Q. Is not Ps. ii. 12, “Kiss the Son lest he be angry, and *ye perish* from the way when his wrath is kindled but a little,” another fearful threatening?

A. Yes. This passage, we have seen, is addressed to kings and judges, as they wear their crowns, and are invested with the ermine. If they refuse the *kiss of civil homage* (as it means) they provoke the wrath of the Lamb, and perish under his *iron rod*. Hence the Roman Emperors and chief officers of state are represented as calling in terror to the rocks and mountains, “fall on us and hide us from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great day of his wrath is come.” Rev. vi. 16.

Q. Can you produce any other threatening?

A. Yes. It is also declared in the 110th Psalm, “The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.” They “withstand” him, they resist his authority, they refuse submission, therefore “he fills the places with dead bodies, and wounds the head over many countries.”

Q. Is there a passage which strengthens this argument?

A. Yes. This argument is greatly strengthened by a portion of the 76th Psalm, v. 11, 12, “Vow and pray unto the Lord your God: let all that be round about him bring presents unto him that ought to be feared. He shall cut off the spirit of princes: he is terrible to the kings of the earth.” According to HENRY, *vowing*, here, respects taking an oath of allegiance to the King of kings. Bind your souls with a vow to him, as subjects to their sovereign. He will be

feared by those who think it their sole prerogative to be feared. *He shall cut off the spirit of princes*; he shall slip it off as easily as we slip off a flower from the stock or a bunch of grapes from the vine, for he is terrible to the kings of the earth, and sooner or later, if they be not so wise as to submit themselves to him, he will force them to call in vain to the rocks and mountains, "Fall on us, and hide us from the wrath of the Lamb."

Q. Is not Christ's sentence for the rejection of his authority awful?

A. Yes. Let nations tremble at the terrible sentence of Jesus Christ. Luke xix. 27, "But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, BRING HITHER AND SLAY THEM BEFORE ME."

Q. Does not the apocalyptic declaration—Rev. xi. 15, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ,"—import this natural subjection to Christ?

A. Yes. It teaches that existing kingdoms, so far from being God's ordinance, are merely *worldly* kingdoms. They have their origin and all their regulations from men, corrupt men, either rulers or mass of the people, as they are influenced by the devil, the god of this world. They are not such governments as meet the approbation of the Lord and his Christ, whose kingdom we have seen is not of this world, has not its origin from man, but from heaven. But throwing off their allegiance to the devil, and subjecting themselves to Christ, and taking the law at his mouth, and ruling for his glory and the good of the church, and felicity of man, they cast off their *worldly* character, and are clothed with the beauty and glory of the kingdom of heaven. Now they are the devil's kingdoms, and "at war with the Lamb," but by a national acknowledgment of the mediatorial authority of Christ, they become happily transformed into his millennial kingdoms.

Q. Is not the duty of national subjection to Messiah as king, taught in Dan. vii. 18 and 27, "The Saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever—and the kingdom and dominion, and greatness of the

kingdom, under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High?"

A. Yes, very distinctly. 1. They imply that a great revolution takes place in the kingdoms of the world, (such as described in the preceding answer,) in the subversion of those beastly powers exhibited in this chapter, upon which all dominions, all national associations, by a voluntary subjection, *serve and obey him*. What shall in future be, with divine approbation, *ought now to be*—all nations should now *serve and obey the Mediatorial King*.

Q. Is not Rev. xxi. 24—26—"And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it—and they shall all bring the glory and honour of the nations into it."—a further proof of the duty of national subjection to the Lord Jesus Christ, as prince of the kings of the earth?

A. Yes. "This passage must be understood as describing a course of preparation that takes place on earth, as it is only in this world that national and official distinctions exist. Now, if nations, as such, are to walk in the light of the New Jerusalem; that is to say, are to derive distinguished honour and privileges from the church of Christ, they must fairly be regarded as *under the dominion of the church's head*! And, if kings, as such, are to bring their glory into it; that is to say, are to subordinate their authority, power, revenues, and whole administration to the interests of Christ's kingdom, we are not only taught that the kings themselves are under the dominion of the Messiah—but in this account of their duty and privilege, we have a beautiful illustration of national subjection to his authority."

Q. Do not the titles given to Christ demonstrate the duty of national subjection to the authority of the Messiah?

A. They amount to a perfect demonstration. The titles, for example—"king of kings"—"prince of the kings of the earth"—"governor among the nations," &c., show clearly that kings and nations are the subjects of Christ; and, as subjects, owe subjection to the lawful authority over them; so, in like manner—nations owe national subjection to the Lord Jesus Christ—who, by the act of the Father, is consti-

tuted their Mediatorial King. The titles are significant of his authority over the nations, and of their reciprocal allegiance to him as their lawful governor.

Q. Does not this claim of Christ—the national acknowledgment of his authority—enter as a chief principle, among the causes of the present conflict between the Lord Jesus Christ, and the nations?

A. Yes. The Lord Jesus Christ proclaims His authority as governor of the nations, and the duty of submission to himself on their part; *his witnesses* testify to the truth, and urge a national acknowledgment of his authority as king of kings. The nations refuse, saying, "We will not have this man to reign over us," they revolt more and more, goaded on in their mad career by the Dragon, and his subordinates, until the day of vengeance cometh, when the wrath of the Lamb being kindled, burneth like an oven, consuming the rebellious hosts. Is. xlv. 23. "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness and shall not return; that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." Applied to Christ, Rev. xiv. 10, 11, and Phil. ii. 9—11; Zeph. iii. 8, 9. "Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nations that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured by the fire of my jealousy—for then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."

Q. Is not this claim of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the homage of the nations in their national character, a reasonable claim?

A. It is a most reasonable claim—for it seems a self-evident principle, that, *as civil government is the ordinance of God*, his authority should be recognised. That, as the Lamb is the *king of kings*, and has the power of civil rule delegated to him, that he should be acknowledged in the exercise of his delegated authority as the vicegerent of Jehovah.

Q. Does not the great majority of professed Christians revolt against this claim of the Messiah—as urged upon

them as a *peculiar principle* of the Reformed Presbyterian Church—and the grand doctrine of their testimony?

A. Yes. They cherish a squeamish sentimentality in relation to civil matters. They shudder, with the infidel, at the thought of religion having anything to do with politics—that the name of Christ should, in any view, be associated with the kingdoms of this world. Yet they will plead his imagined sanction for *their own connexion* with these kingdoms, and the support which they give to their immoralities and grinding oppression. *The very ministers*, who shrink with a superstitious sensitiveness from the writings of those noble witnesses, who have weighed immoral governments in the balances of the sanctuary, and have pronounced them wanting—*will be found at the polls* voting for the elevation of the “man stealer!” But, to plead the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ as *king of kings*, and to urge the application of his law to civil society—*they absolutely refuse*—whilst they strenuously defend *existing civil establishments*, and, in so doing, *betray the cause of their Lord and Master*.

SECTION VII.

On the Word, or Revealed Will of God, the Supreme Law in the State.

Q. Upon the supposition that God had a right, from all eternity, to resolve upon creating a world (which cannot be doubted), had he not an equal right to impose such laws upon it as his own glory and its welfare required?

A. Yes. The creator has a natural inalienable right to impose such laws upon the work of his hands as may, in his wisdom, seem good; and this proposition is so self-evident that it requires no argument to prove it.

Q. Are not mankind, through their ignorance, and the blindness of their minds, and the depravity of their hearts,

greatly lost to the sense of the theory of moral duty, and the source of rational obedience?

A. Yes. Especially in the reasonings of self-styled philosophers upon the institution of civil government, they seem to forget that there is a God, who claims to be the Governor among the nations.

Q. However confused the ideas of mankind may be upon this subject, in point of application to the important interests of morality, does it not appear among their most common notions, that there both is, and ought to be, such a thing as *law*?

A. Yes. We know of no nations, however savage, that subsist in society, without some sort of laws or regulations by which their mutual intercourse is limited and directed.

Q. Is not *the idea of law* most likely to be found in the original constitution of rational nature? And is it not here we ought to fix as its most probable locality, the first principle of that social intercourse which so generally draws the different tribes of the human race into their distinct national associations, which we see spread over the whole earth?

A. Yes. The sense of law, or *right and wrong*, seems to have been impressed upon the original constitution of man's moral nature; otherwise we could not easily conceive how beings of such a texture, and possessing such a versatility of character, as we find obtains in our own common family, could be brought so easily and universally to deliver themselves up to the restraints of civil authority, without some such principle implanted originally in their hearts.

Q. Do not all laws and regulations among men require *some rule* by which they ought to be moulded?

A. Yes. All the laws that ever were, or can be made, are mere "ropes of sand," unless they possess a certain portion of His authority, who is our *Law-giver* and *King*; and until men resort to this way of making laws, these fabrics of human order will not long brave the mouldering teeth of time.

Q. Had a little more attention been paid to this principle, would the history of ancient and modern times have worn such a face of blood as it does at this day?

A. No. We should not have seen the miserable race of man outraged without end and without measure, mingling their tears with the dust, under the iron heel of civil oppressors, while there is few or none to comfort the oppressed.

Q. Is it not highly probable God has given up, in just judgment, this earth, to groan under the complicated miseries arising from tyranny and oppression, bloodshed and famine, on account of the contempt shown to his *legislative character*?

A. There can be little doubt of the truth of this statement: nor can we have any reason to believe that the disease will be removed until its causes cease.

Q. What will be the consequences to the nations of the earth of the practical restoration of this right to God, as the Supreme Lawgiver?

A. It will serve as an immovable mound to keep off the encroachments which pride, ambition, and avarice have almost generally made upon all the securities of civil liberty, which, in the depth of their wisdom, nations have been able to contrive; an infallible guardian to the rights of man is in vain sought for in the wise maxims of philosophers and patriotic statesmen; in vain do nations attempt to purchase liberty with the best blood of their citizens, while they deliver it into the keeping of men unacquainted with, or regardless of the supreme legislative authority of God, under which his friends may sit securely and none to make them afraid.

Q. Although the remembrance of God's legislative authority may for a time become feeble, can it entirely be obliterated from the heart of man?

A. Infidelity and impiety are often forced to relinquish their strongholds, and openly confess that the darkened prisons of human wretchedness never can expect to be visited with a general jubilee, unless God condescends to avenge the quarrel of humanity, and let the prisoners shake off their chains; sceptical philosophers, who have been obliged to invent an atheistical language, to serve the interests of their pride and vanity, have, undesignedly, been obliged to recognise God's legislative character.

Q. Can you give an illustration?

A. Yes. Philosophers, even of the infidel school, are obliged to introduce the notion of *laws* for the government of the physical world—as they account for the phenomena in the visible kingdom of creation by the name of *laws of nature*.

Q. What is the import of the term *nature* in such a connexion?

A. It can mean nothing more than that order of causes and effects, which the only wise God at first established, and which he continually upholds.

Q. What are the *laws of nature*, so termed in reference to the physical world?

A. They are nothing else than the will of God, taking continued effect upon the different parts of his extended empire: and whether they are called by specific names, such as *attraction, gravitation, &c.*, they are but the effects of the divine will governing the movements of the material creation which his hand hath formed. Hence when infidel philosophers speak of *the laws of nature*, they are constrained to recognise the will of the Supreme, upon the principle of *Blackstone*, that “law is a rule of action dictated by some superior being;” the laws of nature being but the rules of action impressed by the creator upon the material creation.

Q. Now, if these philosophers are obliged to introduce *laws* for the government of the physical world, is not this aid much more needed for the regulation of the moral system?

A. Yes. So much the more as the moral transcends in excellency the physical world.

Q. Does not *the law of nature*, therefore, assume a somewhat different aspect as applied to rational man?

A. Yes. It is not merely a rule impressed upon a material subject to regulate its movements, but a system of moral precepts given for the regulation of the conduct of a dependent rational agent.

Q. Had not God a right as a spirit *infinite, &c.*, to display or give scope to the exercise of his perfections, in such a manner as he saw to be conducive to his own glory?

A. The right is indisputable. To deny man a similar right is judged to be insupportable tyranny; it cannot, therefore, be denied to God.

Q. Has God chosen to exercise this right?

A. Yes. Events have made it evident that he saw it every way worthy his divine majesty, to command a multitude of creatures into existence.

Q. His right to do so being admitted, as it must, does not his legislative *authority* follow of course?

A. So necessarily are these things connected, we cannot conceive the existence of creation a moment without the continual operation of a system of laws, suitable to regulate each of its component parts, and guide all their motions into one central point.

Q. Is not the existence of these wise regulations, rendering this world a comfortable habitation for all its inhabitants, apparent everywhere we turn our eyes?

A. Yes. He that would not believe the testimony of day and night, summer and winter, seed time and harvest, would not believe though one rose from the dead.

Q. Is not the denial of God's right of legislating for his creatures, to assert—that he never had a right to act at all?

A. Yes. For if once his right to create be granted, it will evidently follow that he behoved to govern the creatures made, conformable to some end, or else declare by his carelessness about them, that he made them in sport, and as a trial of his skill, and for no good, wise, or holy purpose. To assert this would be the most horrid blasphemy.

Q. Has not God given abundant testimony of his own moral nature and rectoral character, in the constitution of man's rational nature?

A. Yes. This is clear from the *moral perceptive* capacities with which man is endowed; for as well may we believe that the eye in animal nature, and the light in the heavens, have met and held sweet society together for thousands of years, *by chance*, as believe a *moral capacity* in man without *moral objects*, with which it is designed to converse.

Q. Is not this moral capacity, a distinguishing property of man's nature?

A. Yes. It is a property which distinguishes him from all the inferior ranks of being, and he is hereby enabled clearly to discover his relation to the Supreme Being, and

that the Lord hath required of him, that he should do justice, love, mercy, and walk humbly with his God.

Q. Is this power in men a subject of government?

A. It is: Because, 1. Like all other powers of a derived nature, it must be governed—unless we adopt the absurdity, that it neither needs, deserves, nor admits of such a rule. 2. The more of spiritual and intellectual essence, any creature possesses, it is the more susceptible of government; and, accordingly, as dependent beings rise in the scale of excellency, legislative authority takes the firmer hold of their natures and operations. No man, in his reason, will say that moral nature, capable of such extensive employment among God's works, needs not a government sufficient to confine it within proper boundaries. 3. The abuse of moral power has kindled the fires of hell, and still keeps them burning. 4. Its proper application has embellished heaven with its most transparent lamps. 5. In proportion as morality prevails on earth, it blossoms like the rose, and sends forth a scent like Lebanon. In proportion as it withers, this earth becomes desolate and bare, and puts on the attire of a mourner—such a power certainly demands government. 6. When it is considered, that a moral capacity in human nature forms one of its principal ornaments, and is that wherein it makes the nearest approach to God, and on which he has expended much cost and pains since the world began, we cannot think it unreasonable that it should be a primary object of Divine legislative authority.

Q. May God's legislative character be argued from his ends in creation?

A. Most certainly. Whatever could move God to create, must move him to govern. It is manifest that creatures cannot exist a moment independently of their Creator, and consequently cannot move on to their point of final destination without constant direction. It must, therefore, follow, 1. That either God had no end in view in forming the beautiful fabric of nature; or, 2. That he has dropped the end if he ever had one; or, 3. That he has missed the end, and given over any farther prosecution of it; or, finally, that he had an end, that he has signified the same to his dependents, and will most certain-

ly see to its accomplishment. It will be no difficulty with any pious mind, which of these suppositions ought to be adopted.

Q. Does a consideration of the existence of civil society and practice of civil government among men, greatly strengthen the argument in favour of God's legislative character?

A. Very much, indeed. For, 1. Experience shows, that the relation of civil society cannot exist to any advantage, unless under the protecting shade of morality. 2. An immoral society is a monster in nature; nor can any one, completely such, ever exist, even among the most barbarous nations on earth. 3. If murder, perjury, theft, and adultery, were legitimated, society must speedily be dissolved. 4. Therefore all nations have found it necessary to encircle themselves with criminal codes of laws, by which the lives, property, and virtue of the community are preserved from destruction. 5. God, in his providence, has so ordered it, that in proportion as the moral law has been incorporated into the civil compact of any collective society, that society enjoys happiness on earth, and progresses towards that which is better beyond it. 6. It is not to be concealed, that our vicious nature often thinks otherwise, and acts upon principles agreeable to its corrupt desires; but as certainly it follows, that such departures from the law of our natures, draw after them national ruin, as has been verified in the history of all ages. The uniformity of similar effects following similar causes, clearly evidences this to be the constitution of heaven. 7. Those, therefore, who think or imagine they can perfect constitutions by abridging the moral law's operation in civil society, are mistaken in one of those points wherein it is of the highest moment to be rightly informed. 8. And if we admit moral considerations at all to have a place in forming the bonds of human society, no doubt then, the more influences which are communicated thence, the social compact will be so much the stronger. 9. So that it does appear, from the impossibility of binding the human race together by any cords but those of a moral nature, that God must have exercised his legislative right, in preparing that code by which our family may harmonize in the bonds of love, while sun and moon endure.

Q. Does not the conscience of man confirm this view of God's legislative authority ?

A. Very forcibly. 1. Whence arises the sense of blame with which men are so severely lashed, notwithstanding all their pains to shield themselves therefrom, or cure the wounds when received ? The instances of remorse on record, put it beyond a doubt that the heart of man, by its constitution, is rendered susceptible of such impressions. 2. And however speculative and immoral men may, in their closets and upon paper, have attempted to reason themselves and others into a belief, that there is no distinction between right and wrong, yet we see they have made no great progress in bringing their proselytes to act up uniformly to such a principle : for who, in his senses, has ever been known to commend the murderer of a beloved father or child ? Who ever beheld with delight a beloved wife or daughter defiled before his eyes ? 3. It seems, therefore, that however men may be carried away by their imaginations into Utopian fields, when they descend and mingle in real life they cease not to feel as other men do, at least in cases interesting to themselves, and to act on the same principles.

Q. Does not Revelation confirm this reasoning upon God's legislative authority ?

A. Yes, its evidence is decisive. For, 1. What is the whole Old Testament but a history of the giving of laws, the breaches made upon them, and the consequent punishment ? or else of due obedience yielded thereunto, with the rewards annexed ? And 2. The *New* completes the Old by adding those sections which more immediately respect the methods by which God's law has been honoured, and its credit preserved, together with the functions which it continues to perform on the hearts of all who are redeemed from under its curse, as also what its office will be to eternity in and over those who remain destitute of a covering from its awful demands.

Q. God has not, therefore, created man independent of his authority, and sent him forth among his works exempted from the dominion of law ?

A. By no means. The above induction brings us neces-

sarily to the conclusion, that man is a dependent creature, he is dependent upon his Creator, and in the language of *Blackstone*, "consequently as man depends absolutely upon his Maker for everything, it is necessary that he should in all points conform to his Maker's will."

Q. What is this will of his Maker called?

A. It is called *the law of nature*. For as God, when he created matter, and endowed it with a principle of mobility, established certain rules for the perpetual direction of its motions, so when he created man, and endued him with freewill to conduct himself in all parts of life, he laid down certain immutable laws of human nature.

Q. Is this law of human nature of superior obligation?

A. This law of nature, says the same civilian, "being co-eval with mankind, and dictated by God himself, is of superior obligation to any other. It is binding over all the globe, in all countries, and at all times; no human laws are of any validity if *contrary to this*; and such of them as are *valid* derive all their force, and all their authority, mediately or immediately from this original."

Q. Was this law the basis of God's covenant with Adam?

A. It was, and was the rule of Adam's behaviour towards God, and of his dominion which he exercised over this world before his apostasy.

Q. Has this law been abrogated by the apostasy of Adam?

A. By no means. Man's apostasy did not annul God's regal dominion over the rebel creature, and the law inscribed upon man's nature in his creation, whilst it binds him under its penalty, still holds him under the dominion of God; and by it he is under an indissoluble obligation to regulate his conduct in all the transactions of life.

Q. Has not the satisfaction of the law, by the obedience unto the death of Jesus Christ, released man from its obligations?

A. By no means, because believers themselves are said to be under the law as a rule of life. 1 Cor. ix. 21, "Being not without law to God, *but under the law to Christ*." 2. Christ did not "*destroy*," but "*fulfilled*" the law.

Q. Is not civil magistracy, as the ordinance of God, founded in this law of nature?

A. Yes. Magistracy was first instituted in the human family when God gave Adam dominion over Eve and all the works of his hand on earth, (Ps. viii. 6,) of which this law was the *rule*; and still abides the supreme rule of civil magistracy among the posterity of Adam, through all ages of the world. Rom. i. 32, "Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which do such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." ii. 14, 15, "For the Gentiles which have not the law (*written*) do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts, the meanwhile, accusing, or else excusing, one another."

Q. Can there indeed exist any lawful civil power that has not its fountain and its law in this will of the Supreme Law-giver, the Creator of the heavens and the earth?

A. No. Civil government, we have seen, as it is legitimate, is the moral ordinance of God, and the Deity himself, alone, is the supreme source of civil power; and consequently, the government which he will recognise must be founded in this immutable law of human nature.

Q. Is it not a first principle of this law, that God's authority be recognised by the constituted civil society?

A. Yes. The rejection of his authority and his law has been the source of the "judicial blindness" which God has inflicted upon the nations. Rom. i. 28, "For even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient."

Q. Is this law fully discoverable by the reason of man from *the light of nature*?

A. Some faint traces of this law remain upon the moral nature of man, (Rom. ii. 14, 15,) and are revealed in some degree of legibility by the light of nature, (Rom i. 20—32; Ps. xix. 1,) "*so that men are without excuse*;" yet man's

intellect has been so much impaired and corrupted by the fall, that he is not able fully to discover what the law of nature directs in every circumstance of life, as every man finds in his own experience, that his reason is corrupt, and his understanding is full of ignorance and error.

Q. Has this blindness of human reason given occasion to the benign interposition of the Creator in giving a perfect transcript of this law, in a written revelation of his will?

A. Yes. God has been pleased at sundry times and divers manners to enforce his original law, by an immediate and direct revelation. The doctrines thus delivered we call the revealed or divine law.

Q. Where are they to be found?

A. They are to be found only in the Holy Scriptures; for until they were therein revealed they were hid from the wisdom of ages.

Q. Is this revealed law contained in the Holy Scriptures of *the same obligation* with the original law of nature?

A. Undoubtedly; for as the moral precepts of this law are of the same original of this law of nature, and are found, upon comparison, to be really a part of the original law of nature, as they lead in all their consequences to man's felicity, so their intrinsic obligation is of *equal strength and perpetuity*.

Q. Is not this revealed will of God in the Scriptures of truth, of even infinitely *higher authority* than that moral system which is framed by ethical writers, and denominated the natural law?

A. Unquestionably. Because the one is the law of nature *expressly declared so to be by God himself*. The other is only what, by the assistance of human reason, men *imagine* to be that law. If we could be as certain of the latter, as we are of the former, both would have an equal authority; but till then they are never to be put in any competition together.

Q. Do not all just human laws depend upon these two foundations—*The Law of Nature* and *the Law of Revelation*?

A. Yes. No human laws should be suffered to contradict them: if they are contradictory to these they have no validity, nor binding obligation upon the conscience.

Q. What is this revealed law usually called ?

A. The *Moral Law*.

Q. Wherein is this moral law summarily comprehended ?

A. It is comprehended in a summary manner in THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

Q. Is this moral law, thus summarily exhibited with all the revealed precepts based thereon, placed in the hands of Jesus Christ the Mediatorial King, to be administered by him in the government of the nations ?

A. Yes. This law is in the hands of the Mediator, and under him the human family, in its national, as well as all other relations, is commanded to be subject to the law of God. 1 Cor. ix. 21, "Not without law to God, *but under the law to Christ.*"

Q. Does the Lord Jesus Christ, as the "Governor of the Nations," demand that their constitution and laws be founded upon his laws, revealed in the Scriptures of truth ?

A. Yes. As the King of kings he hath in the Scriptures of truth promulgated his law, and demands that all people, nations, and languages should *serve* him, by submitting to his sceptre and "taking the law at his mouth."

Q. Does it appear from the fact already established—the *endowment of the Mediator with regal authority over the nations*—that it is the design of God to reduce the human race under him to a condition of obedience and holiness, even upon the earth, nearly resembling that which it would have enjoyed had Adam not revolted ?

A. Yes. The MILLENNIUM will exemplify this happy state ; and in order to reduce the race to this blessed condition, the constitution and laws of civil governments must be based upon the revealed law of Christ.

Q. Wherein is it evident that Christ claims this national recognition of, and subjection to, his law, revealed in the Scriptures ?

A. It is evident, 1. In the fact that men, in their social relations, are under the same law that they are under in their individual capacity.

Q. What is the second evidence ?

A. The law under which each individual is placed is "*the*

law" (1 Cor. ix. 21)—evidently the *moral law* revealed in the Scriptures.

Q. What is the third evidence?

A. As this law was the rule, as proved, of civil government, as lodged in the hands of the *first Adam*, it remains the supreme rule in that relation still under the second Adam.

Q. What is the fourth evidence?

A. The language of its *curse* contains this doctrine: "Cursed is every one that continueth not *in all things* written in the book of the law to do them." To this the people *collectively* were to say, *Amen*.

Q. What is the fifth argument?

A. The commission given to the New Testament Ministry embodies this doctrine, Mat. xxviii. 19, 20, "Go ye therefore and teach *all nations*, to observe *all things whatsoever I have commanded you*."

Q. What is the sixth evidence?

A. The character of civil government and its administration, described in the 13th of Rom., as *the ordinance of God*, and *the Minister of God to men for good*, plainly enforces the doctrine of national subjection to the law of God, because his law is the only rule of moral good.

Q. What is the seventh evidence?

A. The example of the commonwealth of Israel demonstrates the doctrine, Exod. xxiv. 7, "And Moses took the book of the covenant and read in the audience of the people: and they said, ALL THAT THE LORD HATH SAID WILL WE DO, AND BE OBEDIENT;" also v. 3.

Q. What is the eighth evidence?

A. The kings of Israel, in their regal capacity, were to have a copy of the law, and to *study* and *apply* it in the administration of the government. Deut. xvii. 18, 19, "And it shall be when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites: and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life; that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of his law, and the statutes to do them."—v. 20.

Q. What is the ninth proof?

A. Those kings who *obeyed* are commended. 2 Chron. xxiv. 26. In the case of Josiah, for "his goodness" according to what was written "in the law of the Lord." Whilst Rehoboam is blamed (2 Chr. xii. 1) because "he forsook the law of the Lord."

Q. What is the tenth proof?

A. To possess this holy and divine law was considered the greatest blessing to the nation. Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20, "He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments they have not known them."

Q. What is the eleventh evidence?

A. It was given to the people as a nation. Thus Joshua addressed the tribes, xxii. 5, "Take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law."

Q. What is the twelfth proof?

A. National judgments are threatened for its violation, Is. v. 24, 25. "Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the Lord, and despised the word of the holy one of Israel."

Q. What is the thirteenth evidence?

A. The nation is reproved for its violation. Jer. ix. 13—15. "Because they have forsaken my law which I set before them; therefore, I will feed them even this people with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink."

Q. What is the fourteenth proof?

A. It is predicted that the nations in New Testament times shall be subject to this law. Is. xlii. "The isles shall wait for his law." Jer. iv. 17; Is. ii. 2, 3. "In the last days—many people shall go and say, come ye and let us go up to the mountains of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth *the law*, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

Q. Were these precepts, indeed, addressed not to individuals only, but to the nation as such?

A. Yes. Each precept is in the singular number, *thou*. This form of expression is used, not merely to indicate that every individual who heard this law is bound to obedience, but also every Christian nation as a body politic or moral person is addressed by the lawgiver, and commanded to obey.

Q. Where is the evidence of this?

A. The evidence is in the fact, that to the nation in its national capacity the decalogue is emphatically directed—*I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage*. Whom did he bring out of Egypt? The nation, and to it he addressed the decalogue.

Q. Were not the Jews, in their true national organization, as the ordinance of God, designed as an exemplar to all nations in subsequent times?

A. Yes. They were in civil things, “a shadow,” as it were, “of good things to come.” What was transacted by them as a nation in covenant with God, is an example to all nations by whom the record of their deeds shall be read; especially in their covenant subjection and obedience to the divine law.

Q. Wherein lies the evidence of this?

A. The evidence lies in the prediction in Psalm cii. 15—18, “*So the heathen (nations) shall fear the name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth thy glory. This shall be written for the generation to come; and the people that shall be created shall praise the Lord.*” The Jewish nation “bowed the knee” to the God of Jacob, as his servants: and after their example, “so” the organized national bodies, and kings, or supreme civil rulers, officially, shall follow their example—shall fear and serve the name of the Lord—the Messiah—the glory of the Lord; shall do him homage as the King of kings, the Father’s glory or representative in the throne of the nations.

Q. When shall this take place?

A. It shall take place, according to the context, “When the Lord shall build up Zion”—bring in the Jews with the fulness of the Gentiles. The Israelitish commonwealth, therefore, stands on the inspired page, an exemplar to all the

nations of the world of a just national organization; which shall be, in all its moral elements, strictly copied when the prediction recorded in the Psalm shall be fulfilled—v. 22. “When the people are gathered together, and the *kingdoms*, to serve the Lord.” So shall they fear *the name* of the Lord—by a national subjection to the *law* of the Lord, in the hands of the Mediator—“the prince of the kings of the earth.”

Q. Is not the decalogue divided into two tables?

A. Yes. The first contains *four* precepts, and the second *six*. The former teaches our duty to God—the latter our duty to man.

Q. Do the precepts of the first table express the *rights* of God, which he demands shall be embodied in the civil constitutions of the nations, that their governments may be his ordinance?

A. Yes. They contain “the things of God,” which all nations are bound nationally to “render” him.

Q. Can you give a simple exhibition of these rights or claims of God by the Mediator upon the nations of the earth?

A. Yes. 1. The first requires as an inalienable right of the Godhead, that every nation as such, in its organic character, acknowledge the Lord to be its God. Exod. xx. 3. “Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.” xxxiv. 14. “For thou shalt worship no other God, for the Lord whose name is *jealous*, is a jealous God.” Rom. iii. 29. Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yea, of the Gentiles also? 2. “The second precept requires the nation to establish the true worship of God, and to put down, and prevent idolatry or false worship. Exod. xx. 4. “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, &c. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them,” &c. Deut. vii. 5. “Thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire.” See an example, by the king Hezekiah, 2 Kings xviii. 4—7. If idolatry and false worship is a moral evil—a violation of the law—then the ruler must suppress it. Rom. xiii. 4. See also, 1 Cor. x. 19—21. 3. The third precept

requires the nations to entertain an awful reverence of the holy name of Jehovah, and sincerely to respect everything whereby he maketh himself known. Ex. xx. 7. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." Deut. xxviii. 58, 59. "If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name—THE LORD THY GOD—then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful," &c. Mal. i. 11. For from the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, *my name shall be great among the Gentiles; (or nations)*—and in every place, incense shall be offered to *my name*, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen (nations), saith the Lord of hosts. See Rom. xv. 4; Jam. v. 12; Zech. v. 3. 4. The fourth precept enforces the claims of God upon the nations to observe the Christian Sabbath: to consecrate it as a day of national rest and devotion. Ex. xx. 8. "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," &c. See also Jer. xvii. 20—22; Ex. xvi. 22, 23; Num. xv. 32, 33; Neh. xiii. 15; Mark ii. 27. Now, as God is as *jealous* of his *DEITY* to-day as of old—as his worship is as *sacred*—his name as *holy*—and his sabbath as *honourable*—it is the duty still of all nations "from the rising of the sun to the setting of the same," to recognise *these his rights*, and embody them in their national constitutions, and defend and enforce them by their laws and administration.

Q. Is not the church the only agent now for the application and enforcing of this table of the decalogue?

A. No. The church is an agent in her sphere, but her influence extends over her members only—but civil government is ordained of God as a grand co-operative agent with the church in the application of the divine law to society, and its arm, in the spreading of moral influence, reaches far beyond her boundaries, into the dark places of the land. Besides, if the state is not "for the Lord," it will be "against him"—it cannot be indifferent, and may paralyse the arm of the church even in the legitimate sphere and manner of

her action—as is exemplified abundantly, in our own land, in relation to all the rights of God.

Q. Does not the second table of the decalogue specifically commemorate the rights common to all mankind, and guaranteed by God to all equally, and to be secured to them in the constitutions of civil government?

A. Yes. The rights of men exist before the constitution of civil government—they exist in the divine law; and civil government confers none of them; but is ordained of God to secure and protect them as the boon of heaven. Hence civil magistrates are the administrators also of the precepts of the second table of the decalogue.

Q. Have you not already informed us that civil government is the ordinance of man? How does this agree with your statement of the duty of national subjection to the law of God?

A. Whilst civil government is the ordinance of man in a certain view of it; it is, at the same time, the ordinance of God (as we have seen in a former section), in its grand fundamental moral principles, and these views are not inconsistent. Men are free as it respects one another, and have a right to erect government over themselves, and no man has a right to rule his fellows, without authority conveyed by the free suffrages of the majority. But no number of people have a right to establish a government upon any other foundation than the law of God. Civil government subordinately to the glory of God, is designed of God, for the highest good of the whole, and must be so organized as that no one will be deprived, unjustly, of his rights, which belong to him equally with the rest.

Q. Is not the law of God the fountain and rule of human rights?

A. Yes. The rights of men are all derived from God, and the law of God defines them; and the substance of that law, as it is the rule of human rights, is condensed in the golden precept,—“As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.” This places all men upon an equality, without respect of persons or complexions. If men

observe this rule, they enjoy an infallible security against oppression and wrong.

Q. Can you give a summary enumeration of the several rights which the second table of the decalogue defines and guarantees to mankind?

A. Yes. The first precept of this table is designed to preserve subordination in society by regulating the mutual duties of superiors and inferiors. 1. It maintains parental authority, which is one of the main pillars of society; whilst it secures, on the other hand, the rights of the child, who is to be honoured as a rational and immortal being, and not the abject slave of a domestic tyrant. 2. It regulates the relation of master and servant, secures obedience to the former, and the "rendering of that which is just and equal" to the latter. It does not erect the former into a lordly and irresponsible tyrant, with the scourge for his sceptre, and reduce the latter into the grovelling condition of the brutalized slave. There is no such relation recognised by the law of God. The master is the head of the family, and the servant is as the son, subordinate to the head of the domestic establishment, and the labourer is worthy of his hire. Jer. xxii. 13, "Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; that uses his neighbour's service without wages, and giveth him not for his work." 3. It regulates the relation of husband and wife, minister and flock, and secures their reciprocal rights, as expounded elsewhere in the Scriptures. 4. Civil government, also, has its security under the ægis of this precept. It guarantees obedience to legitimate rulers administering the ordinance of God; and secures the rights of the subject, as those of the son. It presents the civil ruler as a benignant parent, and all the people surrounding him as his beloved children, whom he nourishes and cherishes as a father his son. 5. In one word, the second table guarantees to all equally the preservation of *life, chastity, property, reputation*, and is designed even to suppress the *lustings* of the depraved heart after that which is the possession of another. 6. It is true that civil government cannot reach the heart. It regulates the life. Yet it is ordained of God not only to punish overt acts in

violation of any of the precepts, but to prevent crime by precautionary regulations, and a parental surveillance. As an illustration—it is the duty of civil government, for the preservation of *chastity*, secured by the 7th precept, to suppress the houses of temptation, and to protect society against the wiles and obscenity of “the strange woman, whose house is the way to hell;” and on the other hand to protect woman from the lust of licentious and debased men, who prowl around the loveliest, that they may seize them as their prey. 7. Thus with regard to every other precept of the decalogue, civil government is its guardian, and is bound to apply it equally to all the subjects of its sceptre, not only to punish the transgressor, but to enforce its observance by such regulations as will bring the precept to bear upon the minds and consciences and lives of all under its jurisdiction.

Q. Is not civil government bound, as it is God’s ordinance, to execute the penal statutes, enacted as sanctions and enforcements of the precepts of the decalogue?

A. This seems to be a necessary deduction from the principles established. Because, 1. Those particular *judgments* which were enacted for the defence and enforcement of the moral laws are, from the nature of the case, of perpetual obligation, for the penal sanction of a law is a part of the law itself. Take away the sanction, and the law is annulled. 2. They were the punishments decreed of God for crimes committed in violation of his own law, and he knows best what punishment is due to its transgression. 3. The moral law is of universal and perpetual obligation, its penal sanctions must carry with them a tantamount obligation. 4. They were enacted for the defence of the authority of the decalogue, which is ever to be defended—the defence should perpetually surround the law. 5. The nature of crime is invariably the same, no lapse of time destroys its punishable character; hence, like crimes in every age deserve like punishment, as they attack the authority of God the Lawgiver, and subvert the good order, purity, and peace of society with equal malignancy. 6. The judicial judgments to which reference is had, were those which were appended to precepts of the first and second table were reducible to these;

were, in fact, the application of these to civil society, by the same awful authority which promulgated the decalogue. *He* who said, "Thou shalt not kill," said also, "*The murderer shall SURELY be put to death.*" *He* who said, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," said also, "*The adulterer and adulteress shall SURELY be put to death.*" *He* who said, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain," said also, "*He that blasphemeth the name of the Lord shall SURELY be put to death.*" 7. Paul i., Tim. i. 8—10, which see, powerfully enforces this argument. It is evidently the penal law to which the apostle refers, because elsewhere he affirms that believers—the same with the righteous—are under the law to Christ. The righteous man is not liable to the judgments of the penal law, but the transgressor of the moral law is exposed to its sanctions. The law, as it is *preceptive*, is a rule of life to the righteous, and he delights in it after the inner man. The *penal law* applies only to the wicked, "*murderers,*" &c. The *sanctions* of the law, then, are of equal obligation with the law itself. 8. Other judicial enactments are recognised by Paul as yet binding in their principle as a *moral rule*. 1 Cor. ix. 9, 10, "For it is written in the law of Moses. Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? FOR OUR SAKES, NO DOUBT, THIS IS WRITTEN. That he that plougheth should plough in hope; and that he that thrasheth in hope, should be partaker of his hope."

Q. Is it not at least strange, that men favoured with a pure copy of the divine law, in the volume of revelation, should reject this fountain of light, and go back to the indistinct "dictates of conscience" to regulate any part of human conduct?

A. Yes. It is more than strange, it is extremely stupid and utterly inconsistent with Christianity; especially when God declares that it is "To the law and to the testimony we must bring all actions and all relations. If they speak not according to these it is because there is no light in them." Is. viii. 20. The truth is, that revelation is given to men to supply the imperfections of the law of nature; and to restrict

ourselves to the latter, and renounce the former, in any case in which it is competent to guide us, is at once to contemn God's gift and to defeat the end for which it was given; and is as absurd as it would be to require men, when the sun is in the heavens, to shut out its full blaze, and go about their ordinary business by the feeble rays of a taper.

Q. Must not those who adopt anti-government principles and reject civil government as an institution necessary and beneficial to mankind, when rightly constituted, become atheists, and reject not only the authority, but also the being of a God?

A. This seems to be a necessary result of such principles: because as man is a rational creature he is necessarily subject to his Creator, who has promulgated his law and instituted civil magistracy as his ordinance, and the civil ruler as his minister, for the application of this in the government of the moral subject.

Q. Is not the authority of God, therefore, and his law paramount to all other authority, even that of "*We, the people,*" in the government of man in his civil relations?

A. Yes. Man has no natural inherent rights of his own. All his are derived from God, are, of course, subject to his law, and are to be defined and regulated by it. A right in opposition to his own, God does not, cannot give; nor is it competent to any power to impart and sanction such a right. The sentiments of Blackstone should, therefore, be deemed axioms, and recorded in letters of gold in the halls of legislation. "*Upon these two foundations, THE LAW OF NATURE AND THE LAW OF REVELATION, DEPEND ALL HUMAN LAWS. THAT IS TO SAY, NO HUMAN LAWS SHOULD BE SUFFERED TO CONTRADICT THESE.*"

Q. What, according to this law, are some of the qualifications of civil rulers authorized to administer civil government as the ordinance of God?

A. The law of God, revealed in the scriptures of Truth, requires that those who rule should possess such a moral character as will fully entitle them to the designation of MINISTERS OF GOD. They should, therefore, possess the following qualifications:

1. They should be wise, able, understanding men, not children, weak, ignorant, or fools. Ex. xviii. 21 : "More-over, thou shalt provide of all the people able men." Deut. i. 13 : "Take you wise and understanding men, and I will make them rulers." Ezra vii. 25 : "Set magistrates and judges that may judge the people, *such as know the laws of thy God.*"

2. They should be men of distinction, well known in the community. Deut. i. 13—18 : "And *known* among you tribes, and I will make them rulers over you. So I took the chief of your tribes, wise men and known, and made them heads over you." 2 Chr. xix.

3. Just men, men of truth, fearing God and hating covetousness. 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 3 : "The spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was on my tongue. The Lord God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spoke to me : **HE THAT RULETH OVER MEN MUST BE FIRST RULING IN THE FEAR OF THE LORD.**" Ex. xviii. 21 : "*Men of truth, fearing God, hating covetousness.*"

Just
Q. Is there a government on earth that can be recognised by the Christian as the ordinance of God, and to which he can be obedient for conscience sake, and in consistency with his allegiance to Jesus Christ—the prince of the kings of the earth ?

A. There is not. Since the captivity of Judah, about 558 years before the Christian Era, until the present day, scarcely an instance has occurred in the whole history of nations, of a kingdom or commonwealth regulating their polity upon purely scriptural principles. Many nations, it is true, have pretended to be Christian ; and religion has been scandalized by their unholy interference. Many Christians have also been deceived and misled into a belief, that the kingdoms of the nations were so constituted as to merit their conscientious acquiescence and pious support. But the prince of the kings of the earth, who gave the revelation to his servant John, teaches us, that now (under the seventh trumpet, Rev. xi. 15, yet future), for the first time, the kingdoms of this world *are become* the kingdoms of God and of Christ. Heretofore they have been *thrones of iniquity, having no fellowship with God*

(Psalm xciv. 20), characterized as *beasts* and horns of beasts, both by Daniel and the writer of the Apocalypse. Servants and admirers and apologists and eulogists they have had in abundance; but there was not a voice in heaven raised in their commendation. They were to be feared but not approved by the servants of the Most High.

Q. Will not the condition of the nations, when they become voluntarily subject to Christ and his law, be most prosperous and happy?

A. Yes. The prosperity and felicity of Ancient Israel, when the law given that commonwealth was faithfully observed, will be the blessed inheritance of the nations when obedient to Christ. Deut. iv. 6—9: "Keep, therefore, and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day? Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons."

SECTION VIII.

The Duty of Nations, in their National Capacity, to acknowledge and support the True Religion.

Q. Is civil magistracy, as the ordinance of God, conversant only about the transient and paltry affairs of merely animal gratification?

A. Such a view, though common, is utterly incompatible

with the origin and design of the institution, which has descended from the throne of God, for the express purpose of preserving moral order among men.

Q. Is there any institution given by God to men, so happily adapted to preserve moral order among mankind as the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ?

A. There is none—for its very nature is to promote “peace on earth, and good will towards men.”

Q. Are the two great institutions—civil government, and the Christian religion, or church and state, hostile to, and in their nature and action calculated to frustrate each other, in the benign influence which they may respectively exert upon the human race?

A. No. They are friendly powers under the same moral regimen,—the law of God, and designed in their respective spheres, and by the means peculiar to each, to advance the same objects, the glory of God on earth, and the best interests of mankind.

Q. Are they distinct powers?

A. Yes. They are distinct powers, and independent one of the other (as will appear in its place), and each has its distinctive and particular sphere of action.

Q. Is it not the custom of independent civil powers to form treaties of alliance, offensive and defensive, against a common enemy and for mutual benefit?

A. Yes. This is a common practice, and generally, if the principles of the treaty are just, tends greatly to the peace, security, and mutual interests of the contracting parties.

Q. Have not church and state their common enemy?

A. Yes. *Sin* is their common enemy, presenting itself in the specific forms of ignorance, immorality, and irreligion. “Righteousness exalteth a nation, *sin* is a reproach to any people.”

Q. May not church and state form, and is it not their duty to do so, such friendly alliance for the promotion of intelligence, morality, and religion, and the suppression of the baneful influence of their common enemy?

A. Certainly. As they have a common enemy, and (as stated) a common object, they ought to form such friendly

alliance, that they may have a mutual understanding of their legitimate and distinctive spheres of action; and co-operate, encourage, and mutually strengthen each other in the advancement of the common good.

Q. Should the true church of Christ, "the bride, the Lamb's wife," form such an alliance with a heathen, anti-christian, or immoral state?

A. By no means. The same law applies to the church collectively, which applies to the individual member, *not to be "unequally yoked with unbelievers;"* even as God's ordinance of civil government in operation in Judea, was forbidden alliance with an apostate and idolatrous civil power. Isa. viii. 12, "Say ye not—A confederacy—to all them to whom this people may say—A confederacy." 2 Cor. vi. 15, "What concord hath Christ with Belial?"

Q. May God's ordinance of civil government form an alliance with a corrupt, heathenish, and anti-christian church?

A. By no means: any more than a Christian man should ally himself in marriage with a polluted harlot, impenitent, and unreformed.

Q. Has not the church of God, in past ages, received detriment, and does she not in some nations at the present time sustain injury by being thus unequally yoked with immoral anti-christian civil powers?

A. Yes. She has been and is still greatly injured, and from the very nature of society, she must suffer in such connexion, until both learning and power are transferred into the hands of godly men, and so made subservient to piety. Independently of the impressive lessons of long and painful experience upon this subject, it is quite reasonable to expect that if unsanctified men incorporate revealed religion with civil government, such a form will certainly be given to religion as may suit unsanctified power. The daughter of Zion is much better without such an alliance, for it is the very essence of anti-christianism. The Bride, the Lamb's wife, cannot be supposed to escape pollution, if taken into the embraces of unholy men, and rendered dependent upon a government which they administer. It is safer for the friends of religion to continue like the witnesses prophesying in

sackcloth, faithfully struggling in poverty against the frowns of power, than to become the stipendiaries of irreligious statesmen.

Q. As you do not approve of every kind of union of church and state, and as no existing union receives your countenance, for what kind of union of these distinct and independent powers do we plead?

A. We plead only for a union between God's moral ordinance of civil government, duly constituted as his minister to men for good, with pure Christianity, or the Bride, the Lamb's wife.

Q. As both of these institutions, *church* and *state*, are from God, is it not a just inference, that they are designed by Him to dwell together in harmonious union, and co-operate, for the promotion of the good of mankind—like the “two olive trees”—that through “the golden pipes” pour their oil into the common bowl?

A. It cannot be justly questioned. Because, if not allied, as they exist in the same community, they must frequently come into conflict with each other, and thus mar their influence respectively: for if the state has no regard, in its administration, for religion, it will desecrate its most sacred institutions, as is the case in this land with respect to the Christian sabbath.

Q. Is it not a dictate of nature (among those notices of God and our duty which we have independently of revelation) that God is to be worshipped by man, not only in his individual, but also in his social capacity?

A. Yes. Hence we find, even the most savage and benighted tribes have their social, and even national religious observances and festivals.

Q. Have we not the substance of sabbatic institutions taught us by the light of nature?

A. Yes. Heathen nations have their stated times to offer public national homage to their gods.

Q. Must not these times of social and public assembling for religious worship be appointed and regulated by national law?

A. Yes. Because upon no other principle could there be

a general concurrence of the community in the times of meeting, and the enjoyment of tranquillity and order when assembled. Hence all nations have had their times of meeting for religious purposes fixed by a national decree.

Q. Is not the idea of a nation destitute of the religious sentiment shocking to our moral nature ?

A. Yes. Religious sentiment and practice is absolutely essential to national happiness, and even its existence—of the truth of which we have an awful illustration in the history of revolutionary France : where the leaders of the dominant factions discarded the religious sentiment, when iniquity in every monstrous form raised its head, and stalked through the land ; virtue and piety were crushed ; and the blooming plains of France were saturated, and its rivers flowed with blood.

Q. Did not Greece and Rome bear decided testimony to the high importance of a national faith, and incorporate with their constitutions laws respecting religion ?

A. Yes. The heathen teach us. These nations, so celebrated in history, yielded a national allegiance to their gods, and aimed at the sanctification of their civil institutions, and all their national enterprises, by the approbation of their gods. The state was the guardian of their religion, and upon every victory they brought their national “votive offerings” to the temples of their gods.

Q. Is there an object on the earth so sublime in its character and so worthy of national care as the Christian church ?

A. No. There is not among the ranks of created being one object worthy of comparison in point of sublimity with the Christian church—“A moral empire consisting of members animated by the Eternal Spirit, the Mediator person, God manifest in the flesh, as its head, the vast machinery of creation moving in regular subordination to its interests, and exhibiting the ineffable glory of the Divinity, is an object to be contemplated with admiration and awe.”—“Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.”

Q. Is not the Headship of Christ over the nations a convincing argument in proof of the duty of nations to maintain and cherish his religion ?

A. There cannot be anything more conclusive. Christ's dominion over the nations, as over all other things, is for the good of the church. "He is head over all things to the Church;" and certainly so important a part of his empire, as *national society*, is not exempted from the duty of exerting its influence for the welfare of that church, for the special benefit of which Christ is exalted "*Lord of all.*" As civil government is subjected to Him, it is with the intent that, in its administration, it shall contribute to the welfare of Zion. And this is done by a national embrace of his religion to the exclusion of all others, and an engagement to its support.

Q. Have we not examples in the Old Testament scriptures, of this happy alliance between church and state?

A. Yes, several. 1. The patriarchal system of government prevailed generally in the world until the time of Moses. The Patriarch was King and Priest, exercising a species of extended family government, in which, among the godly, all temporal affairs were managed in subserviency to religion. Such were Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, who "commanded their households to keep the way of the Lord." What an ancient Patriarch and his patriarchate or family did for advancing among themselves the interests of godliness, every nation as a body may and should in substance now do, for the present mode of government has succeeded this primitive institution—is merely an enlarged family. 2. Melchisedec was King of Salem, and at the same time Priest of the Most High God. His civil dominion was subservient to the interests of piety. 3. By divine authority the civil government of the Jews succeeded the primitive patriarchal institution—which was also rendered completely subservient to the religion of the Son of God. Legal countenance and support were given to the institutions of religion; and Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon, Hezekiah, Josiah, and others, concerned themselves in the capacity of civil rulers about the interests of the Church. The erection of places of worship—the support of the ministers of religion, the removal of obstacles—and the correction of abuses, occupied much of their attention. A clear evidence that union

between church and state is not necessarily, and in itself sinful—else it never could at any time have received the divine approbation and sanction. 4. The union and co-operation of the King and the Priest. Moses and Aaron, Joshua and Eleazer, David and Abiathar, Solomon and Zadok, Hezekiah and Azariah, Zerubbabel and Joshua—and Samuel “who judged Israel and built an altar unto the Lord,” vii. 19. 5. The example of Cyrus and Darius, Ezra i. 1—4; vi. 9—12. Approved of God, vi. 12, 16, 20, 24, also viii. 10. 6. The King of Nineveh, when God’s prophet denounced judgment, proclaimed a fast, giving an interesting example of the duty of magistrates to exercise a care about the moral and religious interests of their people.

Q. Were not these examples, especially that of the subserviency of the Jewish civil policy to the true religion, designed to be limited to that dispensation?

A. By no means—as is evident from the consideration, that it was founded in reason, or the immutable principles of Christian philosophy; for religion is intimately, yea, vitally connected with all that should be done by man in this life, and lies at the foundation of all that regards his prospects of future blessedness and glory; and it is unreasonable to suppose that he should lose sight of it utterly the moment he acts as a member of the civil community. An immortal being should act everywhere with reference to his immortality. The reason is as valid to-day as in ancient times, and these examples are therefore to be copied in all succeeding ages. “What was written of old times was written for our instruction.”

Q. May not the duty of nations to acknowledge and support the true religion, be conclusively reasoned from the character of civil magistracy, as the ordinance of God described by the apostle in Rom. xiii. 2, 3?

A. The passage is conclusive, as is evident, 1. From the title given of the ruler. “The minister of God.” Can the ruler be the minister of God, and yet in his rule have no regard for religion? 2. From the objects of his office. “A terror to evil doers,”—a “*revenger*,”—“a terror to him that doeth evil.” Are not offences against the first table, which

relates to God and his worship, evils? He is also to be "a praise to them that do well." Are not the deeds of piety worthy of his countenance? If the magistrate is "the minister of God," and "a terror to evil doers," he must be so not only to the immoral, but to the profane and irreligious; and if "a praise to them that do well," he must be so not only to the *moral*, but also the *religious*—inasmuch as the works of piety are incomparably more excellent and worthy of fostering care than those of cold morality. 3. Moreover, the passage teaches that civil magistracy is especially designed for the good of the saints. For they are particularly addressed,—"*to thee*," "*the saints*." Rom. i. 7.

Q. Is not this argument confirmed by the reason given for the prayer for the conversion of magistrates who were notorious enemies of Christ and persecutors of his religion? 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2.

A. Yes. For this is not a prayer for the success of an ungodly, immoral, civil power, but a prayer for the conversion of civil rulers to Christianity; that their government being founded upon Christian principles, and its administration regulated by the Christian law, the subjects may live under its jurisdiction "a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." The government must evidently be subservient to "godliness," or, which is the same thing, the practice of true religion.

Q. Is not idolatry punishable at the judicial tribunals, and is not this a proof of the care civil rulers should exercise about the true religion?

A. Yes. Job declares it, xxxi. 26, 27, to be "an iniquity to be punished by the judge," and thereby teaches that the civil ruler should exercise a guardian care about religion in the suppression of idolatry.

Q. 25. Does not the prophet Isaiah, xlix. 22, 23, "Kings shall be nursing fathers," etc., forcibly teach the duty of civil governments to acknowledge and support the Christian religion?

A. Most clearly. The passage manifestly refers to New Testament times, and predicts that a prominent feature of those times shall be the subserviency of civil rulers to the

church. The figure employed, of "nursing fathers," is a similitude which imports the most tender care, the most anxious solicitude, not mere protection, but active and unwearied nourishment and support.

Q. Does this passage give countenance to the opinion entertained by some, that the best thing the state can do for the church is "to let her alone?"

A. Certainly not. Such an idea is utterly inconsistent with the figure. Strange and unnatural nurse, indeed, who takes no interest in the welfare of her feeble charge, but lets it alone, to shift for itself! On the contrary, the just import of the figure clearly teaches that in New Testament times, it will be esteemed one of the most important and interesting functions of men in the most exalted civil stations, to nourish and cherish the church of Christ, as a tender nurse the beloved child committed to her charge.

Q. Is the opinion of some correct, who, to neutralize the force of this passage, hold that rulers are here spoken of not in their official but in their private and personal capacity, inasmuch as "queens" may be here viewed not as queens regnant, but consort?

A. We answer in the words of Dr. Symington, "It is, however, far from self-evident that queens are spoken of here in the latter capacity; for every candid person will admit that the very same phraseology might as naturally be employed in speaking of queens regnant in relation to their husbands as of kings regnant in relation to their wives. It is, therefore, not by any means clear that queens are here to be understood as consorts only; or, admitting this, will the inference follow from it legitimately that the kings are to be understood merely in their private domestic capacity, as consorts of the queens. When subjects pray for the blessing of God on their king and his queen, as they are every day in the habit of doing, the queen is of course the queen consort, but surely it cannot for a moment be supposed that they do not refer to the monarch in his official capacity. Because his partner can only be viewed as associated with him in her private capacity. Yet it is only on such a supposition as this that the meaning we attach to the passage before us can

be evaded. Even admitting then, for the sake of argument, the interpretation proposed with regard to queens, they are referred to only as consorts, the inference drawn from it with regard to kings does not follow. It does not follow that kings are referred to only in their private capacity. The kings may still after all be kings regnant, and the utmost that the passage can be made to bear is, that both kings and queens, whether regnant or consort, are bound to exert all the influence they possess, in their own proper spheres, to aid and foster the interests of Messiah's kingdom in the world. Because queen consorts can do this only in their own private sphere, it does not follow that kings regnant, in their proper sphere, are not also bound to do the same. On the contrary, the prediction before us leads us to conclude that, in the times of the gospel, persons of the most exalted public stations shall exert their influence in behalf of the church of Christ."

Q. Does not Isaiah, lx. 11, 12, 16, "Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night: that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that *their* kings may be brought. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, *and shalt suck the breast of kings*," powerfully enforce this doctrine?

A. Yes; with great power. "Here there cannot be the shadow of doubt about the sense in which kings are spoken of. The pronoun '*their*' in this sentence, at least, is decidedly in favour of the view that they are to be regarded in their public capacity; they are spoken of as the people's kings, or kings in the possession and exercise of official power and influence. In this capacity they are represented as ministers to the church of Christ in various ways. Nor is this passage less decisive that it comprehends a *threat of awful judgment* denounced on such nations and rulers as shall refuse to yield the service required."

Q. Have we not an additional argument of great weight in Ezek. xlv. 17, "It shall be the *prince's* part to give burnt offerings, and meat offerings, and drink offerings in the

feasts, and in the new moons, and in the sabbaths, in all the solemnities of the house of Israel, and *he* shall prepare the sin offering?" &c.

A. Very weighty indeed. The mysterious prophetic vision with which the words quoted are associated, is believed by all judicious commentators to refer to the church in New Testament times. Some portions of the figurative allusions are to us mysterious, but the passage quoted plainly teaches that in those times the civil ruler, in his *official capacity*, will contribute largely to the support of religious institutions.

Q. Does not Psalm xlv. 12, "And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift, even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour," beautifully instruct us in the same grand truth?

A. It does. The church in this psalm is exhibited in the splendid array of a queen, the consort of Christ, the king of glory. The accession of the Gentiles to the church seems to be here predicted under the name of Tyre, a neighbouring city, and at that time the mart of the world; for even the richest of the nations will in due time submit to the Messiah, "consecrate their gain" to him, in support of his religion and his kingdom, and court the friendship, and solicit the prayers of his church. "*Thy favour*," פְּנֵיךָ. The pronoun is feminine, and the queen, the church, is especially meant.

Q. Have we not a further conclusive argument in Is. ii. 2, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the tops of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it?"

A. Unquestionably. "The last days," or latter days, signify the time of the Messiah. As Solomon's temple, the centre of Israel's worship, was placed upon a mountain, to which the people resorted with their sacrifices from distant places, so the church of Christ and its instituted worship are represented as a temple built upon a mountain. "Mountains" and "hills" are scripture symbols of the greater and lesser kingdoms of the earth (Amos iv. 1, Jer. li. 25), and the passage plainly teaches the establishment of the church

by these kingdoms, or the national acknowledgment and support of the religion of Christ.

Q. Does not Rev. xi. 15, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ," forcibly teach this duty of nations?

A. Very forcibly. Because its manifest interpretation is, that it teaches a national recognition of the authority of Christ, and a national profession of his religion as kingdoms promised to Christ. It is not the private and individual regard of many of the inhabitants of the land that constitutes it the kingdom of its Prince, but the publicly declared and pledged allegiance of the people, and of their representatives. "It imports their becoming Christ's as formerly they had been antichrist's. As the nations under antichrist did acknowledge and submit to antichrist in a national way, so shall they as solemnly reject antichrist, and take Christ in his room, and become his people in a national capacity," by submitting to his authority, and embracing and supporting the true religion.

Q. Does not Rev. xxi. 24—26 beautifully seal this argument in proof of the duty of nations nationally to acknowledge and support the true religion?

A. Yes. Here are glorious blessings promised. "The kings of the earth in the church." "The nations walking in the light of Zion." The kings of the earth promoting the prosperity of the church by consecrating the wealth and glory of their empires to the Son of God, to beautify the place of his sanctuary.

Q. Is not the Christian religion, or church of Christ, adapted to exert a benign influence upon the nation by which it is embraced?

A. Yes, in a great variety of ways. 1. It teaches the true character of civil government, as a benign institution of heaven, or God's own minister for the promotion of the happiness of man, and is adapted by its teachings to restrain tyranny on the one hand, and to prevent anarchy on the other, by establishing the just spheres of rulers and ruled. 2. It is favourable to *true liberty*, by checking selfishness and inspiring benevolence, and teaching a strict moral equality.

3. It operates favourably upon national wealth, as it requires all to "be diligent in business," for "he that will not work shall not eat;" teaches moderation in the use of earthly good, and inspires all to exercise a tender regard for the poor, and prevent, or at least ameliorate, the evils of pauperism, "which spread like a leprosy over an immoral population." 4. Greatly promotes the peace of a nation. It proclaims "peace on earth and good will towards men;" unites men and nations in the bonds of Christian love; and securing peace with God, inclines its subjects to "follow peace with all men;" and will ultimately eradicate the fierce and warlike passions of our depraved nature, and bring about, in proportion as it is nationally embraced, that blessed period when "nations shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." 5. It secures the true morality of a nation. It alone carries with it those influences by which corrupt man is changed in the disposition of his mind, and his affections are sanctified. Its laws and institutions are adapted to advance the same process of purification; particularly its *Sabbath* is a national blessing, as the most effectual instrumentality for the promotion of the national morality and piety. 6. It places the nation which embraces and practises it under the divine protection, and secures it "God's full flood" of blessings, so that by his arm it is defended against all its foes, and by his bounty it is rendered prosperous and happy. Thus Israel was protected and blessed, as the nation adhered to the religion of the Messiah; but "wrath came upon it to the uttermost" when his religion was corrupted and abandoned.

Q. Is not God's ordinance, as his minister, qualified to exert upon the church the most happy influence?

A. Yes. 1. The state may legally recognise and protect the true religion, and thus make religion honourable in the nation, and secure to it a wide-spread influence. For this reason rulers, in scripture, are called "the shields of the earth," and *as such*, the *property* of Christ, (Ps. xlvii.,) and "nursing fathers," so that by a just administration the pious may "lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness

and honesty." 2. The civil government can interpose the sanction of the law, and thus secure a national observance of the Christian Sabbath, without which sanction the church cannot enjoy in peace her Sabbaths, and without which institution the nation will become utterly demoralized. 3. The civil magistrate may restrain many things injurious to religion and the best interests of society. Prov. xx. 24, "A wise king scattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel over them." 1 Pet. ii. 14, "Governors, who are sent, for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well." Rom. xiii. 4. Gross blasphemy, profane swearing, open idolatry, and desecration of the Sabbath, are legitimate objects of magistratical interference, not merely as prejudicial to the commonwealth and offensive to the members of society, but as injurious to religion, and highly displeasing to the Almighty. 2 Chron. xiv. 2—5; Job. xxxi. 26—28. 4. A nation may maintain religion by pecuniary support. Numb. xviii. 26, "When ye take of the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you *from them* for your inheritance." 2 Chron. xxxi. 4, 5; Neh. x. 32, xiii. 10. Predictions, Psalm lxxii. 10—15; Is. lx. 3, 6, 9.

Q. What will necessarily be the consequence to a nation of an entire separation of religion from the state?

A. Civil society will become essentially and avowedly infidel, and the nation be subjected to the terrible judgment denounced by Jehovah. Is. lx. 12. "The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee (*the church*) shall *perish*; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted."

Q. Is it practicable for the nations to maintain an entire neutrality respecting religion?

A. No. The nations cannot separate themselves entirely from religion: but the evil is—they have usually assumed an unhallowed supremacy over the church; and even where, as in our own country, they profess indifference, they assume a lordly power over the subject, and dare to place "the bride, the Lamb's wife," in the same position, as it respects their "nourishing" care, with the false systems, Mahometan, Papal, and Pagan. Christianity scorns mere *toleration* as an associate with idolatry, and superstition, and falsehood—she is

exclusive and uncompromising, and demands implicit acknowledgment.

Q. Is this a "*peculiar*" doctrine of the Reformed Presbyterian Church?

A. Nearly so. Some other denominations have maintained it. Generally it is loosely held; and has, of late, become unfashionable, through a spirit of conformity to an infidel world—and is now left by *the many* in the hands of the "two witnesses," to be maintained as a reviled and contemned portion of "the Testimony of Jesus."

SECTION IX.

On the Spiritual Independence of the Church of Christ.

Q. Is the church of Christ *absolutely* independent?

A. No, she is not; inasmuch as she is in all things subject to her only King and Head, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Q. In what, then, does her spiritual independence consist?

A. Her spiritual independence consists in this—SHE IS ABSOLUTELY FREE FROM ALL MERELY HUMAN SUPREMACY.

Q. If the civil ruler, as you have taught, is under obligation to acknowledge and support the church of Christ, *as a nurse*, must he not as a nurse have authority over it?

A. The civil ruler is a nurse to the church merely *as to the care* he must exercise concerning it, in the supply of nourishment, &c. (*Thou shalt suck the breast of kings*), but he has no *authority in nor over it*, the *authority* is in the *parent* and Head of the church. 2 Cor. vi. 18. "*I will be a Father unto you, saith the Lord Almighty.*"

Q. In what light, then, are we to consider the administration of civil rulers respecting the church?

A. Whatever service the civil ruler may be required by the law of God, to render the church, he acts only in his

civil capacity, in the legitimate exercise of his civil rule, and not from any ecclesiastical authority *in or over* the church?

Q. Does his ministry, then, respecting the church, simply regard things *external* to the church, things *circa sacra*, which relate only to her outward prosperity and comfort?

A. This is the whole extent of his privilege in this respect. He acts simply as a civil ruler, who is "the minister of God" in that capacity, and is bound as such to promote the welfare of the church—or the interests of piety in the administration of the civil dominion with which he is intrusted. 1 Tim. ii. 2. Their administration is to be such, that Christians "may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all **GODLINESS** and honesty."

Q. Are not church and state mutually dependent powers?

A. By no means. They are *co-ordinate*, but not mutually dependent powers. They have distinct authority and spheres of action; and are mutually in their respective spheres, *absolutely* independent of each other.

Q. What? Have you not taught us—that the church is to be "*established*" in the "tops of the mountains," and exalted above the hills," pre-eminent above all the civil kingdoms of the world? Has she not, therefore, *authority over the state*?

A. This pre-eminence of the church in the times referred to, respects her simply *as an object of care, respect, and interest*, to the nations of the earth—but does not inculcate the anti-Christian doctrine—that the church (or her officers) *has* any dominion over the nations.

Q. What do you mean, then, by *co-ordinate powers*?

A. Simply that they are powers which are equal as it respects authority, and strictly independent of each other; whilst, being respectively subject to the same *supreme King and Lawgiver*, they may live in happy alliance, and mutually co-operate, in their respective spheres, in the promotion of the same great ends—the *glory of God*, and the *good of man*.

Q. May not church and state be mutually *subservient*, whilst they are not strictly *subordinate*, one to the other—but mutually independent?

A. **SUBSERVIENCY** is the proper term. Neither is *subor-*

dinate to the other; but, as has been fully shown, they may happily, each in its own manner, subserve the interests of the other—the church promote the good of civil society, and the state foster the interests of piety.

Q. Is the church, then, absolutely independent of *all human control*?

A. Yes, strictly so. No earthly power, be it king, prelate, Pope, or synod—or “*We the people*” (civilly or ecclesiastically viewed), has any right to domineer over the church. It is composed of Christ’s *freemen*, and is itself free from all outward control. Mat. xxiii. 8, 9, 10. “Call no man your father upon the earth—neither be ye called masters.”

Q. May not the state extend to the church protection, and countenance, and pecuniary support, and friendly co-operation, without exercising any supremacy over her?

A. Yes. All this, we have seen, the state may legitimately do—but has no right to dictate the creed of the church, to institute its laws, to appoint its ministers, or to interfere in any one way with either its constitution or administration.

Q. May not the church exist, independently of, and even flourish, without the friendly alliance and co-operation of the state?

A. Yes. The church has not only existed, but flourished independently of both these, and even in defiance of the wrath, opposition, and persecuting rage of the state—because she possesses a living and almighty energy—THE ETERNAL SPIRIT, to apply her truth, and render effectual her institutions upon the conscience and life of her members, and to gather in “the travail of the (Redeemer’s) soul,” and not all the power of the civil arm when made bare in wrath, and wielding the sword of persecution, has been, or can be, able to paralyse this energy.

Q. Is it not pure and undisguised Erastianism, to maintain that such alliance is essential to *the being* of the church.

A. Yes. Such a principle is degrading to the honour of the church, and subversive of the very end of its existence.

Q. Whilst this alliance is not essential to the existence, may it not be beneficial to the well-being of Zion?

A. Yes. This is the proper light in which to contemplate the subject. Human beings may exist without many external things, which, however, when possessed, conduce largely to their comfort, peace, and enjoyment: consequently, the fact of the church's capability of existence even in defiance of the opposition of the state, constitutes no argument against their friendly alliance and co-operation, but is evidence, by contrast, of the mutual benefit of such alliance and co-operation.

Q. Whilst church and state are strictly co-ordinate powers, and the latter has no dominion over the ecclesiastical society as such, and the former over the civil as such, yet may not the same persons, in respect of different relations, be *superior* or *inferior* to another person, and may require another, and be themselves required, to fulfil relative duties; and in case of delinquency, may arraign others, or be themselves arraigned, pursuant to the laws of their respective courts?

A. Yes. Thus ministers, as ambassadors of Christ, have a right to require magistrates, *as church members*, faithfully to execute their magistratical power, so as may best promote the honour of Christ, and the welfare of his church; and in case of gross acts of maladministration, may inflict upon them the censures of the house of God. And, on the other hand, magistrates have a right to require ministers *as their subjects*, faithfully to execute ministerial power, as an excellent means of rendering the nation pious and virtuous, in order that its happiness may thereby be promoted.

Q. Will not this principle, if duly attended to, and judiciously applied, free the Westminster Confession of Faith from the false imputation of Erastianism, charged upon it by modern reformers?

A. Most certainly. "There are several articles in the *twentieth, twenty-third, and thirty-first* chapters, which have been much inveighed against, as giving the magistrates too much power in the church of Christ. Let it be considered that he can convoke synods, *not formally as ecclesiastical judicatories, but only as members of the commonwealth*, in which character they are *his subjects*. Rom. xiii. 1. "When

convened, surely they are bound to do what is most calculated to promote the glory of God. If their synodical deliberations be calculated to do so, should they not essay them? Should they become remiss, ought he not to require them, *as his subjects*, to do their duty?" If he view these things with indifference, *he cannot be "the minister of God for good to men."*

Q. Where is this duty of magistrates clearly and scripturally expressed?

A. It is clearly expressed and amply sustained by scripture in the following quotation from "Reformation Principles." "It is the duty of the Christian magistrate to take order, that open blasphemy and idolatry, licentiousness, and immorality be suppressed, and that the church of Christ be supported throughout the commonwealth; and for the better discharge of these important duties, it is lawful for him to call synods, in order to consult with them; to be present at them, not interfering with their proceedings, (unless they become manifestly seditious and dangerous to the peace,) *but supporting the independency of the church and its righteous decisions, and preserving its unity and order against the attempts of such despisers of ecclesiastical authority as should endeavour, in a riotous manner, to disturb their proceedings.*" This doctrine is amply sustained by the following texts: Rom. xiii. 4; Lev. xxiv. 16; 2 Chron. xiv. 2, 3; Rev. xvii. 16; Prov. xx. 26; Ps. ci. 8; Prov. xiv. 34, xvi. 12; Is. xlix. 23, lx. 10—12, lxii. 4; 2 Sam. xxiii. 3; 2 Chron. xxix. 2, 4, 15, xxx. 22; Rev. xxi. 24; Dan. vii. 22; 2 Cor. x. 31; Ps. cxxxvii. 5, cxii. 7.

Q. Would not such an exercise of authority infringe upon the liberty and independence of the church?

A. By no means. In the friendly alliance supposed to exist between church and state, the latter has not only engaged to "nourish" the church, but the rulers of the church, in their sphere, have engaged to discharge their duty, for the good of the state, and it is perfectly within the sphere of the civil authority to require the ecclesiastical to do its duty according to the acknowledged constitution of the

church, which has become the law of the land; and so reciprocally in reference to the delinquency of the state authorities.

Q. How are we to regard any interference of the civil powers with the legitimate independence of the church?

A. Such interference must be regarded as an unhallowed invasion of the rights of the people, and a monstrous usurpation of the inalienable rights and prerogatives of the church's glorious HEAD.

Q. Has not the church greatly suffered from such interference?

A. She has. For from such interferences have sprung some of the grossest corruptions and severest sufferings of the church; and they cannot be too jealously watched against, or too indignantly repelled.

Q. Is not PATRONAGE a gross invasion upon the liberty and independence of the church, and the prerogatives of her glorious Head?

A. Yes. It is one of the most daring invasions of right and usurpation of Christ's authority over the church, inasmuch as it subjects the minister of religion to the absolute control of the state.

Q. What is *patronage*?

A. By patronage we understand the right claimed for certain men, on the ground of *property* alone, to nominate ministers to parishes or congregations.

Q. What may this definition comprehend?

A. It may comprehend not only those cases in which one man exercises the right of nomination to the exclusion of all other parties, but those also in which men, on the ground of merely civil and secular qualifications, *co-operate* with a congregation in the selection of a minister.

Q. In how many forms does this evil appear?

A. This evil, which we condemn, appears in many forms. 1. Whenever men, on account of superior wealth or elevated rank, assume the power of dictating a minister to the members of Christ's flock—*there is patronage*. 2. Whenever men unconnected with the church by membership, are permitted on account of some largesses bestowed by them for

the erection of a place of worship, to enjoy a share in the election of a minister—*there is patronage*. 3. Wherever, on condition of contributing to the support of a congregation, the interference of men, neither holding nor seeking to hold the privileges of membership, is sanctioned in the choice of a pastor—*there is patronage*. 4. Wherever, *by the erastian legislation of a state*, a civil right to nominate ministers is conferred on men, who may be members of any church, or members of no church whatever—*there is patronage, and THERE IS A CHURCH ENSLAVED*."

Q. Are not such claims, especially in the *fourth* form, utterly inconsistent with the spiritual independence of the church?

A. Yes, most clearly. For the church is a kingdom, as we have seen, under the administration of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a kingdom of which he is *the supreme and sole Head*. "This truth," to use the words of the famous GILLESPIE, "that Jesus Christ is a king, and hath a kingdom and government in his church, distinct from the kingdoms of this world, and from the civil government, hath this commendation and character above all other truths, that Christ himself suffered to the death for it, and sealed it with his blood." Patronage interferes with the right of the Head of the church to legislate in all matters pertaining to the internal administration of his kingdom, and with her spiritual independence under him.

Q. Can patronage stand the test of a reference to its origin?

A. Our *Fathers* of the *First Reformation* in Scotland, clearly held that it could not, and they have recorded their conviction on the subject in language not to be misunderstood. 1. *The Second Book of Discipline* contains these words, "Because this order which God's word craves cannot stand with patronage, and presentation to benefices, used in the Pope's Kirk, we deem all them that truly fear God, earnestly to consider that, forasmuch as the names of patronages and benefices, together with the effect thereof, have flowed from the Pope and corruption of the Canon law only—and, forasmuch as that manner of proceeding hath no

ground in the word of God, they ought not to have place in the light of Reformation." (1578.) To the same effect we find the Reformers of 1649 issuing the following clear decision: "Considering that patronages and presentations of Kirks is an evil and bondage under which the Lord's people and ministers of the land have long groaned, and that it has no warrant in God's word, but is founded only in the Canon law, and a custom Popish, and brought into the Kirk in the time of ignorance and superstition," &c. This quotation from the act of the Scottish Estates of Parliament sufficiently proves the origin to be in the darkness and superstition of Popery.

Q. How did it originate in these dark and superstitious times?

A. In several ways. 1. Individuals and communities under the influence of superstitious notions built and endowed churches, and the law in recognition of this act of benevolence reserved for them and for their successors the disposal of the benefices. 2. Ambitious men, not satisfied with civil preëminence, gradually obtained the right of nominating to benefices, in order that their importance in the eyes of the vulgar might be enhanced by investiture with a spiritual prerogative. 3. There was another source of patronage. Wily ecclesiastics, intent upon wealth and aggrandizement, fostered the notion that by human merit divine favour was acquired. Largesses to the church were exhibited as meritorious in the highest degree, by many plain-spoken statements, and many convenient inuendoes. In return for such kindness, the right of patronage was assigned to the deluded votaries of superstition.

Such was the origin of patronage. Let us never forget, however, that hired charity is but an equivocal virtue, whilst a church that could sanction the bestowment of ecclesiastical privileges for *money* will find its prototype in Simon Magus with greater success than its first Pope in Simeon Peter.

Q. What is therefore the character of Patronage in any and all of its forms?

A. It is a gross violation of the rights of the freemen of

Christ, and usurpation of *His* royal prerogatives as King in Zion; and thus subverts the spiritual independence of the church.

Q. In how many ways may a nation violate the independence of the church?

A. In a great many ways. 1. When civil rulers claim the right of prescribing a *creed* or confession to the church, and, perhaps, of enforcing submission to it by civil penalties. 2. When they undertake to regulate the *government* of the church, in virtue of usurped supremacy over her. 3. When they claim a right of *nominating* her office-bearers, or of authoritatively determining in whose hands that right shall be placed. 4. When they *control the meetings of ecclesiastical courts*, convening, proroguing, or dissolving them at pleasure; or limiting them with regard to the matters discussed in them. 5. When they tamper with the *worship* of the church, loading it with rites and ceremonies, and disguising the beautiful simplicity of New Testament worship, by pompous additions of human inventions. 6. When they interfere with the *discipline* of the church, by admitting or excluding members, annulling ecclesiastical censures, or dictating terms of Church fellowship. Let her "*stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made her free.*"

Q. Is it, indeed, a truth that Christ hath granted to his people the right of electing their own pastors free from the yoke of patronage in any of its aspects?

A. Yes. Acts xiv. 23, were it alone, would be sufficient proof. "And when they had *ordained* them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord," &c. *Χειροτονέω* (*ordained*) signifies to hold out the hand, compounded of *χείρ*, the hand, and *τείνω*, to extend. The action of holding out the hand is expressive of choice and resolution. It marks a decision of the will, whether intended or executed.

The word is used to signify *divine appointment*, Acts x. 21; *human choice*, 2 Cor. viii. 19; and it signifies to elect to office by holding up the hand. "At Athens some of the magistrates were called *χειροτονητοί*, because they were elected by the people in this manner."—*Parkhurst*. "Election

and consequent ordination of elders in the church.' Thus it is manifest from the critical import of the passage that Christ hath conferred the right of the choice of pastors, *by the free suffrages of the MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH, without respect of persons*, and thus in this respect secured the independence of His church.

Q. Has not the free Church of Scotland given a noble testimony to this right of Christ's people, and His crown right as the sole King in Zion?

A. Yes. She has nobly unrolled one fold of the ancient flag of the *Covenant*, and brought to view a portion of its glorious inscription, *Christ's crown*. But to be a consistent *witness*, she must testify to Christ's prerogative of "*KING OF KINGS*," and dissenting from the British ecclesiastico-civil constitution "*as a horn of the Beast*," unfurl the whole ancient flag, and display the full inscription, in rich emblazonry, **CHRIST'S CROWN AND COVENANT.**

SECTION X.

On the Right and Duty of Dissent from an immoral Constitution of Civil Government.

Q. Is civil society a voluntary or involuntary association?

A. Civil society is a *voluntary* association. Men are not only social beings, but rational and free agents, and all have naturally equal rights; and, consequently, have a right to judge of the character of the government about to be constituted, or already constituted, and to unite with it, or not, as their best judgment may determine. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

Q. Is a civil government bound to admit to its peculiar privileges every person who may reside within the reach of its power?

A. Certainly not. Government is, indeed, bound to extend

a paternal care over all, and should *oppress* none; but it is not under obligation to admit every character to the enjoyment of all its peculiar privileges; for the ignorance and immorality of some, and the oaths which bind others to a foreign power (the papists to the Pope, for example,) may utterly disqualify them for the discharge of the duties of loyal citizens.

Q. Has every government a right to enact laws of naturalization?

A. Yes, every government has a right to define the principles upon which it will admit *aliens* to the enjoyment of full citizenship. Deut. xxiii. 8: "The children that are begotten of them shall enter into the congregation of the Lord in the third generation." Acts xxii. 27, 28: "Tell me, Art thou a Roman? He said, Yes. And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free born."

Q. Is every person, dwelling within the limits of a nation, bound to incorporate with the national society?

A. By no means. He may claim the privilege, as Israel in Egypt, of a *sojourner* in the land, without fully incorporating with the national society. Gen. xlvii. 4: "And they said unto Pharaoh, For to *sojourn* in the land are we come." See, also, Numb. x. 29, 30; Heb. xi. 9.

Q. Does not every individual possess the right of *expatriation*?

A. Yes, every individual has a right to change his residence and his country, and thus dissolve the bonds which may have bound him to a particular community. Heb. xi. 15: "And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned."

Q. Are nations, in making laws of naturalization, and individuals in the exercise of the right of expatriation, at liberty to act arbitrarily according to their own will?

A. No. Both these rights are to be exercised in conformity to the law of God, the supreme Ruler and Judge. The laws, in the one case, must be founded on justice; and the individual, in the other, must be satisfied that by expatriating

himself he can best promote the glory of God as well as his own good. James iv. 12, 15: "There is one lawgiver. . . . For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that."

Q. Is not the individual, who declines incorporating with the national society, entitled to protection, in the enjoyment of his inalienable rights—life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness?

A. Unquestionably. Numbers xv. 15: "One ordinance shall be both for you of the congregation, and also for the stranger that sojourneth with you: as ye are, so shall the stranger be before the Lord." Exod. xxii. 21: "Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt."

Q. Is it the duty of Christians to profess allegiance to any government that may exist in providence, however hostile to the kingdom of Christ, though sustained by the majority of those within the reach of its power?

A. By no means.

Q. Why? Is it not said, "The powers that be are ordained of God? and let every soul *be subject*?"

A. The reasons are many. 1. The powers ordained of God have been shown, in a former section, to be *moral* powers. The authority which he sanctions, and to which he commends *conscientious* allegiance, is one which is "a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well." 2. Such powers as oppose God and Christ, are not ordained of God in any other sense than "the prince of the power of the air," whom they serve, is. 3. There are "thrones of iniquity, which decree mischief by a law," with which God will not "have fellowship." Ps. xciv. 20. 4. Existing governments are the organs of the devil. Rev. xiii. 12; xii. 9. "And the Dragon ('the Devil and Satan') gave him (the Roman empire, under all its forms of government, and especially in its present divided state,) his power, and his seat, and great authority." 5. They are described as waging war, at the present time, with the Lamb, God's Vicegerent. Rev. xvii. 14: "These (the ten kingdoms of the beast) shall make war with the Lamb." God, certainly, does not require any one

to yield allegiance to such. 6. Consequently, "No power which deprives the subject of civil liberty, which wantonly squanders his property, and sports with his life, or which authorizes false religion, (however it may exist according to Divine providence,) is approved of or sanctioned by God, or ought to be esteemed and supported by men, as a moral institution." Prov. xxix. 2: "When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn." xxviii. 15: "As a roaring lion, and a ranging bear, so is a wicked ruler over the poor people." Hos. viii. 4: "They have set up kings, but not by me: they have made princes, and I knew it not." Also, Ps. xciv. 20; ii. 2. 7. It follows necessarily, that to *such powers* Christians cannot bind themselves in allegiance, and maintain a moral subjection to Christ. Allegiance to governments of such a character is *rebellion* against Heaven.

Q. What kind of submission *may* be rendered to immoral and tyrannical governments, the ordinance of Satan, such as now exist?

A. Christians, in the exercise of their Christian liberty, and in the performance of the duty of "proving all things, and holding fast what is good," can submit to such governments "*for wrath's sake*," ONLY, which kind of submission has no respect to the power as *legitimate authority*, but simply, from dread of the cruelty of the *tyrant*, who pours forth his fury upon all who oppose his misrule. To God's moral ordinance as described, is allegiance due for *conscience sake*. Submission to this, is submission to God.

Q. When Christians reside under an immoral government, is not conformity to the general order of society a duty, provided this can be done without violating the divine law?

A. If the constituted authorities of a nation are not in voluntary subserviency to the Mediator, but opposed to his authority, law, and religion, for the sake of peace and order, and for the sake of contributing as much as possible to the ease and happiness of society, and from a spirit of resignation to the Divine providence, and in order to make legitimate provision for themselves and relatives, so much conformity

to the prevailing system as is consistent with their oath of allegiance to Messiah, is a duty conscientiously to be practised, although very distinct from that obedience for conscience sake which they would render to the government of their choice, to the authority which has the sanction of the Divine approbation. Jer. xxix. 4—7, "Seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace."

Q. Whilst it is the duty of Christians thus to live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty, in conformity to the laws of Christ, which are everywhere, and at all times, obligatory upon them—is it not their duty publicly to declare their dissent from an immoral constitution of civil government, within the reach of whose power they may reside?

A. This is, indeed, their duty. Because, 1. They are bound to defend God's moral ordinance of civil government, in the purity of which, God's own honour as "the Governor of the nations," is deeply involved. Rev. ii. 25, 26, "That which you have already hold fast till I come; and he that overcometh—and keepeth my works unto the end—to him will I give power in the nations," &c. Isa. viii. 16, "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples." 2. The purity of this holy ordinance cannot be preserved, if it is confounded with the existing immoral systems, and by an indiscriminate exercise of allegiance. 3. Christians are witnesses for God among men; and having in their possession "the testimony of God," in the Holy Scriptures, respecting the true character of civil government, and the duty of national subjection to Christ and his law, and respect for his holy religion, it is their duty to apply the doctrines of inspiration upon this subject, in stating and defending the truth, and condemning the existing immoral systems, and in bearing public testimony against all who uphold them. Isa. xlii. 10, "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord." Rev. xi. 3, "I will give power to my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and three score days, clothed in sackcloth;" xii. 17, "And the dragon was wroth

with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." See also Rev. xvii. 14, Acts v. 32, xxvi. 16, Micah iv. 8—18, Mark vi. 11. 4. The witnesses in Revelation are raised up not only to testify against the ecclesiastical apostasy, "The scarlet woman," or Roman church—and "the image of the beast,"—the Papacy—but also against "the seven-headed and ten-horned" beast—or the civil powers—upon which the woman rides. The nations which sustain Antichrist, and are equally, with "the man of sin," Antichristian, and are at war with the Lamb. See passages last quoted, together with Rev. xiii. 1, 2, xvii. 3—14, and xii. 11, "And they overcame him, (the devil embodied in the Roman church papacy, and civil powers,) by the blood of the Lamb and *by the word of their testimony*," xvii. 14, "These, (the civil powers,) shall make war with the Lamb—and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful."

Q. Are not virtuous persons, who, in their private capacity, are endeavouring to further the true end of civil government—the maintenance of peace and quietness in all godliness and honesty, although they *dissent* from the constitution of civil government of the nation in which they reside, entitled to protection?

A. They certainly are entitled to protection in their lives, liberties, and property; "but they are not to act inconsistently with their declared dissent, and it would be tyranny to constrain them to such measures." Exod. xxii. 21, "Thou shalt neither vex a stranger nor oppress him." See also Rom. xiii. 3, 1 Tim. ii. 2, Jer. xxi. 12, Esther iii. 8, 9.

Q. Should not "Christians, testifying against national evils, and striving, in the use of moral means, to effect a reformation, relinquish temporal privileges, rather than do anything which may appear to contradict their testimony, or lay a stumbling-block before their weaker brethren?"

A. This is unquestionably their duty. Because they cannot convince men of their own sincerity, and of the immorality of a principle or practice, whilst they themselves are

found actually maintaining the immoral principle or practice, (by oath of allegiance, voting, and holding offices, &c.,) and enjoying the emoluments of iniquity decreed by law. Heb. xi. 24, 26, 36, "By faith, Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Esteeming the reproach of Christ to be greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. And others had trials of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonments." Numb. xxiii. 9, "Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations." Rom. xiv. 21, "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended."

Q. Will not such a public dissent from immoral governments, and faithful testimony against them, ultimately prevail to their overthrow?

A. Yes. By these means the witnesses will prevail, however much they may suffer in the meantime, and will be the honoured instruments of establishing the millennial kingdom of the Lamb. Rev. xii. 11, "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." Dan. vii. 22, "The Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." Rev. xx. 4, "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, (the civil powers,) neither his image, (the Papacy,) neither had received his mark, (yielded allegiance,) upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

Q. Is not this doctrine of the right and duty of dissent from immoral constitutions of civil government, a doctrine peculiar to the Reformed Presbyterian Church?

A. Yes. It is a principle peculiar to them, for they alone hold it as a doctrine, and give a practical exemplification of it by refusing oaths of allegiance, voting at the polls, and holding office,—and other modes by which they can declare their dissent from the immoral constitutions of government

where they reside, and testify publicly against them, and exhibit in contrast the excellency and majesty of civil government as the moral ordinance of heaven.

SECTION XI.

On the Duty of Covenanting and the Permanent Obligations of Religious Covenants.

Q. What is a covenant ?

A. A covenant is a mutual engagement between two parties, in which certain performances are stipulated on the one hand, and certain promises on the other.

Q. Wherein does a covenant differ from a *law*, a *vow*, and an *oath* ?

A. 1. It differs from a *law* in this, that it supposes mutual stipulations, while in a law there is no stipulation whatever, but simply the authority of a superior enjoining obedience on an inferior. 2. It differs from a *vow*, inasmuch as, while a covenant supposes engagement on *both sides*, a vow supposes engagement on *one side* only; a person who vows engaging to perform some particular service without any promise being supposed to be annexed to the performance. 3. It differs from an *oath*; an oath being nothing more than a solemn appeal to God for the truth of some assertion that is made, without, as in a covenant, either an engagement to duty, or promise of reward. 4. In a covenant, then, there is engagement by *two* parties—in a vow there is engagement by *one* party only—in an oath there is no engagement at all.

Q. Does a covenant, whilst it differs from each, at the same time suppose the existence of a *law*, and include both an oath and a vow ?

A. Yes. "A covenant proceeds upon the supposition of something being obligatory, and here is the idea of *law*. It

implies an engagement to perform what is admitted to possess the obligation; and here is the idea of a *vow*. It supposes the covenanter to appeal to God with regard to the sincerity of his intentions, and here is the idea of an oath."

Q. Are the terms covenant, vow, oath, used interchangeably to describe the same transaction?

A. Yes. According as one or other of these is designed to be prominently expressed, the same deed may be described by one or other of these terms.

Q. What does a covenant suppose in addition to the above definition, and as expressing a difference between a law, a vow, or an oath?

A. It supposes the promise of a reward which is not necessarily involved in any of the others.

Q. Are covenants either *civil* or religious?

A. Yes. 1. *Civil*, when entered into between men or societies of men with respect to the affairs of this life. 2. *Religious*, when entered into between God and men with respect to the duties men owe to God, more especially religious duties.

Q. Are religious covenants either *personal* or *social*?

A. They are both. 1. *Personal*, when an individual engages, on the one hand, to keep the commandments of the Lord, and takes hold by faith, on the other, of God's gracious promise. 2. *Social*, when a society engages with joint concurrence to perform certain duties, and to embrace with one heart the precious promises of Jehovah.

Q. Is it competent to any society, be it a family, a church, or a nation, to enter with common understanding and consent into a federal transaction?

A. Yes. And when this is done by a large corporate body, the transaction is called a *public social covenant*; which is the subject of consideration in this section.

Q. What is public social covenanting?

A. It is a solemn religious transaction in which men, with joint concurrence, avouch the Lord to be their God, and engage, in all the relations of life, to serve him by obedience to his law, in the performance of all civil and religious duties, in the confidence of his favour and blessing in the fulfilment

to them of all his gracious promises. Deut. xxix. 10-13. "Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Israel. Your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger that is in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water; that thou shouldst enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day: that he may establish thee to-day for a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." Josh. xxiv. 1, 25. 2 Chr. xv. 9, 12, 15. Is. xix. 18. Jer. xi. 10.

Q. By what arguments can it be proved that public social covenanting is of divine authority, and so of moral obligation?

A. By numerous arguments. 1. The light of nature. The mariners of Tarshish, Jonah i. 16. "Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, *and made vows.*" Epictetus, a heathen moralist, thus expresses himself: "To this God we ought to swear an oath, such as the soldiers swear to Cæsar. They, indeed, by the inducement of their wages, swear that they will value the safety of Cæsar before all things; and will you, then, honoured with so many and so great benefits, not swear to God? or having sworn, will you not continue stedfast?" 2. Scripture precepts. Ps. lxxvi. 11. "Vow and pray unto the Lord your God." Jer. iv. 6. "Thou shalt *swear* the Lord liveth in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness." Also, xliv. 26, and Deut. x. 20. 2 Chr. xxx. 8. "Yield (*give the hand*) yourselves unto the Lord—and serve the Lord your God;" and Rom. vi. 13, Mat. v. 33. "*Thou shalt perform unto the Lord thy oaths.*" Rom xii. 1. 3. Scripture examples. Deut. xxvi. 15-19. "Thou hast avouched the Lord to be thy God—and the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people—that thou shouldst keep all his commandments." xxix. 10-13. Quoted above, Josh. xxiv. 1, 25—"So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day," &c. 2 Kings xi. 17. "And Jehoiada made a covenant be-

tween the Lord and the king and the people, that they should be the Lord's people." xxiii. 1, 2; also, Neh. x. 29, &c.

Q. Is not covenanting a duty confined to ancient times, and not obligatory under the present dispensation?

A. As it is of *moral* obligation, it is consequently a duty incumbent upon present times; for things which are *moral* do not diminish in their obligation by the lapse of time.

Q. By what arguments can its obligation in New Testament times, be solidly proved?

A. By the following. 1. It was obviously a duty under the Old Testament dispensation, and being *nowhere repealed*, and being moral and not typical, it is of present obligation. Ps. lxxvi. 11, "Vow and pray unto the Lord your God." 2. Scripture prophecies, evidently referring to New Testament times, and even yet to be fulfilled. Is. xix. 18, 21, 23, 24, 25, "In that day (the latter day) shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear to the Lord of hosts," &c., &c. Jer. iv. 4, 5. "In those days (*Mil-lennial*), and in that time, saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping; they shall go and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, *Come and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten.*" 3. The New Testament recognises the obligation. Rom. vi. 13. Compare 2 Chr. xxx. 8, 2 Cor. viii. 5. The Macedonian churches, says Paul, "Not as we hoped, *but first gave their ourselves unto the Lord*, and unto us by the will of God." Not in the Lord's supper, which Paul certainly *hoped* they would do, but to his surprise, in a *public social covenant*. Rom. i. 31. "Covenant breakers" have a place in the catalogue of sinners, whose conduct is denounced as displeasing to the Almighty; which could not be the case, unless on the supposition of the continued obligation of covenanting. 4. It was one of the distinguishing privileges of the Jews to be in covenant with God. "I am married unto you, saith the Lord." The privileges of the New Testament dispensation are increased and not diminished. Heb. xii. 18, 22. 5

This duty is involved in the church's relation to God, as a married relation. Hos. ii. 19, 20; Eph. v. 30, iv. 25. Covenanting is only a solemn recognition of this relation, and engagement to evidence this by a life and conversation becoming the Gospel. Is. lxii. 4, evidently alludes to New Testament times, and celebrates not only an ecclesiastical, but national marriage. By the *marriage of a land* unto God, we are not to understand that the trees of the forest, the mountains or plains come under engagements. Surely it must be the nation inhabiting the land. National marriage implies a national deed whereby the inhabitants, in their national capacity, solemnly covenant unto God. 6. The duty, when performed in its true spirit, is a source of unspeakable benefit to a people; and, as nations seek the blessing, they should perform the duty. Ps. cxliv. 15, "Happy is that people that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord." Bound to God and he to them in "an everlasting covenant, not to be forgotten."

Q. Have covenants a distinct intrinsic obligation peculiar to themselves?

A. Yes. Covenants possess an obligation distinct from God's law. The covenanter is brought under an additional obligation to do the will of God. He is bound not merely by the naked authority of the divine word, but by his own voluntary act. "The covenant does not bind to *anything additional* to what the law of God contains, but it *additionally* binds—it superinduces a new and *different* obligation. As in the case of an oath. The obligation to tell the truth, is universal and perpetual; but an oath brings the person who swears, under an additional obligation. Before he took the oath, if he deviated from the truth, he was guilty simply of lying; now he is guilty of *perjury*. Before, he violated only the authority of God; now he violates both the authority of God and the obligation of his oath."

Q. What constitutes the *formal* reason of covenant obligation?

A. It is the personal act of the covenanter which constitutes the formal reason why a duty, when sworn to, is binding as a covenant duty, and not the obligation of the divine

law, or morality of the act. "Were the morality of the duty the reason of covenant obligation, then all mankind would be formally covenanters, because the reason extends unto all, inasmuch as the moral law binds every man. Thus covenanting would be a mere cypher, and carry no obligation in it at all; for it does not affect the morality of the duty, that being the same before as after covenanting."

Q. Are public social covenants of *continuous* obligation? or, are they binding upon the posterity of the original covenanters, as long as the corporate body exists; or, until such time as the object for which they were framed has been accomplished?

A. They are; and this position is sustained by forcible arguments. 1. We find posterity recognised in the transaction between God and Jacob, at Bethel. Gen. xxviii. 13; compared with Hosea xii. 4. "He found him (Jacob) in Bethel, and there *he spake with us.*" 2. We have another remarkable instance of the transmission of covenant obligation to posterity in Deut. v. 2, 3. "The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers (only) but *with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day.*" 3. Another example occurs in Deut. xxix. 10—15; the covenant is here made with *three* descriptions of persons. 1. With those addressed adults. "Neither with *you only.*" 2. Minors. "Him that standeth here with us." 3. *Posterity.* "*Him* that is not here with us this day"—for this could have no reference to any of the Israelites then in existence, as they were all present. It must, therefore, include posterity, together with all future accessions to the community. With *them*, Moses informs us, the covenant was made, as well as with those who *actually* entered into it, in the plains of Moab. 4. Another instance in which posterity is recognised in covenant obligation is found in Joshua ix. 15. This covenant was made between the children of Israel and the Gibeonites. Between four and five hundred years after that time, the children of Israel are visited with a very severe famine, in the days of David. 2 Sam. xxi. 1. And it is expressly declared by the Lord that, "It is for Saul, and

for *his* bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites." And at the same time, v. 2, that very covenant is recognised, and the breach of it is stated, as being the formal reason of the divine displeasure. Now, had it not been for this covenant, the extirpation of the Gibeonites would not have been imputed to Israel as a thing criminal; for they were comprehended in Canaanitish nations, which God had commanded them to root out. 5. Posterity are charged with the sin of violating the covenant of their ancestors. Jer. xi. 10. "The house of Israel, and the house of Judah, have broken my covenant *which I made with their fathers*"—by which they are evidently considered as bound. 6. The principle of *federal representation* confirms this doctrine. Thus when Joseph made a covenant with his brethren, that they should carry up his bones from Egypt to the land of promise, he assumed that those whom he addressed, were the *representatives* of their successors, as he knew well that the whole of that generation should die before the deliverance of Israel by Moses. *Posterity* recognised the obligation. Ex. xiii. 19. A similar case of federal representation, is that of the Gibeonites quoted above. 6. *Infant baptism* is a forcible illustration of the continuous obligation of covenants. 7. The principle of the transmissibility of the obligations of covenants to posterity, is recognised by civilians in civil matters. In the obligations, for example, of the heir of an estate, for the engagements of his predecessor in the possession of it. All national treaties and other engagements of the corporate body, descend with all their weight upon succeeding generations."

Q. Upon what is the principle in question founded?

A. "The principle in question is founded in the right which parents have to represent their posterity in certain social transactions. It is supposed in the continued identity of society throughout successive generations. And it naturally enough follows from the common interest which children have, along with their parents, in those objects for which federal deeds are framed. In this case representation springs, not from choice, as when men appoint their civil and ecclesiastical functionaries, but from the appointment of God,

from a divinely authorized constitution—a constitution the existence of which is distinctly recognised when it is said, ‘*Levi paid tithes in Abraham, for he was yet in the loins of his father when Melchisedec met him.*’ Here the principle is clearly admitted by God himself.”

Q. What is the *reason* of this continuous obligation of covenants?

A. 1. God will have it so. 2. The *permanency* of the subject coming under the obligation. The church and nations are corporations existing and perpetuated in the succession of generations—one generation passeth away and another cometh—the succeeding coming into the obligations of the preceding—and God as a party to such deeds *always exists*. 3. The sameness of the relation to the moral Governor of the universe. The corporation and all its members are related to God as moral subjects to a rightful sovereign. The duties being moral to which the covenant binds, by virtue of the moral relation of the corporate society to the Divine Sovereign in its successive generations, it is bound by the deed. 4. Obedience to God, according to his law, is a debt which no one generation can fully pay, and remains to each successive generation the same—hence the covenant obligation must be continuous. 5. Covenanting is a means of holiness—each successive generation needs to be sanctified, and consequently each successively needs this instrumentality—hence covenant obligation is transmitted with the stream of succeeding generations.

Q. Is not the principle of the transmissible nature of the obligation of public social covenants founded in reason and equity?

A. Yes. “The principle is this, That, when the matter of a covenant is lawful, and the parties continue to exist, the covenant itself retains its obligation until the object it contemplates has been gained. Thus a covenant between God and the church, or between God and a nation, continues obligatory long after the original framers of it have been gathered to their fathers. The object contemplated may be a degree of Reformation hitherto unattained. The parties, too, must be held as continuing to exist, God the one party

being the eternal God, and the church, or the nation, the other party, continuing in virtue of that identity which a corporate body possesses. This identity is not affected by the constant changes society may undergo as regards its individual members, just as the incessant changes which take place in the particles of the human body have no effect in destroying the personal identity of the individual."

Q. Is not this principle of the continuously transmissible obligation of covenants highly advantageous in its tendency?

A. Yes. 1. "It strengthens that sense of gratitude to God by which men are stimulated to obedience, by leading the children to reflect on his goodness, in having regard to their welfare in the covenant made with their fathers, and comprehending them in the same federal transaction. Thus Peter reminds the Jews, Acts iii. 28, 'Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers.' 2. It inspires confidence in the promised mercies of God, and affords ground to hope that he who has been gracious, in times that are past, to the fathers, will be gracious still to their children. Thus Moses encouraged the people of Israel. Deut. iv. 32: 'He will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, *nor forget the covenant of thy fathers, which he swore unto them.*' 3. It furnishes a powerful argument in pleading with God at a throne of grace, as we find exemplified and confirmed in Jeremiah's expostulation with God concerning the state of his nation; xiv. 22, 'Do not abhor us for thy name's sake; do not disgrace the throne of thy glory; remember, *break not thy covenant with us.*' 4. It throws a shield over a people by which the wrath of God is averted. Lev. xxvi. 44, 45: 'Yet for all that,' says the Lord, 'when they lie in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them to destroy them utterly, and *to break my covenant with them,* for I am the Lord their God. But I will, for their sakes, *remember the covenant of their ancestors,* whom I brought out of the land of Egypt.' 5. It is not less fitted to keep up a remembrance of the wonderful things done by God on behalf of a people, by forming a record of them, and furnishing a medium for

their transmission from generation to generation. Accordingly we find the command, 1 Chron. xvi. 12-15, 'Remember his marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders and the judgments of his mouth,' connected with the injunction, '*Be ye mindful always of his covenant, the word which he commended to a thousand generations.*' 6. Above all, it is eminently fitted, by begetting *a delightful mutual interest between fathers and children*, to promote and display the UNITY of the church. The fathers, by being required to transact for the children, and the children, by being required to recognise the deeds of the fathers, must be inspired with a double and most salutary interest in each other. All selfish and exclusive feeling is in this way rebuked. The present generation are taught to look back to the past, as the past are supposed to have looked forward to the future. Distant periods are united, and the interests of different generations concentrated.' Jno. xvii. 11: 'Holy Father, keep through thine own name, those whom thou hast given me, *that they may be one as we are.*'"

Q. Is covenanting a stated and ordinary, or occasional and extraordinary duty?

A. It is occasional and extraordinary.

Q. What are some of the times and seasons in which the church, or a nation, is called on to engage in this extraordinary yet important duty?

A. They are many and various. 1. Times of public humiliation for *apostasy from God*. Jer. l. 4, 5. 2. Times of affliction. Neh. ix. 1, 38; 2 Chr. xxxiv. 29-32. 3. Times of public reformation. 2 Kings xxiii. 1-3. 4. Times of public thanksgiving for special deliverances. 2 Kings xi. 17-20; Ps. lxxvi. 11. 5. When there is great lukewarmness and a tendency to backsliding. Deut. xxix. 10-15. 6. In view of severe conflict with the enemies of the truth, to consolidate and strengthen the Lord's host. For example—Israel before crossing the Jordan. Ps. xlv. 3; Heb. xi. 32-35. So our Fathers—and now against the combined "armies of the aliens." Rev. xix. 11. 7. Times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Is. xlv. 3-5. 8. When jealousies and contentions prevail, and there is a tendency to schism, cove-

nanting will be a happy mode of "binding up the testimony"—which is in danger of being rent by schism.

Q. Are there not reasons forcibly urging the *present* performance of this duty?

A. Yes. There are many and forcible reasons. 1. The present is a time when *reformation* is demanded both in church and state. 2. A time of peculiar temptations to draw back. 3. A time of misunderstanding and misapprehension among professors. 4. A time when the faithful performance of the duty may operate as a means of conviction upon the enemies of truth. 5. A time of suffering. Neh. ix. 38; 2 Chr. xxxiv. 21, 31, 32. 6. A time in which it is necessary to *revive the sense of covenant obligation*, which has lamentably declined, and is very feeble in the hearts of professors.

Q. Has not God, in his providence, given us, in modern times, several interesting illustrations of this divine ordinance of covenanting?

A. Yes. 1. The existence of such federal deeds can be distinctly traced in the writings of Irenæus, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and others of the early Christian fathers. 2. During the dark ages, the testimony of the Waldenses and of the Bohemian brethren to the practice can be easily adduced. 3. In more modern times it is well ascertained to have prevailed in all the Reformed churches of the continent—in Germany, France, Switzerland, and the Netherlands (*The league of Smalcalde*, for example). 4. "The Pilgrim Fathers" employed this divine ordinance as a means of preserving the privileges of true religion among themselves, and of conveying them to their posterity. 5. But the examples in which we take the deepest interest, and in which we have the fullest embodiment of the principle in question, are those given in the British Isles; viz. *The National Covenant of Scotland*, and *The solemn League and Covenant* of the three kingdoms.

Q. When and by whom was the *National Covenant* taken, and repeatedly renewed?

A. 1. At Edinburgh, on the 28th of July, 1581, the *National Covenant* was sworn. The *National Covenant* was

sworn to by King James VI. and his privy council, and soon after received the sanction of the general assembly of the church. Being cheerfully taken and subscribed by persons of all ranks throughout the land, under the direction of the constituted authorities, both civil and religious, it amounted to a solemn national surrender of the kingdom to the Lord. 2. Afterwards, in 1590, when the liberties of the church were threatened by both domestic and foreign invasions, this celebrated bond was ratified anew, under the direction of two commissions, the one consisting of 96 ministers, the other of 130 of the nobility and gentry, who were authorized to obtain subscriptions; and with such success was this business executed, under the good favour of God, that in two years thereafter, an act, ratifying the liberties of the church, and settling the Presbyterian church government in Scotland, was obtained from the king and parliament. 3. This covenant, with some additional clauses, was sworn to with great unanimity and effect at the commencement of the second reformation, in 1638, "a step which was loudly called for by the insidious attempt then made to impose, by royal authority, the Book of Ecclesiastical Canons, and thus to blot out every vestige of the reformed religion and discipline from the land."

Q. What was the substance of this interesting deed?

A. This deed formally abjured all the corruptions of the Popish system; expressed unequivocal attachment to the Confession of Faith, which, indeed, it comprehended; and embodied a clause in which the covenanters called upon God to witness the sincerity of their hearts in the solemn transaction.

Q. What was the occasion of the *Solemn League and Covenant*?

A. It was occasioned by the struggle maintained by an arbitrary and Popishly affected court against the friends of reformation and liberty in the British Isles.

Q. When was this celebrated deed prepared and taken?

A. 1. It was prepared by Alexander Henderson, received the approbation of the general assembly and the convention of estates, and was cordially subscribed by all persons of all ranks in Scotland, in the year 1643. 2. Having been deli-

berately examined by the venerable assembly of divines at Westminster, it was solemnly sworn in the Church of St. Margaret's, Westminster, by both houses of parliament, by the assembly of divines, and by persons of different ranks generally throughout England. 3. In Ireland, too, it was joyfully received by many of the Protestant population in the south, and by almost the whole body in the north; although, from the distracted state of things in that country, it could not possibly obtain the same legislative sanction as in the other two kingdoms. 4. This deed was formally and repeatedly ratified by parliament especially in 1644 and '49; and solemnly taken and subscribed by Charles II., both at Spey in 1650, and at Scoon in 1651, however perfidiously dealt by afterwards on the part of that royal hypocrite and traitor.

Q. What were the main objects of this famous deed?

A. These were "the preservation of the reformed religion in Scotland, and the reformation of religion in England and Ireland, and the bringing of the churches in the three kingdoms to the nearest conformity, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government." The Covenanters bound themselves also to preserve the civil ruler's "just power and authority," *in the preservation and defence of the true religion and liberties of the kingdom.*

Q. Is not the second article of this instrument, in which it is said, "We shall endeavour the *extirpation* of Popery, prelacy, superstition, heresy, schism, profaneness, and whatsoever shall be found contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness," chargeable with asserting persecuting principles?

A. There is nothing here which savours of persecution. There are certainly various methods of *rooting out* errors besides the anti-Christian one of putting to death the persons who hold them. "The clause makes no mention of *persons*, but of principles, as the subjects of extirpation; and surely to use all lawful means of ridding the world of such false and abominable evils as are there enumerated was not only innocent but praiseworthy. The *heresies*, not the *heretics*, were what the Covenanters had in view in the article in question."

Q. Were not the Covenants enforced by "civil pains?"

A. This charge is founded upon the Act of Parliament, 1640, enjoining the subscription of the National Covenant. To this it is answered: 1. "This is no objection to the covenants as such, but to those who, in an imprudent manner, undertook to promote their ends. 2. There is no evidence to prove that the subscription was not voluntary; but persons who had the best opportunities of knowing have declared that 'no threatenings were used, except of the deserved judgments of God, and no force except the force of reason.' 3. Liberty to subscribe was withheld in the case of some, till there should be time to try their sincerity, and to prove that they acted from love to the cause, and not from the fear of man. 4. Besides it ought to be borne in mind that these instruments had a *civil* as well as religious object; and that, although the latter might not warrant the infliction of "civil pains," the same restrictions did not apply to the former, and they ought, in candour, to be judged of in this complex character in which they were framed, enacted, sworn, and promoted. 5. Moreover, there is good reason to think that all that this vexed and startling phrase in the act in question was ever intended to provide for was, that the covenants should be employed as tests of qualification for office, *or proof of the candidate's attachment to the Reformation*. Exclusion from places of power and trust, it is believed, is all that can be proved ever to have been inflicted under this obnoxious act. The phrase, "*under all civil pains*," when taken literally, and viewed by itself, may be deemed formidable looking enough, and calculated to call up, in the imaginations of the timid and the weak, the frightful ideas of fines, confiscations, imprisonments, executions, and similar "chimeras dire;" but when fairly interpreted by the light of history, it dwindles very innocently into—"no seat in parliament." 6. This is perfectly in conformity with the principle and practice of Israel's best king. Ps. lxxv. 10. "All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off; but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted." The horn is the symbol of *civil power*. David cut off the horns, *but not the heads*, of the wicked. He deprived them of civil authority, and conferred office upon the righteous only; for "the wicked (was his experience) walk on every

side when the vilest men are exalted?" And such is the doctrine of the Covenanter.

Q. Is it not a valid objection to these deeds that they improperly *blend civil and religious matters*?

A. "The cause in which the covenanters were embarked, the enemies by whom they were opposed, and the dangers by which they were surrounded, were of both kinds. They were necessitated, therefore, to frame their measures with a view to the removal of evils, and the accomplishment of ends, both of a religious and political character; they had to have respect at once to the interests of the church, and those of the civil community."

Q. Was not the taking of the covenants a most deliberate, solemn, and sublime transaction?

A. Truly so. "Nothing could exceed the affecting solemnity with which the national covenant was renewed in 1638; the powerful and pertinent prayer of Henderson; the impressive speech of Loudon; the reading of the document 'out of a fair parchment' by Johnston; the death-like silence of the people that ensued; the sensation produced when the venerable earl of Sutherland stepped forward and appended his name first to the memorable deed; the rapidity with which it afterwards circulated round the church to receive subscriptions; the eagerness with which they crowded round it, for the same purpose, when it was spread out like a prophet's roll on flat grave-stones in the church-yard; the mingled expressions of joy and sorrow that rose from the crowd—joy at what the Lord had wrought, sorrow for personal and national sins; the shouts, the groans, the tears which succeeded; and above all the forest of right hands simultaneously uplifted in awful appeal to the searcher of hearts! These all bespeak deliberation as well as determination. Well might Henderson exclaim, 'This was the day of the Lord's power, wherein He saw his people most willingly offer themselves in multitudes like the dew-drops of the morning.' The great day of Israel, wherein the arm of the Lord was revealed; the day of the Redeemer's strength, on which the princes of the people assembled to swear allegiance to the king of kings—great, great was the day of Jezreel."

Q. Was not the influence of these covenants highly beneficial?

A. Yes. God smiled on the work, and "by the outpouring of his spirit gave the testimony of the divine approbation. Religion prospered, and the schemes of enemies were overthrown. 'Now,' said the Archbishop of St. Andrews, when he heard of the renovation of the national covenant, 'now all that we have been doing these thirty years past is thrown down at once.' 'The Lord,' says the author of the fulfilling of the scriptures, 'the Lord did let forth much of the spirit on his people when this nation did solemnly enter into covenant in the year 1638.' Many yet alive do know how their hearts were wrought on by the Lord. The ordinances were lively and longed after. Then did the nation own the Lord, and was visibly owned by him; much zeal and an enlarged heart did appear for the public cause; personal application was seriously set about; and then also was there a remarkable call of providence that did attend the actings of his people, which did astonish their adversaries, and forced many of them to feign subjection.' 'To what,' adds Paxton, 'to what must our great and lasting prosperity be owing? We believe it has been greatly owing to the covenants of our fathers, to which a faithful and gracious God has hitherto had respect. It was not the ocean that surrounds us; it was not the number and prowess of our fleets and armies, nor the wisdom of our councils (when invasion was threatened) but the sword of the Lord, and the buckler of his favour that saved us.' Thus has God conferred a moral sublimity and wondrous prosperity upon the nations that bound themselves in these sacred bonds—'*covenants not to be forgotten.*'"

Q. Are not these covenants still obligatory upon the British Isles?

A. Yes. "The matter of these covenants, we have seen, was lawful, scriptural, reasonable; the objects contemplated by them, all will admit, have not yet been attained, namely, the complete reformation of these lands, the extirpation of every anti-christian and false system, and uniformity in doctrine, discipline, and government throughout the three

kingdoms. The parties also still continue—the eternal and unchangeable God on the one hand, and the British nation on the other. Nations having a moral and even religious character, it must be admitted, are competent to enter into such solemn engagements; and those of which we speak were in every point of view *national* deeds; they were framed and concluded by the representatives of the kingdom; they were taken by the call and authority of those in power; they were sworn in a public capacity; they were ratified and confirmed by public legislative acts; the public faith was plighted by all the organs through which a nation is accustomed to express its mind and will. Sanctions less sacred; pledges less numerous and formal, would have entitled another nation to demand from Britain the fulfilment of any treaty or contract; and shall not God, who was not only a witness, but a party, nay, the principal party in these transactions, and whose honour and interests were immediately concerned, be regarded as having a claim to see that the stipulations are fulfilled?" 'The identity of a nation,' says the venerable biographer of two most distinguished covenanters, 'the identity of a nation, as existing through different ages, is, in all moral respects, as real as the identity of an individual through the whole period of his life. The individuals that compose it, like the particles of matter in the human body, pass away, and are succeeded by others, but the body politic continues essentially the same. If BRITAIN CONTRACTED A MORAL OBLIGATION IN VIRTUE OF A SOLEMN NATIONAL COVENANT FOR RELIGIOUS REFORMATION, THAT OBLIGATION MUST ATTACH TO HER UNTIL IT HAS BEEN DISCHARGED. Have the pledges given by the nation been yet redeemed? Do not the principal stipulations in the covenant remain unfulfilled at this day? Are we not a people still bound by that engagement to see these things done? Has the lapse of time cancelled the bond? Or will a change of sentiments and views set us free from its tie? Is it not the duty of all the friends of the reformation to endeavour to keep alive a sense of this obligation on the public mind? But although all ranks and classes in the nation should lose impressions of it, and although there

should not be a single religious denomination, nor even a single individual in the land to remind them of it, will it not be held in remembrance by one, with whom a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years?"

Q. Does not great guilt rest upon the British nation for its treatment of these covenants, and for the blood of the covenanters?

A. Yes. A fearful weight of guilt. "It is matter of history, that after the restoration of Charles II., who himself had solemnly sworn these vows, acts were passed denouncing as treasonable and rebellious all the proceedings of the Second Reformation, rescinding all the public securities given during that period, stigmatizing the covenants as unlawful oaths, absolving men from their obligation, and declaring all laws passed in their favour to be null and void. It is also a well known fact, that under royal authority, the covenants were publicly burned by the hands of the common hangman, at London, in 1661, at Limalithgow the year following, and afterwards at Edinburgh. It is painful to be obliged to record, that, at the revolution in 1688, which extinguished the fires of persecution (consuming the adherents of the covenants), and put an end to the tyrannous rule of the Stuarts, nothing whatever was done, either by church or state, to make reparation for these atrocious indignities"—and the blood of the covenanters, which still stains the throne and nation. Now, when we consider that "one of the heaviest charges ever brought against the people of Israel was on this ground; *they kept not the covenant of the Lord*, and refused to walk in his law. For their heart was not right with him, *neither were they stedfast in his covenant*"—and the solemn declaration of the prophet of old, "I have been very jealous for the Lord of hosts, because the children of Israel *have broken thy covenant*"—and God's own complaint, "The house of Israel, and the house of Judah, *have broken my covenant* which I made with their fathers"—how does it become the inhabitants of that covenant breaking land to ponder these words of Jehovah, *If ye will not be reformed by me, but will walk contrary unto me; then will I walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your*

sins ; AND I WILL BRING A SWORD UPON YOU THAT SHALL AVENGE THE QUARREL OF MY COVENANT. *Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land ? What meaneth the heat of this great anger ? Then shall men say, BECAUSE THEY HAVE FORSAKEN THE COVENANT OF THE LORD GOD OF THEIR FATHERS.* Lev. xxvi. 23—25 ; Deut. xxix. 24, 25.

Q. May we not indulge the hope, that, in the goodness of our covenant God, and by the promised outpouring of his Holy Spirit, “the kingdoms of the world” at large, and the British empire in particular, will dedicate themselves to God in a covenant not to be forgotten—animated by the example of our covenant fathers exhibited in these memorable deeds ?

A. Yes. We have the most cheering grounds for this blessed hope ; for it is written, that the nations at large in the spirit of devoted loyalty, shall cry—COME AND LET US JOIN OURSELVES TO THE LORD IN A PERPETUAL COVENANT, THAT SHALL NOT BE FORGOTTEN : and it cannot be well doubted, that the death-cry of the martyred Guthrie has been heard on high, and shall be verified—THE COVENANTS, THE COVENANTS, SHALL YET BE SCOTLAND’S REVIVING.

SECTION XII.

On the Application of these Principles to the Governments, where Reformed Presbyterians reside, in the form of a Practical Testimony.

Q. Under the government of what nations do Reformed Presbyterians reside ?

A. They reside within the jurisdiction of the governments of the United States and Great Britain.

Q. Is the government of the *United States*, a government to which they yield allegiance, being in its constitution and administration the ordinance of God ?

A. They do not yield allegiance to the government of the United States, but claim and exercise the right of *dissent* from its constitution, as an instrument of government having no claims to the dignity of being the ordinance of God; but as *immoral*, and hostile to the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Q. Upon what grounds do they state their dissent from the constitution of the United States?

A. In their testimony entitled "Reformation Principles," they declare, "There are moral evils essential to the constitution of the United States, which render it necessary to refuse allegiance to the whole system. In this remarkable instrument there is contained no acknowledgment of the being or authority of God. There is no acknowledgment of the Christian religion, or professed submission to the kingdom of Messiah. It gives support to the enemies of the Redeemer, and admits to its honors and emoluments, Jews, Mahometans, Deists, and Atheists. It establishes that system of robbery, by which men are held in slavery, despoiled of liberty, and property, and protection. It violates the principles of representation, by bestowing upon the domestic tyrant who holds hundreds of his fellow creatures in bondage, an influence in making laws for freemen proportioned to the number of his own slaves. This constitution is, notwithstanding its numerous excellences, in many instances inconsistent, oppressive, and impious." Part I. p. 152.

Q. Is it indeed true, that this famous constitution does not recognise the being or authority of God, or the regal authority of Jesus Christ, "the prince of the kings of the earth?"

A. It does not. If it did, the acknowledgment would be found in the PREAMBLE, which is as follows:—"We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this constitution for the United States of America."

Q. Is there any recognition of the being and authority of God and his Christ in this part of this important instrument?

A. There is evidently not. *The supreme authority* is evidently that only of WE, THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES; God and his Christ are not mentioned, nor the mediatorial supremacy recognised.

Q. But is not the being and authority of God recognised in the *oath* of office required of the President of the United States, in these words, "I do solemnly swear (or affirm), that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States," &c.?

A. Not necessarily of the TRUE GOD. Because, 1. We learn from a member of the convention that framed the constitution, LUTHER MARTIN, delegate from Maryland, that the subject was debated in the convention, and the recognition refused. "The part of the system which requires that '*no religious test*' shall ever be required as a qualification of any office or public trust under the United States, was adopted by a great majority of the convention, and without much debate. However, there were some members so unfashionable as to think that *a belief of the existence of a Deity*, and of *a state of future rewards and punishments*, would be some security for the good conduct of our rulers, and that in a Christian country it would be, at least, decent to hold out some distinction between the professors of Christianity, and downright infidelity and Paganism."—*Genuine Information*, p. 87. From this information it appears that the president may be an *Atheist*, according to the constitution, and the oath of office is, therefore, not a recognition of the being of a God, as his name is not mentioned in the form of the oath, and it contains *no appeal to Him*. 2. The Heathen swore by *their Gods*, but this was not a recognition of God; nor is he pleased with such service. Jer. v. 7. "How shall I pardon thee for this? Thy children have forsaken me, *and sworn by them that are no gods*." 3. As it was evidently intended that Atheists might hold office, by what God would they swear, *who deny the existence of a Deity*, and a future state of rewards and punishments?

Q. Does not the constitution recognise the Christian religion, and express its subjection to the kingdom of the Messiah?

A. It evidently does not. 1. From the above testimony of Luther Martin, that it was designed to hold out "*no distinction between the professors of Christianity and downright infidelity and Paganism.*" 2. From the 2d Sec. of Art. 6th, in which it is declared, "This constitution, and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof, *and all TREATIES made, or which shall be made,* under the authority of the United States, SHALL BE THE SUPREME LAW OF THE LAND." In the treaty with "TRIPOLI," *Mahometanism* is declared to be as much the religion of this nation as Christianity. "The Government," says this "*supreme law,*" "of the United States is NOT IN ANY SENSE FOUNDED ON THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION. It has in itself *no character of enmity against the laws or religion of Mussulmen.*"—*U. S. Laws, Vol. 4, Trip. Treat. Art. 2.* Christianity—the laws of the Bible, are in no sense an element of the constitution. The supreme law is, THE WILL OF WE THE PEOPLE, expressed in the constitution, laws, and treaties with foreign powers. The nation, *as such,* is INFIDEL. Yea, it is a nation *without a God.* Is. lx. 12. And the "*justice*" which they would "establish," is not that which is founded upon *that attribute* of God, but that only which the *will* of "we the people" shall *determine* to be justice.

Q. Does the constitution give support to the enemies of the Redeemer, and admit to its honours and emoluments those who are adverse to his authority, religion, and laws, even Mahometans, Deists, and Atheists?

A. This is manifestly so; as a *supreme law* declares it is not in *any sense* founded on the religion of the Bible, and refuses, as a qualification for office, that the office-bearer should believe in the existence of a Deity, or a future state of rewards and punishments; as a consequence, *infidels* have occupied, and Atheists may occupy the highest seat in the gift of *we the people.* In contrast, the scriptures require, *He that ruleth over men must be just, RULING IN THE FEAR OF THE LORD.*

Q. Is the Constitution of the United States a pro-slavery instrument?

A. Yes. It establishes that *system* of ROBBERY by which

men are held in slavery, and despoiled of liberty and property.

Q. Is not this view of that instrument zealously disputed, and is it not attempted to be proved a strongly *Anti-slavery* document?

A. Yes. By a false and sophistical scheme of interpretation, an attempt is made to free the constitution from the guilt of being, in its true import, a slave-holding instrument.

Q. What are the legitimate rules of interpretation, by the application of which, the true import of a disputed document may be correctly ascertained?

A. The following are laid down by logicians as legitimate rules of interpretation. 1. "Whatever is obscure or doubtful in a covenant should be interpreted by the *intention* of the parties. If the intention of the parties does not appear from the words of the covenant, it should be inferred from the existing customs and usages of the place, in which it was made. If *the words* of the covenant contradict the well known intention of the parties, *this intention must be regarded rather than the words.*" 2. "When former interpreters are appealed to, in order to establish the sense of an ancient writing, those, *cæteris paribus*, should be preferred, *who were nearest the author, in time or place*, as his children, pupils, correspondents, or countrymen; and who had, therefore, better advantages for knowing his mind than more distant commentators."—*Hedge's Logic*, p. 167. By the application of these established rules of interpretation to the constitution, we will be able to ascertain its real character.

Q. Does not the *preamble* to the constitution, in which it is stated that the object of the instrument is to *establish justice* and secure *the blessings of liberty* to "we the people" and their "posterity," prove the anti-slavery character of the instrument?

A. By no means. The import of the preamble depends upon the just meaning to be attached to the phrase "*We the people*," which cannot be justly interpreted as signifying any other than the *free* inhabitants of the land at the time the constitution was penned.

Q. Have you any proof that the *slaves* were not included in the phrase "*We the people*?"

A. Yes. Conclusive proof. 1. The people who *ordained* and established the constitution to secure the blessings of liberty to themselves and posterity, were *the same* who were bound together by the feeble bonds of the old "articles of confederation," which expressly declare, *Art. iv., Sec. 1*, "That the **FREE INHABITANTS** shall be entitled to the immunities of *free citizens* in the several states." The *free citizens* of the several states were united by the ties of the confederation; and these, finding those articles but "a rope of sand" to hold them together—and *these only* constitute **WE THE PEOPLE**, who ordained and established *the constitution*, to form a *more perfect union*, not with the *slaves*, but among themselves, as the *free citizens*; and to secure, *not for the slaves*, whom they *then and afterwards held in bondage*, but for *themselves and their posterity*, as then free, *the blessings of liberty*. 2. *Not a slave* had **A VOTE** (the prerogative of freemen), or cast a vote in the election of delegates to the convention which framed the constitution. That they so voted must be *proved* before they can be embraced in the phrase *we the people*. 3. *Not a slave* had the privilege of voting, or cast a vote in the election of delegates to the thirteen state conventions *that adopted* the constitution as the expression of *the sovereign will of WE THE PEOPLE*. This also must be proved in the affirmative, before the slaves can be included in the pompous phrase. 4. The inference is *irresistible*. **THE FREE INHABITANTS** of the land are **WE THE PEOPLE**; and it is not a constitution to secure the liberties of *the slave*, but of *the already free*, whilst it rivets the chains of the bondman. 5. When the constitution was ordained, and started on its career in the inauguration of Washington as the first president, the president himself was, at the time, **A SLAVEHOLDER!** and the groans and clanking of the chains of *half a million of slaves* mingled with the notes of the trumpet, the roar of artillery, and the shouts of "*We the people*" on that stupendous occasion! What a splendid mockery of *justice and liberty!*

Q. Have you any further proof of the pro-slavery character of this celebrated instrument?

A. Yes. Abundant. The first I adduce is Art. i. Sec 2. "Representatives and direct taxation shall be apportioned among the several states, which may be included within this union, according to their respective numbers, which shall be determined by adding to *the whole number of free persons*, including those bound to service for a term of years, and excluding Indians not taxed, *three-fifths of all other persons.*"

Q. Upon what in this passage does the argument hinge?

A. It hinges upon the just construction of the phrase, "*three-fifths of all other persons.*"

Q. Is it not a just construction of this clause to represent it as signifying *women, aliens, paupers, the tenants of almshouses, vagrants, &c.*; for those who would evade its true import are not agreed upon a specific meaning?

A. All these constructions are illegitimate. 1. Women, aliens, and paupers are *free persons*, and are embraced in the census of population. 2. The phrase is not in the least ambiguous. It is as plain as any *circumlocution* can be. Take it in connexion with its context, and the laws of philological construction *compel* us to adopt the term *slaves*, as the only logical interpretation, and the true synonyme of the phrase "*all other persons:*" for who are *the opposite* of "*the whole number of free persons,*" but those *who are not free*, namely, *SLAVES*? This stands nearest in the opposition to *free persons*, and legitimate construction constrains us to adopt the term. 3. This has been the uniform construction since the constitution went into operation, and sustained by this clause the slave-holding states have *twenty-five representatives* in Congress, based upon their *slave population*, more than they would be entitled to upon the basis of their *free population*!

Q. Have you any respectable authority in proof of this interpretation of the disputed clause?

A. Yes; highly respectable. BAYARD, in his "Exposition of the Constitution," confirms this interpretation as the *original intention* of the clause. "In settling the ratio of representation, another difficulty arose, respecting *the slaves*,

who form so large a portion of the inhabitants of some of the states. To compute them *among the numbers represented* would be giving them *an importance* to which their character did not entitle them; or, rather, would be introducing a representation of property, contrary to the general tenor of the constitution; *to omit them altogether* in the computation would be *to reduce the influence of the Southern States in a manner to which they would never consent*. As a medium between these, it agreed that five slaves should be accounted as three citizens, in arranging the representation, and the apportionment computed accordingly."—P. 50.

Q. Have you any additional proof that this was the *design* of the clause when enacted and adopted as the supreme law of the land?

A. Yes. LUTHER MARTIN, a member of the convention that framed the constitution, and who therefore was fully possessed of its design, fully confirms the interpretation. "With respect to that part of the first article which relates *to the apportionment of representation* and direct taxation, there were considerable objections made to it, besides the great objection of inequality. It was urged that no principle could justify taking *slaves* into computation in *apportioning* the number of *representatives* a state should have in the government. *That it involved* the absurdity of increasing the power of a state in making laws for freemen in proportion as that state violated the rights of freedom." *Slaves*, then, were the persons designed by the phrase "*three-fifths of all other persons*." Thus the constitution "*violates the principle of representation*, by bestowing upon the domestic tyrant who holds hundreds of his fellow creatures in bondage, an influence in making laws for freemen *proportioned to the number of his own slaves*."

Q. Was such the understanding of THE STATE CONVENTIONS which adopted the constitution?

A. Yes. ALEXANDER HAMILTON, a delegate from New York to the convention that framed the constitution, and the only member from New York that signed it when completed, thus urges its adoption in the *New York Convention*: "The first thing objected to is the clause (three-fifths of all other

persons) that allows a representation of *three-fifths of the negroes*. Much has been said of the impropriety of representing men who have no will of their own: whether that is reasoning or declamation (!) I will not presume to say. It is the *unfortunate* situation of the Southern States to have a great part of their population as well as *property in blacks*. The regulation complained of was one result of *the spirit of accommodation* which governed the convention; and *without this indulgence NO UNION COULD HAVE BEEN FORMED*. But, sir, considering some of the peculiar *advantages* which we derived from them, *it is entirely just they should be gratified (! !)* The Southern States possess certain *staples*—tobacco, rice, indigo, &c., which must be *capital objects in treaties of commerce with foreign nations*; and the *advantages* which they necessarily procure in these treaties *will be felt throughout the United States*." Thus the spirit of *compromise* has erected SLAVERY a column to sustain the union of these states, and this column has for its pediment the *United States Constitution*! Hamilton certainly understood the *meaning and intention* of the clause "all other persons." His interpretation is *THREE-FIFTHS OF THE NEGROES*! Yes, commercial speculation drowned in the bosom, even of an ALEXANDER HAMILTON, *the sense of justice*, and he and his compatriots did not hesitate to barter *liberty for gold*, and to strengthen and cement the union *by the bondage and blood of the negro*!

Q. Does not the venerable JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, contemporary with the framing, adoption, and administration of the constitution, confirm this interpretation?

A. Yes, fully. In his report, in the House of Representatives, on the Massachusetts resolutions, he thus comments on this clause: "In outward show it is a representation OF PERSONS IN BONDAGE; in fact it is a representation of their masters—the *oppressor* representing the *oppressed*."—"Is it in the compass of human imagination to devise a more perfect exemplification of the act of committing the Lamb to the tender custody of the wolf?"—"The representative is thus constituted, not the friend, agent, and trustee of the person whom he represents, but the most inveterate of his foes."—

"If there be a parallel to it in human history, it can only be that of the Roman Emperors, who, from the days when Julius Cæsar substituted a military despotism in the place of a republic, among the offices which they always concentrated upon themselves, was that of the tribune of the people. A Roman Emperor, Tribune of the people, is an exact parallel to that feature in the Constitution of the United States which MAKES THE MASTER THE REPRESENTATIVE OF HIS SLAVE." In the light of these contemporaneous expositions, we cannot in the exercise of sound judgment for one moment hold the clause under consideration as *in the least ambiguous*, but so well defined, understood, and so fully practised upon, that a power has been reared legitimately upon it which overtops all other powers, and threatens the enslaving or destruction of the union. "Its reciprocal operation upon the government of the nation is, to establish an artificial majority in the slave representation over that of the free people, in the American Congress, and thereby to make the preservation, propagation, and perpetuation of slavery THE VITAL AND ANIMATING SPIRIT OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT." —*Adams's Report.*

Q. May we not array one part of the instrument against the other, the good parts, for example, against the bad, for the nullification of the latter?

A. By no means. It must be received as a whole and in all its parts. Neither can we separate the good from the bad—they are so interwoven that they must stand or fall together. We cannot construe it as wholly in favour of liberty; this would be to falsify the instrument. It is a compact in compromise with the slaveholder. He claims his part of the bond, and, *if we sustain the instrument*, WE MUST YIELD HIM HIS POUND OF FLESH, DRAW BLOOD WHERE IT MAY. It is, moreover, fearfully consistent with itself, liberty for "the whole number of free people," bondage and degradation for "all other persons"—the WRETCHED NEGRO-SLAVES.

Q. What other proof have you of the *pro-slavery* character of the Constitution of the United States?

A. A conclusive argument is found in Art. i., Sec. ix

"The migration or importation of such persons as any of the States now existing may think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by Congress prior to the year 1808, but a tax or duty may be imposed on such importation not exceeding ten dollars for each person."

Q. What evidence is there that slaves are intended by the phrase "*such persons*" in this remarkable clause?

A. There is abundant evidence which cannot be fully gainsaid, because fully exhibiting the original design of this degrading clause.

Q. Are slaves, indeed, viewed as "*persons*" according to the letter and spirit of this clause?

A. American slavery, it is fully admitted, is all that the laws of the States declare it to be. The slave is "*a chattel personal*" in the hands of his owner; goods, a merchantable thing; yet, though marketable as a beast, and sold in the shambles as property, all this does not deny him to be a *person*; not *free* and *independent*, yet "*an individual human being consisting of soul and body,*" yea, "*a man, woman, or child, as opposed to things, or distinct from them.*" But a man, woman, or child, held as the *property* of another man, woman, or child, as the case may be. The slaveholder still views the slave as a human being, and will call it his *MAN*, *POMP* or *CUFFY*, his *BOY Harry*, his *WOMAN Diana*, or his *GIRL Malinda*. Take two advertisements as an example:—

1. "*FOR SALE.*—Dick Morgan, a *very honest, trusty servant, has acted as a porter in a grocery store* for several years, and *SPEAKS French and English.*" 2. "*Robert—possesses a first rate character in every respect.*" These slaves are considered as men skilled in various employments requiring intellect, "*souls,*" so as to understand them; endowed with the gift of *speech*, and susceptible of moral culture, so as to be *honest* and to possess character. Now, who ever advertised a *horse* for sale as *honest, a porter in a grocery store, and possessing a first rate character* in all respects, and speaking the French and English languages? Negroes are viewed by slaveholders themselves as *persons*, held as *property*. His personality is not destroyed, but his personal control as a "*free person*" is wrested and retained from him. He is considered a *person*

as represented in Congress by his master; he is *property as sold* in the shambles: they are persons in the condition of slavery.

Q. What is the testimony of Bayard as an expositor of the constitution, as it respects the fact that *slaves* are solely intended by this clause of that instrument?

A. Bayard thus expounds the clause. Illustrating the limitation in the constitution of the powers of Congress, he remarks: "The first exception of this kind, is that by which Congress is forbidden to prohibit 'the migration or importation of such persons as any of the existing states should think proper to admit prior to the year 1808.' The word '*slaves*' is never mentioned in the constitution; the same sensibility on that subject then, as now, in the southern portion of the Union; but *some of the politicians* of that day thought the introduction of that unfortunate class essential to the prosperity, if not to the existence, of the southern states; and therefore would not consent to allow Congress to exercise the right they would otherwise possess, under the general power of regulating commerce, to put an immediate end to this inhuman traffic. The result was a compromise by which the power of Congress was restricted for a limited period."

This is the language of an expositor of the constitution, who, I learn from his advertisement to the second edition of his commentary, from which I quote, received by letter approbation of "*Chief Justice Marshall, Judge Story, Chancellor Kent, and other distinguished jurists.*" Now, what is the construction ratified by these distinguished jurists? Simply, the clause relating to *slaves*, and *slaves only*; and manifestly authorizes and sanctions the inhuman traffic in slaves for 20 years. This is obvious upon the least consideration. Without this clause Congress *had* and would have exercised the right to put an end to the *African slave-trade*, as far as this country was concerned. But the WILL of WE the SOVEREIGN PEOPLE expressed in the constitution RESTRAINED Congress in the execution of this noble deed for 20 years. Therefore the will of "we the people" expressed in the constitution SANCTIONED the FOREIGN SLAVE TRADE during that period. If they prevented its destruction by

their *will*, which otherwise could, or would have taken place, *their will sustained* the barbarous traffic.

Q. What is the testimony of LUTHER MARTIN upon this point?

A. His testimony upon this clause, as a member of the convention that framed the constitution, is as follows: "The design of this clause is to PREVENT the General Government FROM PROHIBITING THE IMPORTATION OF SLAVES, but the same reasons which induced them to strike out the word 'national,' and not admit the word 'stamps,' influenced them here to guard against the word '*slaves*.' They anxiously sought to avoid the admission of expressions which might seem odious in the ears of Americans; although they were willing to admit into their system THOSE THINGS which the expressions signified."

Q. What is the history of the celebrated COMPROMISE upon the subject of slavery, between the Northern and Southern States, which was adopted in the convention that framed the constitution?

A. LUTHER MARTIN gives the history of that odious transaction in the following words: "This clause," the one under consideration, "was the subject of great diversity of sentiment in the convention; as the system was reported by the committee of detail the provision was general, that *such importation* SHOULD NOT BE PROHIBITED, without confining it to any particular period. This was rejected by eight states—Georgia, South Carolina, and, I think, North Carolina *voting for it*."

"We were then told by the delegates of the two first of those states, that their states would never agree to a system which put it in the power of the general government TO PREVENT THE IMPORTATION OF SLAVES, and that they, as delegates from those states, *must withhold their assent from such a system*."

"A committee of one member from each state was chosen by ballot, to take this part of the system under consideration, and to endeavour to agree upon some report, which would RECONCILE those states. This committee, of which *I also* had the honour to be a member, met and took under

their consideration the subjects committed to them. I found the *Eastern States*, notwithstanding their *aversion to slavery*, were willing to *indulge* the Southern States, at least with a temporary liberty, to prosecute the slave-trade, provided the Southern States would gratify them in laying no restriction upon Navigation Acts; and after a very little time the committee by a *great majority* agreed on a report by which the general government was to BE PROHIBITED FROM PREVENTING THE IMPORTATION OF SLAVES FOR A LIMITED PERIOD, and the restrictive clause to navigation acts was to be omitted. This report was adopted by a majority of the convention."

Q. What is the point of this testimony of LUTHER MARTIN?

A. The point is this. That most infamous traffic, the slave-trade, was GUARANTEED by the *constitution* of the general government from 1787 until 1808, a period of more than 20 years. This was the *direct* and *special* design of this clause. In vain do men assert "it is a mere prohibitory clause—it authorizes nothing." What, if I by an oral, and especially by a written expression, of my will, prevent *the prohibition of an evil practice*, do I not thereby SANCTION that evil practice, and doubly so when by so doing I annul *a right possessed by my agent* to prohibit that practice? No man can rid himself of this conclusion.

The United States government had the grant of the power to regulate the entire commerce of the Union already conferred upon Congress, by which Congress would have had *the right* to abolish the slave-trade. This was torn from the hand of Congress by the nefarious deed, the *compromise*, enacted, as the will of "we the people" in *this clause*. Citizens of the United States, look at your own deed recorded in *your* national Constitution! "WE THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES 'ORDAINED' AND ESTABLISHED AS A CONSTITUTIONAL AND SUPREME LAW, THE PREVENTION OF THE PROHIBITION OR EVEN RESTRICTION OF THE MOST INFAMOUS TRAFFIC THAT EVER DISGRACED THE WORLD, THE AFRICAN SLAVE-TRADE, AND THEREBY GAVE THE SANCTION OF OUR HIGH AUTHORITY TO ROBBERY AND PIRACY FOR 20 YEARS!"

Q. What is the testimony of the venerable James Madison as to the meaning of this clause ?

A. James Madison, Fourth President of the United States, and Member of the Convention that framed the Constitution—thus testifies in the debates in the Virginia Convention that adopted it—thus testifies to its true import. “The Southern States” (says Mr. M. upon this clause) would not have entered into the Union of America without **THE TEMPORARY PERMISSION** of that trade (the slave-trade). The gentlemen from South Carolina and Georgia argued in this manner: ‘We have now liberty to import *this species of property*, and much of the property now possessed, has been purchased or otherwise acquired in contemplation of improving it **BY THE ASSISTANCE OF IMPORTED SLAVES**. What would be the consequences of hindering us from it? *The slaves of Virginia would rise in value, and we should be obliged to go to your market.*’ Was there ever wickedness like this! To gratify the cupidity of a few Southern planters, a nation stoops to decree the “mischief” of *the slave-trade*, by a national Constitutional “law.” To grant “the temporary permission of that trade.” In vain will men reiterate the cry that the word “*slave*” is not in the Constitution, and therefore it is innocent of the guilt of slavery. **THE THING IS THERE.** The eyes of Omniscience are not blinded by the specious drapery of style with which crafty men may seek to disguise ‘iniquity’ in their recorded deeds. Yea, the veil is too thin to hide this iniquity from the eyes of the *righteous man*, when he opens his eyes upon it. He sees with the eloquent coloured man, that ‘*slavery was in the understanding that framed the Constitution. Slavery is in the will that executes it.*’”

Q. Does not the Act of Congress, 1808, enacted for the abolition of the slave trade, according to this clause, prove clearly that *slaves* only were meant by it ?

A. Most conclusively. It was enacted to abolish the slave trade, which had been temporarily permitted by this clause of the constitution, and could not be restrained or prohibited until 1808, and which was, until this date, under the protection of the United States flag, in virtue of this guarantee of the constitution prosecuted with the utmost vigor; and thou-

sands of African slaves were imported, and many of them, with their descendants, still groan in bondage, the chains of which have been riveted by the U. S. constitution.

Q. Is there any other proof that the constitution sanctions slavery?

A. Yes. I adduce as another conclusive argument, Art. 4, sec. 2, 3: "No person held to service or labour in one state, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labour; but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labour may be due."

Q. Are slaves the "persons" here intended?

A. Yes. The slave, it has been already clearly shown, is esteemed both as "*a person*" and *property*; a person, when he can advance the dignity and augment the power of his master; property, when he can be subservient to the insatiable cupidity of his owner.

Q. Does the term "*service*" in this clause cover the office of slaves?

A. Yes.—The *first* meaning of *service* is "menial office." "*Menial*" signifies "belonging to the train of servants." Now, the term "servants" is a familiar term by which Southern men designate their slaves. They are *sensitive*, as Bayard declares, to the word "*slave*," and hence avoided the use of the term in the constitution. In proof that "*servants*," in Southern states, mean "*slaves*," that these are there convertible terms, take the following advertisement:—"Valuable SERVANTS for sale at auction, by Isaac L. McCoy. This day, Thursday, 27th instant, at 12 o'clock, at the Exchange Coffee House, will be SOLD, 34 valuable SERVANTS."—(Anti-S. Man., p. 102.) Now, the term *service* expresses the *menial office of a train of servants*; which whole train, amounting to 34, or any number, may be sold at auction, in the shambles of the South, as *valuable servants*. The clause contemplates, then, the "*service*" of Southern servants, or *slaves*.

Q. In what sense is the term "*due*" to be taken in this clause?

A. Every person, it is presumed, of the least legal intelli-

gence, is familiar with the distinction between a claim *in equity* or a *just claim*, and a claim *in law*, or a legal claim. No slaveholder can have a just claim to his slave, and his *service*, as his property, in a court of *equity*; but *the law* of the Southern states makes men slaves, and *the will* of the people contemplates in this clause the *legal claim* of the master, and determines to secure him *the service* of his runaway slave, *due to him in law*, by compelling the delivering him up upon the claim of the master, when captured in a *free state*, to which he had *escaped*, as he supposed, as to a place of refuge.

Q. Can any person be *held* to service or labour, but a slave?

A. No. No *contract* service is compellable of performance. No contract compels a man to perform his promised service. The law holds him only in *damages*. Nobody is held to service under any contract he can make. If he does not perform what he promises, he is held to pay only, and not held then to the *creditor*. The creditor cannot hold him to pay. He has to ask the law to. He is not "held to service" to anybody. To "hold him to service" would itself make him a *slave*. The clause, therefore, means "*slaves*" only.

Q. Does not the phrase, "*held under the laws*," prove the same point that *slaves* only are meant by the clause?

A. Very clearly. The constitution contemplates a class "*held to service in a state under the laws thereof*," and says further, what it would not say of any persons but slaves, or any service but slave service, that, escaping from it into another state shall not discharge the person from it by virtue of any laws in that state. There is no service a person is holden to in any state under the laws thereof from which the laws of any other state would discharge him, generally, but *slave service*. We have slave states and non-slave states, but not pay states and non-pay states, contract states and non-contract states. The obligations of contract in one state, are obligations on the debtor in all other states. But the constitution says there is a service under the laws of one state from which the laws of another state will discharge a person if he runs there. This service is *no other than slave service*; is that or none.

Q. Is any person liable by law to be *delivered up* to a claimant but a *slave*?

A. No. No person is liable by law to be delivered up to a claimant but a slave; but the constitution speaks of *delivering up* to the claimant *the person* who owes the service by the laws of the slave states, but not by the laws of other states. Such person must then be a slave. This can only be spoken of slaves, and anybody of whom it can be spoken *is a slave*. If the constitution means anybody but the negro slaves, then it regards as slaves the white folks of the country. It is an *enslaving* instrument.

Q. Does not the law of Congress, 1793, illustrate this clause of the constitution, and prove that slaves only are meant?

A. Yes; conclusively. We quote the third section of the law, that this clause of the constitution and it may be compared: "And be it further enacted that when a *person held to service for labour* in any of the United States, or in other of the territories on the north-west or south of the river Ohio, under the laws thereof, shall escape into any other of the said states or territories, *the person to whom such labour or service may be due*, his agent or attorney, is hereby empowered to seize or arrest such fugitive from labour, and to take him or her before any judge of the circuit or district courts of the United States, residing or being within the state, or before any magistrate of a county, city, or town corporate, wherein such seizure or arrest shall be made, and upon proof to the satisfaction of such judge or magistrate, either by oral testimony or affidavit, taken before, and certified by a magistrate of any such state or territory, that the person so seized or arrested, doth, *under the laws of the state or territory*, from which he or she fled, *owe service or labour* to the person claiming him or her, it shall be the duty of such judge or magistrate to give a certificate thereof to such claimant, his agent or attorney, which shall be sufficient warrant for removing the said fugitive from labour to the state or territory from which he or she fled." All admit this law to be a *slave-catching law*, and nothing else. Yet the word *slave* is not in it, but its phraseology describing the

persons *designed in it*, is the *exact* phraseology of the clause in the constitution. If the one is slave-catching, so is the other; for the slave-catching law is the legitimate offspring of the enactment in the constitution; and the *only design* of the law was to arrest and carry back into bondage the fugitive, and for this purpose *only* has it been administered ever since its enactment. The *constitutionality* of this law has been decided by the *Supreme Court of the United States* in the late case of *Puff vs. Pennsylvania*, and from this decision *there is no appeal*. It must abide THE SUPREME LAW OF THE LAND.

Q. What proof have you that the decision of the *Supreme Court of the United States* is final in this and similar matters, and that from its decision there is NO APPEAL?

A. Bayard, in his exposition of the constitution, thus declares the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. "The *judicial* power of the Union is declared to extend to *all cases* in law and equity arising under the constitution (Const. Art. iii. sec. 2, 1), and to the judicial power it belongs whenever a case is presented before it, to determine *what is the supreme law of the land*. And this power in the last resort, is vested by the constitution in the *Supreme Court of the United States*. And its decision must be final and conclusive; because the constitution gives to that tribunal, power to decide, *and has given no appeal from its decision*."—P. 122.

Q. What is the decision of this *ultimate tribunal* relative to the import and original design of this clause of the constitution respecting *fugitives from service*?

A. Its decision demonstrates the pro-slavery character of the clause, and is as follows: In one of the decisions JUDGE STORY said, "Historically it is well known that the object of *this clause* was to secure to the citizens of the slave-holding states THE COMPLETE RIGHT AND TITLE OF OWNERSHIP IN THEIR SLAVES AS PROPERTY, IN EVERY STATE OF THE UNION into which they might escape from the state wherein they were held in servitude." "The full recognition of this right and title was indispensable to the security of this species of property, in all the slave-holding states, and, indeed, was so vital to the preservation of their interests and institutions,

that it cannot be doubted that it constitutes a *fundamental article*, without the adoption of which *the Union would not have been formed*. *Its true design was to guard against the doctrines and principles prevalent in the non-slaveholding states, by preventing them from intermeddling with, or restricting, or abolishing the rights of owners of slaves.*"

Again. "The clause was therefore of the last importance to the safety and security of the Southern states, and could not be surrendered by them without endangering their whole property in slaves. *The clause was therefore adopted in the constitution by the unanimous consent of the framers of it. A proof at once of its intrinsic and practical necessity.*"

Again. "*The clause manifestly contemplates the existence of a positive unqualified right on the part of the owner of the slave, which no state law or regulation can in any way regulate, control, or restrain.*"

JUDGE BALDWIN, in charging the jury, said, "If there are any rights of property which can be enforced—if one citizen have any rights of property which are inviolable UNDER THE PROTECTION OF THE SUPREME LAW OF THE STATE AND THE UNION, they are these which have been set at naught by some of these defendants. As the owner of property which he had a perfect right to possess, protect, and take away, as a citizen of a sister state, entitled to all the privileges and immunities of citizens of any other state—Mr. Johnson stands before you on ground which cannot be taken from under him; *it is the same ground upon which the government itself is based*. If the defendants can be justified, *we have no longer law or government.*" Again, after referring more particularly to the provision for delivering up fugitive slaves, he said, "*Thus you see that the foundations of the government are laid and rest on the right of property in slaves. THE WHOLE STRUCTURE MUST FALL BY DISTURBING THE CORNER-STONE.*" *Thus slavery is a CORNER-STONE of the government—a column in the temple of liberty!*

Q. How does Bayard interpret this clause?

A. "This provision," says Bayard, "relates to that class of men *who are held in bondage* in some of the States, and are sometimes tempted to escape into the non-slaveholding

states, in the hope of regaining their freedom by that means. These states might be induced, *by views of humanity*, or other motives, *to shelter the fugitives* and throw obstacles in the way of their recovery. This, if allowed, would be a constant source of dissension between the states, and might lead to the most serious consequences. The holding of slaves is a domestic concern with which other states ought not to interfere, and as long as it is permitted in any of the states, the peace of the country *requires that the rights of the masters should be respected*. This, therefore, is a wise provision. *Without it, the Southern states would, probably, not have consented to the union.*"

Q. What is the opinion of James Madison, who, of all men, had the best opportunity to know, as to the legitimate construction of this clause?

A. Thus this celebrated man delivered his opinion upon this clause in the Virginia convention for the adoption of the constitution: "Another clause *secures us that property which we now possess*. At present (under the old confederacy) if any slave elopes to those states where slaves are free, *he becomes emancipated by their laws*; for the laws of the states are *uncharitable* to one another in this respect. *But in this constitution* 'no person held to service or labour in one state, under the laws thereof, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labour, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to which such service or labour may be due.' THIS CLAUSE WAS EXPRESSLY INSERTED TO ENABLE OWNERS OF SLAVES TO RECLAIM THEM. *This is a better security than any that now exists.*" Thus plainly speaks a member of the Convention that framed the constitution, and by whose arguments in its illustration, the Virginia convention is influenced to adopt it.

Q. What says General Randolph as to its true meaning?

A. He thus briefly delivers his opinion as a member both of the United States and Virginia conventions. "Every one knows that slaves are held to service or labour; and *when authority is given to vindicate their property* can they (the owners of slaves) be deprived of it?"

Q. Does not this clause, therefore, sanction, by all the force of the supreme law, the odious sin of slavery?

A. Of this there can be no doubt in the impartial mind. The clause was "EXPRESSLY INSERTED" to give a power not before possessed to owners of slaves TO RECLAIM THEM—to "give them authority to vindicate their property." This is full sanction of slavery—the strongest ratification of the alleged rights of the master. Ah! go not to the panders of immoral power and the worshippers of an idol for a just answer to the inquiry—Is not this sanction? But go to the slave—go to yonder weeping one, who thought he had escaped to a city of refuge, but by the authority of this clause of the United States constitution is now seized, reclaimed, rebound, to be dragged back to the land of chains, and whips, and horrid gashes in the flesh, and iron yokes with spikes, applied in the "tender mercy" of that personification of the dignity of human nature, the overseer! Ask this wretched being as he writhes under the torture inflicted because he dared to assert his rights in the attempt to regain his liberty, ask him if this is sanction?—and raising his manacled hands to heaven, in the agony of a bursting heart, he will exclaim—YES, this is sanction, I FEEL IT TO BE SANCTION!

Q. Is not the fugitive slave law of 1850, a further illustration of this pro-slavery clause of the Constitution?

A. Yes. An ample and fearful illustration.

Q. What is its substance?

A. Its substance is in a principal clause contained in Sec. 4. This clause makes it the duty of the commissioners, appointed by the act to adjudicate in the matter, "to grant certificates to such claimants upon satisfactory proof being made, with authority to take and remove such fugitive from service or labour, under the restrictions herein contained, to the state or territory from which such persons may have escaped or fled." It is a fearful restoration of the peremptory injunction of the constitution—the fugitive shall be delivered up upon claim of the party to whom such service or labour is due.

Q. Have you any additional evidence of the sanction of slavery by the constitution of the United States?

A. I have—and adduce Art. iv. sec. 4th; and Art. i. sec. 8th. By the former, “every state in this Union is guaranteed protection by the United States, ‘*against domestic violence.*’” By the latter, “Congress is empowered ‘to provide for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the Union, to *suppress insurrections* and repel invasions.’” These provisions, however strictly they may apply to cases of disturbance among the white population, were adopted with reference to the slave population, for the purpose of keeping them in subjection by the combined military force of the country; and were these repealed, and the South left to manage her slaves as best she could, a servile insurrection would ere long be the consequence, as general, as it would be unquestionably successful.

Q. What evidence have you of the correctness of this interpretation of these clauses?

A. 1. *James Madison*. He says, respecting these clauses, “On application of the legislature or executive, as the case may be, the militia of the other states are to be called to suppress domestic insurrections. Does this bar the states from calling forth their own militia? No! but it gives *supplementary* security to suppress insurrections and *domestic violence.*” 2. In answer to Patrick Henry’s objection, as urged against the constitution in the Virginian convention—that there was no power left to the *states* to quell an *insurrection of slaves*, for it was wholly invested in Congress, GEORGE NICHOLAS asked, “Have they it now? If they have, does the constitution take it away? If it does, it must be in one of these clauses which have been mentioned by the worthy member. The first gives the general government power to call them out when necessary. Does this take away from the states? No. *But it gives additional security*; for besides the power in the state government to use their own militia, it will be the duty of the general government TO AID THEM WITH THE STRENGTH OF THE UNION WHEN CALLED FOR.” 3. LUTHER MARTIN testifies to the same point. “It was further urged (in argument against the proslavery features of the constitution), that by this system of government, every state was to be protected both from foreign

invasions, and *domestic insurrections* ; that from this consideration it was of the utmost importance it should have a power to *restrain the importation of slaves*, since in proportion as the number of slaves were increased in any state, in the same proportion the state is weakened, and exposed to foreign invasion and *domestic insurrection*, and by so much less will it be able to protect itself against either ; and therefore will by so much the more *be a burden to the union.*"

Q. Has not this view of these clauses been exemplified—and is it not demonstrated that they are the stronghold of slavery ?

A. Yes. This solemn guarantee of security to the slave system, caps the climax of national barbarity, and stains with human blood the garments of all the people. In consequence of it, that system has multiplied its victims from five hundred thousand to nearly three millions—a vast amount of new territory has been purchased in order to give it extension and perpetuity—several new slave states have been admitted to the union—the slave trade has been made one of the articles of commerce—the slave population, though over worked, starved, lacerated, branded, maimed, and subjected to every form of deprivation, and every species of torture, have been overawed and crushed ; or, whenever they have attempted to gain their liberty by revolt, they have been shot down and quelled by the strong arm of the national government ; as, for example, in the case of Nat Turner's insurrection in Virginia, when the naval and military forces of the government were called into active service. Cuban bloodhounds have been purchased with the money of the people, and imported and used to hunt slave fugitives among the everglades of Florida. A merciless warfare has been waged for the extermination and expulsion of the Florida Indians, because they gave succour to these poor hunted fugitives—a warfare which has cost the nation several thousand lives, and forty millions of dollars—and the late war with Mexico was waged, unquestionably, to extend the area of slavery.

Q. Have you any additional argument demonstrating the national sanction of slavery ?

A. Yes. I adduce Art. i. sec. 8, clause 3. "Congress

shall have power to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes." Bayard, on the Constitution, says, "The *exclusive* regulation of commerce with foreign nations, and *among the several states*, and with the Indian tribes, is also confided to Congress. This was obviously proper, as the management of all concerns with foreign nations, and a *general superintendence over domestic affairs*, constitute the *peculiar province* of the national government, and were the *principal objects of its establishment*," p. 49. *Slaves are an article of commerce among different states. The domestic slave trade is therefore under the general superintendence of the national government. It regulates this part of domestic affairs as its "peculiar province."* The domestic slave-trader is protected in this "*infamous traffic*" by "the stripes and stars." The stars of freedom shine with a benignant lustre upon the domestic slave-ship, as she ploughs the ocean with her burden of woe; but they emit no ray of gladness to cheer the bosom of the helpless tenants of her hold.

Q. Has not Congress the right to abolish the domestic slave trade?

A. This is exceedingly doubtful. Mr. Madison says, "No power is given to the general government to interfere with respect to the property in slaves now held by the states." The constitution views the slave *as property*, as proved above, and *authorizes* the slaveholder to *vindicate his property*—in a free state. Now *all property may be sold*, and therefore become *an article of commerce*. It would seem a just conclusion, that the slaveholding states have a constitutional right to traffic in slave property among themselves—the inter-state slave trade is constitutional—and Congress, whilst it has a right to *regulate*, would seem to have no right, without the consent of the slaveholding state, to *abolish* this nefarious and inhuman traffic.

Q. Does not the amendment to the constitution, which is in these words, "Nor shall any person be *deprived* of life, *liberty* or *property*, without due process of law," prove the constitution to be an anti-slavery instrument?

A. By no means. The only one of these three possessions

which the slave can at all be said to *possess*, is *life* ; yet, *his living energies* are his master's. If he forfeits his life—and in the slave states in more than 70 ways he may do so—he has always, until *Judge Lynch* erected his tribunal, been deprived thereof by “due process of law.” *But liberty and property he legally possesses not.* “He can *possess nothing*, nor *acquire anything*,” says the slave code, “but *what must belong to his master.*” This was his condition when this amendment was enacted, and has been his condition ever since. It was never enacted *for him*. How will you undertake to *deprive* a man of that of which *he is not possessed* ? The slave has neither *liberty* nor *property*, and you cannot *deprive him* of either by “due process of law,” or otherwise. How common sense breaks the meshes of the web of subtleties !

Q. Is not this provision of the constitution, compelling the delivering up of the fugitive slave to his master, from whose tyranny he had escaped, a direct violation of the law of God ?

A. Yes. It is a direct violation. Deut. xxiii. 15, 16, “Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee : he shall dwell with thee, even among you, in that place which he shall choose in one of thy gates, where it liketh him best : thou shalt not oppress him.”

Q. What action has the Reformed Presbyterian Church taken upon American slavery ?

A. She has made it a term of communion. Her decision is, “No slaveholder is admitted into her communion.” Test. part i. p. 155. The resolution of the committee of presbytery sent to the South to purge the church of this evil, is in the following terms : “*Resolved*, That enslaving these our African brethren is an evil of enormous magnitude ; and no one who continues in so gross a departure from humanity and the dictates of our benevolent religion, can have any claim to communion in this church.”

The following note was sent to each individual implicated in this enormous evil—“Sir : You are hereby informed that none can have communion in this church who hold slaves.

You must therefore immediately have it registered legally that your slaves are freed, before the ensuing sacrament. If any difficulty arises to you in the manner of doing it, then you are desired to apply to the committee of Presbytery, who will give directions in any circumstances of a doubtful nature in which you may be involved in carrying this injunction into execution."

In her Test., part ii. pp. 119 and 152, she emphatically denies "That a constitution of government which deprives unoffending men of liberty and property, is a moral institution to be recognised as God's ordinance;" and declines allegiance to the United States Government, because 'It establishes that system of robbery by which men are held in slavery, despoiled of liberty, and property, and protection. It violates the principle of representation, by bestowing upon the domestic tyrant who holds hundreds of his fellow creatures in bondage, an influence in making laws for freemen proportioned to the number of his own slaves."

Q. Will not God "judge and avenge" the blood of the slave upon such a nation as this?

A. As God is just he will: what he did to the oppressors of old he will do now. "Thus saith the Lord: even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children, and I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood as with sweet wine, and all flesh shall know that I am the Lord thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty one of Jacob." "Arise, O Lord, for the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, and set him in safety from him that presseth at him." "Arise, oh sovereign Judge of the nations, judge the fatherless and the OPPRESSED, THAT THE MEN OF THE EARTH MAY NO MORE OPPRESS."

Q. Is there not some evidence in the signs of the times that God is now judging this nation, and will ere long deluge it with blood?

A. Yes. The signs of the times indicate that the prophecy of John Quincy Adams may soon be fulfilled. "The

delegates," said that distinguished man, "of the free states (in the national convention), in their extreme anxiety to conciliate the ascendancy of the Southern slaveholders, *did listen to a compromise* between *right* and *wrong*—between FREEDOM and SLAVERY, of the ultimate fruits of which they had no conception, but which already, even now, is urging the Union to its inevitable ruin and depopulation, by a *civil, servile, foreign, and Indian* war, all combined in one ; a war, the essential issue of which will be between *freedom* and *slavery*, and in which the unhallowed standard of slavery will be the desecrated banner of the North American Union—that banner first unfurled to the breeze inscribed with the self-evident truths of the Declaration of Independence."

APPLICATION OF THE TESTIMONY TO THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

Q. What is the present position of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the British Isles, in relation to the civil institutions of those kingdoms ?

A. It is that of avowed *dissent*, and of faithful testimony against the immoralities in the civil constitutions of those kingdoms.

Q. Upon what ground did the steadfast band of witnesses for the covenanted reformation in Scotland, adopt the position of dissent from the civil government of these lands, as well as from the churches which were at once established and corrupted by it ?

A. The extreme tyranny of the government then in existence was only one of the grounds on which they rested that dissent. They further complained, that the government was erected on the ruins of a scriptural reformation, to the preservation of which these nations were solemnly bound : that the ecclesiastical *were the mere creatures of the State* ; and that the principles and the policy of the great Romish apos-

tasy were so conspicuous in the constitution and administration of both church and state, as to stamp the whole with the character of *Antichrist*.

Q. Were matters altered much for the better at the memorable revolution?

A. At the revolution, these nations adopted and acted upon the views of the covenanters in regard to the first ground of complaint only. The tyrannical government was indignantly overthrown, and one of a much more equitable and moderate character was substituted in its stead. But while the public spirit and energy of the nations were displayed in shaking off the yoke of oppression, and in asserting their own rights, no effectual attempt was made to vindicate the rights of the Redeemer. The covenanters were not ungrateful for the large increase of liberty and privilege secured to them by the revolution; but they could not accede to an arrangement, however beneficial to themselves, of which these were made essential conditions: That the crown rights of the Messiah should be compromised, and the antichristian corruptions interwoven with the constitution, both of church and state, should remain undisturbed.

Q. What is the first specific exception which Reformed Presbyterians in Britain take to the British constitution?

A. In their own language, they explicitly state as their first objection to the British constitution, That there is no direct or explicit acknowledgment of the supreme authority of the scriptures in the constitution and administration of civil government in these lands. In the actual administration of the government of these kingdoms, it seems to us that this principle has been practically disregarded. It does not appear that the responsibility of *nations* to the moral governor of the world is fully understood or felt. No strenuous attempt has heretofore been made, by almost any class of society, to select men possessing scriptural qualifications to occupy the halls of legislature, or to fill public offices; and it has rarely occurred, we believe, that any course of policy has been abandoned, merely because it was condemned in the word of God. Here we rest our first complaint, That the authority of Jehovah is virtually set

aside, while the homage and allegiance of the nations have been tendered to the great idol of POLITICAL EXPEDIENCY.

Q. What is their *second* ground of dissent?

A. At no period, say they, since the revolution, have these nations and their rulers formally acquiesced in the divine decree which has invested the exalted Messiah with the government of the nations: "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth; serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. *Kiss the son*, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way." We know of nothing, either in the deeds of constitution, or in the administration of the government of these kingdoms, which can justly be regarded as a proper acquiescence in this authoritative appointment. There is no formal recognition of the supremacy of Christ, as Mediator, over the nations; no acknowledgment of those vows of allegiance that were formerly pledged to him in the period of the Reformation; no care employed to make the interest of his kingdom the primary object of concern. The favour that has been extended to churches in these lands has been manifestly vicious in its principle, and has tended to corrupt these churches, rather than to advance the cause of religion.

Q. What is the *third* ground of this dissent?

A. With these evils may be conjoined the open and arrogant invasion of Christ's supremacy over his church. He has solemnly commanded his disciples to own no other master. He claims the exclusive right of prescribing a government and laws to his church; and there is not a single hint in the sacred volume of his having appointed an ecclesiastical VICEROY, to whom he has delegated his own authority. The usurpation of such a dominion constitutes one of the highest charges against the Man of Sin. Yet according to the statute laws of the empire, an Erastian supremacy over the churches of England and Ireland is held to be an essential right of the British crown.

Q. What evidence is there of this unhallowed claim?

A. "The king," says Blackstone, and of course the queen, too, "is considered by the laws of England as the head and supreme governor of the national church." The Papal juris-

diction in England was destroyed by Parliament upon the express ground that "the king's majesty justly and rightly is, and ought to be, supreme head of the church of England." The first of Elizabeth enacts that, "all jurisdictions, *spiritual and ecclesiastical*, should for ever be united to the imperial crown." And in her 37th Article, the church endorses the impious claim. It runs thus: "The king's majesty hath the chief power in this realm of England, unto whom the chief government of all the estates of this realm, *whether they be ecclesiastical or civil*, IN ALL CAUSES, doth appertain." Thus do both church and state agree in declaring it to be a fundamental principle of the constitution, that the king or queen *is supreme head in all causes civil and ecclesiastical*. A more grossly unscriptural element, therefore, has been introduced into the church of England than is to be found in that of Rome. In the fearful impiety in making a sinful mortal head of the church, indeed, both have concurred; but then the head of the church of Rome must be an *ecclesiastic*, and a *man*—female popes are not esteemed quite canonical—whereas the head of the church of England is *a lay or civil person*; and may be *a man, a woman, or a child!!!* Her erastianism, therefore, is emblazoned on her very forehead.

Q. Has a copious stream of erastian encroachment flowed from this polluted fountain of royal supremacy?

A. Yes. Her clergy, for instance, have all their authority *to rule and ordain* from the sovereign. In 37 Henry VIII. cap. 17, it is declared, that archbishops, bishops, archdeacons, and other ecclesiastical persons, have *no manner* of jurisdiction ecclesiastical, but *by, under, and from* his royal majesty; and that his majesty is the only supreme head of the church of England and Ireland." Words could not more explicitly declare that instead of having their authority from the Lord Jesus Christ, these dignitaries derive it immediately from a poor erring mortal. Hence, also, the clergy cannot meet in convocation, or enact anything, or perform any act of ecclesiastical discipline, without her majesty's authority and permission; and the appointment of all bishops belongs to the sovereign, &c., &c.

Q. Does the power of the state to model and remodel, to overturn and reconstruct the church at pleasure, to decree rites and ceremonies in her, to form canons for the regulation of her government, to select the persons who shall fill all her most important offices, and even to determine her confession and creed, therefore remain undisputable?

A. Yes. All this is evident from the above statutory enactments.

Q. Is it not at once repugnant to religion and to common sense, that the church of Christ should be thus subjected to the arbitrary will, or caprice, of a legislative assembly, composed of Protestants and Papists, of Christians and libertines, of sincere believers and scoffing infidels, and in which the enemies of religion so greatly outnumber her friends?

A. Yes; and every upright Christian should bear testimony against such enormity.

Q. What is the *fourth* ground of dissent of Reformed Presbyterians in Britain from the British constitution?

A. The support that has been extended by the state to the church, however munificent, has been so managed that the cause of true religion has been more injured than promoted by it.

Q. How is this charge sustained?

A. It is sustained, 1. By the fact that this support has been lavished most abundantly on those Protestant churches which have been most inefficient and corrupt: and even in them it has been employed to pamper luxury and gratify ambition, while a large portion of those ministers by whom pastoral duties were actually performed, have been left to struggle with poverty, and multitudes of the people to perish through lack of knowledge. 2. It has invariably been used as an instrument for reducing the church into a condition of political subserviency. The revenues of the church have been dealt with as a spoil, which civil rulers have distributed among their political partizans and supporters. They have been employed to sustain a lordly aristocracy, rather than to feed the people with the bread of life. They have largely contributed to silence the voice of faithful remonstrance, which it is the duty of the church to raise against the ini-

quitous measures of public men, and to influence the clergy to inculcate upon the people lessons of indiscriminate and slavish submission, whatever aggressions have been made upon their liberties—civil or religious. 3. The mode of levying the revenues of the church, both in England and Ireland, has been unhappily calculated to excite odium against her and her ministers, and to call into exercise a class of passions exceedingly unfavourable to the progress of the gospel. 4. The principle upon which that bounty has been bestowed upon the churches is essentially corrupt and vicious. In all the measures of government respecting the church, we have searched in vain for any higher principle than political expediency as the prime mover. It is impossible to believe that an enlightened regard to the authority of God, a discriminating love of divine truth, an earnest desire for the promotion of true religion, can dispose a government to patronize every system of religion—be it true or false. Yet it does not appear that the British government, since the Revolution, has ever withheld its fostering care from any religious system, merely on the ground of its falsehood. Presbyterianism is conceded to the inclinations of the people in Scotland; Episcopacy, more in favour with men in power, is established in England and Ireland, and more richly endowed than any church in Europe. But when a wretched expediency seems to require it, Popery is taken under the fostering care of government in the Ionian Isles; its corrupting seminary at Maynooth magnificently endowed; successive companies of its priests directly supported from the public treasury, sent out to propagate its destructive errors in the British colonies, and it is honoured with a legal establishment in Lower Canada! Nor is the climax of inconsistency and iniquity complete, until the functionaries of a Protestant government are degraded into tax-gatherers for the wooden gods of Hindostan, and the priests of a debasing and bloody superstition!

Q. Which is the *fifth* ground of their dissent?

A. In the domestic policy of these nations, there are many things which awaken regret and merit reprehension. While millions have been expended in destructive wars, the educa-

tion of the people has been neglected. Until a very recent period, this has been lamentably the case both in England and Ireland. An irreligious government, and an ambitious and pampered church, have looked on with equal apathy, while successive generations have grown up in the grossest ignorance. In England a revenue has been expended annually on cathedrals, and on the swarms of idle ecclesiastics that are attached to them, which, under judicious management, might have secured the education of all the poor in that kingdom. From the extensive prevalence of ignorance has arisen a most frightful growth of infidelity and of crime. How little has been done to check the alarming progress of *the national sin* of Sabbath profanation! With this may be joined the apparent apathy with which government has contemplated, from age to age, the dreadful ravages of intemperance. The views we have adopted of the office and duty of witnesses, imperatively called for these remarks.

Q. What is the general summary which these witnesses give of the reasons of their dissent from the British constitution?

A. They remark: The guilt and danger of holding fellowship with the principles, or the policy of the Antichristian system—with the head or the horns of the beast—are represented in Scripture as of such magnitude, that no temporal loss nor suffering can counterbalance them. (Rev. xvii. 3, 12, 13.) Under these impressions, we cannot proclaim attachment, nor vow allegiance to institutions which many good men extol and admire:—1st. Because, in viewing them by the light of scripture, we believe them to be immoral. 2d. Because we hold them to be Antichristian. 3d. Because they were erected on the ruins of a more excellent system, both in church and state, and in opposition to those solemn vows, by which these nations were pledged to preserve that system inviolate. 4th. Because the immoralities of existing institutions were originally introduced, and are still upheld, in opposition to the clearest light of revelation with which any people were ever favoured.

Q. In what manner do these witnesses illustrate *practically* their dissent?

A. This explanation of our sentiments, say they, will supply the reason why we do not adopt those forms of prayer for the government of these lands, which are publicly prescribed, or commonly used throughout the churches. We fully recognise the obligation that lies on us, to pray for the peace and prosperity of the land that sustains, and for the temporal and spiritual welfare of all classes of its inhabitants. Towards the persons of the rulers we cherish no feeling but that of unfeigned good will. Our heart's desire and prayer to God for them is, that they may be saved. But we cannot warrantably employ forms of prayer that would even seem to express approbation of institutions which we believe to be essentially defective and immoral. We cannot pray for the stability of a system which, as long as it is unreformed, is dishonouring to Christ, and an impediment to the coming of his kingdom. The same reasons are still more cogent to forbid our being *incorporated* or united with the state, so as to become accomplices in, or morally responsible for, its iniquitous public policy. Such as are in ecclesiastical fellowship with us, cannot, without a breach of their testimony, hold fellowship with the civil government, by composing a part of the legislature, or by taking those oaths, for the maintenance and defence of the complex constitution, which are required of members of Parliament and others filling public offices, both in church and state. And as the members of our church cannot sit in Parliament themselves, neither can they, consistently, sit there by their representatives, or commission others to do for them what it would be unwarrantable and immoral for them to do in their own persons. Neither can they compose a part of the executive government, by holding offices under the crown, civil or military, which might require them to co-operate in carrying into practice any branch of an unscriptural code of law. Yet we do not feel debarred from doing what may be in our power, as private individuals, for strengthening those wholesome laws which are necessary for the security of life and property, or for promoting the administration of justice, when permitted to do so without being identified with a corrupt constitution. Should these principles subject us to the

charge of uncharitableness or want of patriotism, we would study to confute the charge by the blamelessness of our deportment, and by a life of active benevolence.

CONCLUSION.

Q. Will not Christ's mediatorial dominion cease "when he shall have delivered up the kingdom (1 Cor. xv. 24, 27, 28) to God, even the Father," when he shall have judged the world at the last day?

A. The passage referred to relates to *the account* which the Mediatorial King shall render to the Father of his administration of the kingdom of providence with which he had been invested—but his mediatorial dominion shall not then cease, but he shall continue for ever to rule as Mediator—as the Father's delegated king, because only in his character of Mediator can the Son (the Father's equal, essentially, in power and glory) "*be subject unto the Father.*" As the Father's Mediatorial servant, therefore, he shall reign over the kingdom of heaven for evermore in fellowship with his saints—for "*if we suffer with him, WE SHALL REIGN WITH HIM.*"

Q. How do you prove that his Mediatorial dominion will be perpetual or eternal?

A. That his Mediatorial dominion is **ETERNAL** is proved by many arguments, of which we advance but *two*. 1. Scripture declarations. Dan. vii., "His dominion (the Son of Man's—Christ's) is **AN EVERLASTING** dominion, which **SHALL NOT PASS AWAY**, and *his kingdom that which SHALL NOT BE DESTROYED.*" Luke i. 33, "**HE SHALL REIGN OVER THE HOUSE OF JACOB FOR EVER, AND OF HIS KINGDOM THERE SHALL BE NO END.**" 2 Peter i. 11, "**AN ENTRANCE SHALL BE MINISTERED TO YOU ABUNDANTLY UNTO THE EVERLASTING KINGDOM of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST.**" 2. His title **KING OF GLORY**. This title belongs to Christ, for he is

called, 1 Cor. ii. 8, "THE LORD OF GLORY, who was CRUCIFIED." James ii. 1, "Have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the LORD OF GLORY, with respect of persons." To him then applies the sublime title employed in a psalm which celebrates his ascension—THE KING OF GLORY. He who reigns over the state of heavenly felicity, as the regulator and dispenser of the joys of celestial bliss FOR EVER AND FOREVER. Myriads of angelic heralds, as they demand admission for him within the portals of the celestial palace, shout, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the *King of glory* shall come in." And when the question is propounded, "Who is this King of glory?" they meet it with the unhesitating response, "*The Lord of Hosts, HE IS THE KING OF GLORY.*" Ps. xxiv. 7—10.

THE END.