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from which no glory is to shine forth but that of its Divine Founder and Lord, in which He is carrying on His greatest work, and to which He requires all other institutions of earth to be tributary. God gave Him to be Head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all, "to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places there might be made known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God." To the Church under Christ God says: "The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted."

UNFINISHED ASPECTS OF THE COVENANTING STRUGGLE.

By the Rev. T. P. STEVENSON, D.D., Philadelphia.

MEN are sometimes permitted to see the final triumph of the cause for which they toiled and suffered. William Lloyd Garrison, the representative Abolitionist, stood one day by the grave of John C. Calhoun, the southern statesman, and said: "He shall rise again from this tomb; but the slavery which he did so much to extend and to perpetuate has gone down into a grave from which there is no resurrection." And so the American Anti-Slavery Society, that society of eloquent orators and wise statesmen and bold and capable agitators, was formally dissolved. The armour bravely borne through a long and bitter conflict was laid aside, the pleasant fellowship of philanthropists and heroes came to an end, and, with more of sadness than of exultation, its members turned to other labours.

To the American Covenanters who began the public war against slavery thirty years before the Anti-Slavery Society was formed, the overthrow of the system of human bondage was only part of a mightier task. That task was to bring the nation to acknowledge the authority of Almighty God and

the authority of Jesus Christ. Slavery was but one of the many national sins, all springing from one bitter root—our national forgetfulness of God. Therefore, when the Abolitionists put off their harness, their steadfast allies, the Covenanters, girded themselves for new conflicts. The National Reform movement arose in the same year on which the Emancipation Proclamation went into effect. The Covenanters exulted no less than others over the battle already won, but they accepted it as only the earnest of a greater and more beneficial victory.

Whether, then, any body of witnesses or workers can be said to have succeeded or not, depends on their own view of what they were witnessing or working for. There are many, and their number is constantly increasing, who bring glad tribute to the heroism of the Covenanters, to their clear insight into the political problems of their day, and their unswerving steadfastness to their convictions of truth and duty. History at last is doing tardy justice to their character and their deeds. Poetry at last finds in their sufferings and their constancy inspiration for some of her noblest effusions. But most of those who twine these garlands for their graves declare that the Covenanters triumphed, that their contendings issued in victory, that their testimony was finished, sealed up and recorded among the triumphant accomplishments of history, and that we are called to revere their memory, to imbibe their spirit, but not to continue their work. They have found no more appreciative historian, no more eloquent champion than James Dodds in his "Fifty Years' Struggle of the Covenanters." But Mr. Dodds says: "The Revolution settlement was the consummation and triumph, civilly and politically, and to a large extent ecclesiastically, of the fifty years' struggle of the Scottish Covenanters." And again he says: "The objects of the Covenants sworn in 1638 were substantially accomplished at the Revolution of 1688, and it ceased, therefore, as a paper document, to have any further active operation." Now, if the Covenanters stood merely for their

own rights and liberties, for the rights and liberties of the Church or of Scotland, they were successful, and their work was done. But if these results were only part of a wider, were intelligently and consciously striving; if they had they more remote, and more beneficent victory for which their eyes on a promised land which they saw from Pisgah but did not reach, then it remains for Joshua to finish Moses' work. God hath provided some better thing for us, or for our children, that they without us should not be made perfect.

I invite your attention to some unfinished aspects of the Covenanting struggle. I regret that the limitations of time will not permit the citation of such extracts from their authoritative declarations as prove that these still unfinished aspects of their work were not only present to their minds but were the very life and soul of their testimony. I believe, however, that these statements of their position will be accepted as self-evidently true by all who know the simplest facts of Covenanting history.

I. The Covenanters witnessed for the sole and exclusive authority of Christ in His Church. When Moses went down to Egypt, he joined issue with Pharaoh not over the liberties of Israel but over the rights of Jehovah. "Thus saith Jehovah, let My people go that they may serve Me." Pharaoh understood and accepted the issue: "Who is Jehovah, that I should obey Him?" From that moment the issue was between Pharaoh, Egypt and the gods of Egypt on the one hand and Jehovah, the true God, on the other; and the promise of God to His servant was: "Against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment."

The Covenanters dignified and glorified their cause by carrying it up to the throne of Heaven and identifying it with the rights, the interests, and the glory of the Son of God. They were not insensible to the argument which may be drawn from the natural rights of man. In all literature there is no more masterful discussion of natural rights than is to be found in Rutherford's "Lex Rex," a pioneer work which blazed

through trackless forests the track by which mankind has since been marching to the larger enjoyment of constitutional liberty. But on these aspects of their great argument they did not much rely. The question with them, first and last, was not whether the Church of Scotland had the right to serve and worship God according to her own conscience, but whether the Lord Jesus Christ had the sole right to rule in His own house. The interference of the civil power with the government or the worship of the Church they resented as an unwarranted interference with the prerogatives of her only Lord. "It pertaineth not to thee Uzziah to burn incense before the Lord."

But this principle has another application. If the State has no right to appoint officers or prescribe ordinances for the Church, the Church herself has no right to introduce anything into her own worship or government which does not rest on the plainly-expressed or clearly-inferred commandment of her Lord. To this limitation of the powers of the Church, as well as to this demarcation of the province of the State, they were obediently faithful. How can any thoughtful man affirm that their cause triumphed, and their work was done, when the Sovereign of these lands remains the acknowledged constitutional head of the Church, when the highest officers of the Church are appointed by the authority of the Crown, and when the ordinances and usages of worship in the English Church are determined by Act of Parliament? Or, while wide sections of the Christian Church maintain and freely exercise their right to adopt whatever form of government and whatever order of worship may commend themselves to human wisdom, or may be approved by human experiment. The eminent prerogatives of the Lord Jesus Christ, as sole ruler of His Church, are, therefore, still an urgent question in many forms and in every land.

II. The Covenanters witnessed for the authority of Jesus Christ over the nations. All the histories tell how Andrew Melville told the King he was but "God's silly vassal,"

that is God's simple servant, and, taking him by the sleeve, went on to say: "Sir, you and the Church and the country are like to be wrecked for our not telling the truth and not giving you faithful counsel; therefore, I must tell you that there are two kings and two kingdoms: there is Christ and His Kingdom, whose subject James VI. is, and of whose kingdom he is not a king, nor a head, nor a lord, but a member." Never through their whole glorious history did they fail to perceive and insist upon the fundamental truths that nations are moral persons, subject therefore to the moral law, and responsible to God for their conduct, and that the same Lord Jesus, who is Head of the Church, is also Head over all things, for the Church. This great principle was seen with increasing clearness as their great controversy went on. It was seen to be an integral part of the eternal Covenant of Redemption in which, as a reward of His sacrifice, and to enable Him to carry out the purposes of that sacrifice, the Father gave to the Son the nations for His inheritance. It was seen to be revealed in the Psalmist's call on kings and judges to kiss the Son; in John's vision of the Lamb upon the throne; in the glorious title, King of kings, inscribed on His vesture; in the prophecy of the Son of Man brought to the Ancient of Days, that He might receive a kingdom, that all kingdoms and languages might serve Him; and in the promise: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ."

This glorious principle is the only truth which is able to regenerate national life. It reveals a ruler so exalted, in the nature and source of His authority, in His infinite qualifications for His high office, that it is no dishonour for kings and legislators to bow to His sceptre; a ruler whose will is the perfect and eternal standard of righteousness; obedience to whom is enforced by all sentiments of love and gratitude and religion; whose wisdom and whose power enable Him to vindicate His own claims, and to defend the weakest of His subjects against the mighty potentates; who alone

is able to compose the dissensions of the nations and begin the reign of universal peace. This principle enfolds in itself, as the acorn enfolds the oak, all our hopes of national reformation, all the blessedness and the glory in the future of nations according to the predictions of Isaiah and the Apocalypse.

Who now will say that this aspect of the Covenanters' struggle has been crowned with success? I acknowledge the familiar legal maxim that Christianity, as part of the common law, is a component part of the unwritten constitution of Great Britain; but is it so clear and so authoritative a part of that Constitution that a legal argument could be based upon it for the overthrow, for example, of the East Indian opium traffic, or the trade in rum and fire-arms with uncivilized tribes, or any other legalized public iniquity? The "Christian Commonwealth" of London may answer the question in its words of a few years ago: "There are not six members of Parliament who could appeal on any public question directly to the authority of Jesus Christ or of Holy Scripture without being laughed out of countenance. Mr. Gladstone could do it. So much personal respect would be accorded him; John Bright could have done it. Where are there four others of whom the same could be affirmed?" Will anyone maintain that the inspiring motive of British diplomacy or of British legislation is regard for the will, the interests, or the honour of Jesus Christ? Still farther removed from Christian ideals, and especially from the direct and explicit acknowledgment of Jesus Christ, are both the legislation and the administration of the American government. Unless it be some scattered islands of the southern seas, lifted by the hands of faithful missionaries and set like stars in the diadem of Immanuel, where is there a nation or a government in the world to-day which has consciously and openly accepted Jesus as its King, and engaged itself to keep His laws? Until the last crown has been cast at His feet, until the last earthly

sceptre is held subordinate to His universal sceptre, this remains an unfinished part of the work of the Covenanters.

III. The Covenanters witnessed for the right relations and mutual duties of Church and State. Their strenuous maintenance of the freedom of the Church from the control of the State did not comprise their whole work on this point. They saw clearly that these two Divine institutions, each serving God in its own sphere, owed important duties to each other. The Scripture teaches that kings are to be "nursing fathers and their queens nursing mothers" to the Church of God; and that "the nation and the kingdom that will not serve her shall perish." (Isaiah xlix. 23; lx. 12.) To determine these duties and to secure the due fulfilment of them by these high parties, was the constant aim of the Covenanters. The Acts of the reforming Parliaments and of reforming Assemblies displayed their high conception of these duties. I am not here to maintain that this conception was at all points free from mistake, or that the statements of these duties which they have left to us would not have been different if they had lived, and thought, and laboured in other lands, and amid other surroundings. But they saw clearly, and steadfastly maintained that the State should help the Church by the moral influence of its own high example in acknowledging Christ as King, and accepting His law. The State can powerfully assist the Church by discharging the whole duty of the State in its own sphere in accordance with the law of Christ; by repressing wickedness, by promoting good morals, by educating all the children of the Commonwealth in the common unsectarian principles of our holy religion, by bestowing the rewards, and honours, and trusts of government on those who are morally deserving. Thus, the State, without trenching on the sphere of the Church, develops such a state of society as is most conducive to the success of the Church in her work.

As to national provision for the support of the Church,

we are aware that special difficulties surround the question of establishment, or disestablishment, in these British lands. Endowments of land and other possessions, accumulated by the Church before the Reformation, were justly applied to the support of religion and education after the Reformation. These endowments can never be justly alienated from these purposes. But they ought to be so applied that the whole people, and not any one Church, to the disadvantage of others, may enjoy the fruits of them.

In the United States, the position of the State is generally understood and loudly proclaimed to be that of utter indifference not only to the Church of Christ but to the Christian religion in comparison with other religions. Mohammedanism, Judaism and Christianity, Romanism and Protestantism are declared to be on a perfect level before the law. This is the only inference which can be drawn from the absolute silence of their written Constitution of Government as to any religious idea. The situation in both lands calls for the steadfast maintenance of the ancestral testimony of our fathers. Not until these two great factors in human society have been taught their just relations and duties will their work be finished or their testimony crowned with success.

IV. The Covenanters witnessed for the right and duty of separation from unchristian Constitutions of Government. This was logically involved in their disowning the authority of the House of Stuart. If they would not acknowledge the authority which had forfeited its right to their allegiance, they would not have consented to incorporate in any with that government. In this, Moses was their prototype. He was adopted into the royal family, and, in a certain contingency, was heir to the throne of Egypt. But when the purple of the Pharaohs trammelled him in doing justice, he cast it off. So the radical Abolitionists of New England, like the Covenanters, laid down the sceptre of the elective franchise rather than use it to smite the slave. When this privilege

was coupled with the acceptance of the Constitution containing express guaranties for slavery, they refused to exercise the privilege. And here let me testify, as history will when it comes to be impartially written, that this position was to them, and to us, not only the attitude of consistency, but the attitude of greatest power. Our own Whittier speaks of the ballot which falls from the freeman's hand—

“As snow-flakes fall upon the sod,
But executes the freeman's will
As lightning does the will of God.”

But there is a power behind and above the snow-flake and the thunderbolt. It is the currents and forces that play in the upper air and determine the course of storms and the measure of their violence. And the power of public opinion, which creates parties, and multiplies ballots, is greater than the ballot. Our political dissent, on the high grounds on which we have maintained it, has done more, a thousand-fold, to arrest attention and thought, to mould public opinion, and to move the nation on toward the Kingdom of Christ, than all the votes we could have cast at all the elections for the last one hundred years could possibly have done. Until that testimony shall have wrought its desired effect, this will remain an unfinished part of the Covenanting struggle.

V. The Covenanters witnessed and laboured for the organic Oneness of Christ's Church. Quite as broadly written on the page of their sublime history as any of the preceding principles is their conception of the Church of Christ as One. The Reformed Church one Church in every reformed land, and the Reformed Churches of all reformed lands in fellowship with each other, despite their differences, was their glorious ideal, and towards that ideal they strove with the utmost consecration of mind and heart. James Renwick, in one of his letters, writes: “Oh, when shall those be agreed on earth who are agreed in heaven? Methinks, if my blood were a means to procure that end, I could willingly offer it.” The voluntary

division of the Church of God into sects, and acquiescence in this sectarian constitution of the Church as having manifest advantages over her organic unity, would have seemed to them a monstrous corruption of the Divine Constitution given to the Church by her Lord. In their "Informatory Vindication," and other documents, they described themselves as the "poor, wasted remnant of the suffering, anti-Popish, anti-Prelatic, anti-Erastian, anti-Sectarian, Presbyterian Church of Christ in Scotland." And not until all the scattered and divided friends of Christ, out of every sect under heaven, shall have been gathered into one glorious Œcumenical Church, on the basis of truth and Scriptural order, shall the testimony of our Covenanting forefathers be triumphant, or their most fervent prayers be fulfilled.

Mr. Chairman, and members of this Covenanters' Convention: These principles set us with our faces to the future. We do not stand looking back at the past and worshipping our ancestors. We do not pitch our tents in a graveyard, and say, "It is good for us to be here." Thorwaldsen, having finished his masterpiece of sculpture, wept because he had realized his highest ideal, and the future held for him no possible higher achievement. It will be long before our ideals are realized in human society. We are, indeed, the "heirs of all the ages;" but the future, too, is ours, and we follow after—"if that we may apprehend that for which we have been apprehended of Christ Jesus." But the privilege of hope carries also with it an obligation. In the immortal "Queensferry Paper," Richard Cameron, with prophetic spirit, declared: "We bind and oblige ourselves to defend ourselves and one another, till we shall overcome, or send our cause down under debate to our posterity, that they may begin where we end." Let us, to-day, in utmost sincerity, accept this obligation, and renew this vow.

Mr. Andrew Symington Gilchrist, Delhi, N.Y.: At the

great riot in New York, in the days of the Civil War, which hastened the downfall of American slavery, a meeting was held in the Cooper Institute, New York, in which the pro-slavery mob would not allow any man to speak; but the late Rev. Dr. J. R. W. Sloane arose and said that he was named for a man who was tried and beheaded for high treason—James Renwick—and then they gave audience and listened. I was named for a man that stood up in Scotland and contended for the cause of Scotland's Covenants, who was a faithful and true Covenanter, witnessing for the whole truth, and never faltered. He fought the good fight, he kept the faith, he finished his course, and now enjoys the crown of life given to all that are faithful unto death—that man was Dr. Andrew Symington, of Paisley. He was a grand and noble Covenanter. It has been said by some that if he had lived, he would have gone into the Free Church. Never; that is a slander on the memory of that grand and noble man. He often said that when he was gone there would be a great falling away. The time did come when many Covenanters did desert the standard. Well do I remember that in this city of Glasgow there were four or five congregations of Covenanters, and all over Scotland there were strong congregations of loyal Covenanters and faithful ministers, witnessing for the truth, and holding up the banner for Christ's Crown and Covenant. But the cause for which they witnessed, being Scriptural, shall never perish. No part of revealed truth will ever be lost—the seed of it is immortal. All flesh is grass, and the grass withereth, but the "Word of the Lord endureth for ever." Though witnesses for Christ's Crowns fail wilfully, and go back in the day of battle, yet the promise shall be fulfilled that "To Him every knee shall bow."

Mr. W. J. Hodge, Stranraer: I cannot resist taking the opportunity of saying with what pleasure and admiration I have listened to the addresses and papers from our American friends. I have long esteemed them as zealous for the faith,

but a nearer view of them has heightened that esteem. Lately I have met with Mr. Edgar in Stranraer—whose admirable discourses would long be spoken of there—and on introduction had called him “American Cousin”—a title I am proud to claim in respect of my relationship to the late Dr. Chas. Hodge of Princeton. Now I would claim them as brothers. Their defence of the cause of Covenanting was equal to, if not above, our own. Covenanters had a cause worth contending for—a cause that would assuredly triumph.

P S A L M CII.

BUT Thou, O Lord, shalt still endure,
From change and all mutations free,
And to all generations sure
Shall Thy remembrance ever be.
Thou shalt arise, and mercy yet
Thou to mount Zion shalt extend;
Her time for favour which was set,
Behold, is now come to an end.

Thy saints take pleasure in her stones,
Her very dust to them is dear.
All heathen lands and kingly thrones
On earth Thy glorious name shall fear.
God in His glory shall appear,
When Zion He builds and repairs,
He shall regard and lend His ear
Unto the needy's humble pray'rs;

Th' afflicted's prayer He will not scorn,
All times this shall be on record:
And generations yet unborn
Shalt praise and magnify the Lord.

Rev. William Russell, M.A., Ballenon, led in prayer.

NATIONAL REFORM IN THE UNITED STATES.

By the Rev. H. H. GEORGE, D.D., Beaver Falls, Pa.

THE theories of government have been on trial since earliest history. They have passed through such evolutions as patriarchal, and tribal, and judgeship, and monarchy, absolute and limited, and more and more limited. There is now on trial more than one experiment of a government residing in, operated through, and wielded by the people, known as a Republican form. This is the form in the United States. As God is the author of government, whatever be its form, and has a right to its allegiance in whatever country established, enjoining upon it everywhere as its first duty to own Him, and give the kiss of loyalty to His Son, the failure of the United