A

# NARRATIVE

OF THE

# INTRODUCTION AND PROGRESS

OF

# CHRISTIANITY

*IN SCOTLAND,*

# BEFORE THE REFORMATION;

AND OF

# *THE REFORMATION,*

AND THE

# PROGRESS OF RELIGION, SINCE,

IN SCOTLAND AND AMERICA,

ESPECIALLY AMONG PRESBYTERIANS.

*FOR THE REFORMED DISSENTING PRESBYTERY,*
PRINTED BY ALEXANDER ARMSTRONG.
WHEELING, SEPTEMBER, 1809.

The [illegible]med Dissenting Presbytery met according to adjournment, at Three-ridge meeting-house, May 30th, 1808. Constituted [illegible]er.—On motion, it was agreed to read the draught of a Narrative, designed to be prefixed to the Presbytery's Testimony, paragraph by paragraph. The foresaid draught of a Narrative was read, paragraph by paragraph; and such alterations as were thought necessary, were made. The question was then put, approve or disapprove? And the votes being taken, it was carried unanimously, approve.—Therefore, the Presbytery do approve the same, as a Narrative to be prefixed to the Testimony of the Reformed Dissenting Presbytery.

ROBERT WARWICK, *Moderator.*

MATTHEW JAMISON, *Clerk, pro tem.*

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A

# NARRATIVE, &c.

## CHAP. I.

*Of the Introduction of Christianity into Britain, and its Progress from that time to the Reformation.*

ACCORDING to the eternal promise, made by God the Father to God the Son, that he would give him the Heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, it is pretty generally agreed, by the Scots historians, that the gospel was introduced among them, in that remote island, by the disciples of the Apostle John, who fled there to avoid the persecution of the tyrant Domitian, though it was not publickly professed till the beginning of the third century, when Donald I. his queen, and several of the nobles, were solemnly baptized. That king did his utmost then, to establish Christianity, and to extirpate idolatry, but could not accomplish his laudable and pious intentions, being diverted from it by his constant wars with the Romans.

The kings that immediately succeeded Donald, paid but little attention to the interests of the gospel, till Crathilinth came to the throne, about the year 277. He soon began to aid, by his *civil power*, the cause of Christianity, by encouraging those who favoured it, and by setting himself against its enemies, the *Druids*, or *heathen priests*. The *Druids*, however, having great interest and reputation among the people, greatly impeded his righteous designs for a considerable time, till several ministers and private Christians, who were forced to fly thither for shelter, from the rage of persecution under *Aurelius* and *Dioclesian*, came over. By the assistance of these, the *Druids* were greatly overcome; and, at last, according to the prefacer of Knox's history, he had the Christian religion *established* in his dominions: as it was not long after, by *Constantine* the *Great*, in the Roman empire.

Those ministers, who came over to Scotland, from the persecuting rage of the emperors before mentioned, were, on account of their holy and retired life, called Culdees, i. e. worshippers of God. They were very strict in their lives, and in the government of the church of Christ. Among them, no higher order of church officers was admitted, nor allowed of, than a presbyter: for though they had ministers who were termed episcopoi, or overseers; yet they were without any distinction of place, or pre-eminence of one above another.

Most of the kings who succeeded Crathilinth, minding their own things more than the things of Christ, took but little heed to the purity of religion in their dominions. Hence, after some time, the Pelagian heresy crept in among *them*, as it had also in South Britain. It is said that the English had applied to the then bishop of Rome, to send them some person, who might be capable of confuting the Pelagians, and restoring the orthodox faith: and that Celestine, then bishop of Rome, sent them one Paladius, who succeeding well in confuting the Pelagians in England, the Scots intreated him to come over and help them; which he did. It was by means of this man, that the government of the church was first changed from being Presbyterial to become Prelatic, according to historians, both of Scotland and of other nations: for by the good services he had done, and other means, he so far gained upon the simplicity of the people, that he obtained their consent to change their church government into prelacy.

Paladius having obtained his design, in the change of the church government into prelacy, and having gotten himself established chief prelate—was the mean of establishing a connection with Rome, which was the great cause of their ruin: for as Rome declined, and increased in idolatry and corruption, so, it is probable, did Scotland also, till at last the whole nation was overspread with gross darkness, which continued for the space of 500 years. Yet, during all that time, it is said, the Lord had a witnessing remnant in Scotland, who faithfully testified for his truths, and against the abominations of Popery.

From the things contained in this chapter, it is plain, that the doctrine of the church, at its first introduction into Scotland, was anti-pelagian: That the government of the church was anti-prelatic, and so presbyterial and scriptural: That it was the opinion of the primitive christians, that the true religion should be established, supported, and defended, by the laws of the land, in opposition to all false religion; and that all idolatry, blasphemy, and heresy, should be suppressed, and extirpated by the civil magistrate.

## CHAP. II.

### *Of the Reformation from Popery, and its progress from the year* 1494 *to the year* 1567.

As there were witnesses for the truth, and against Popery, as before mentioned, during the space of 500 years; so about the year 1494 the Reformation began to dawn, and the light of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ to shine again in several parts of the country, particularly in the shire of Ayr. This so inflamed the *Romish* fraternity with rage, and the rulers then influenced by them, that they endeavoured, with all the violence they were capable of, to destroy every professor of the true religion; and several fell victims to their rage and fury, particularly Mr. Patrick Hamilton was burnt, 1527, and Mr. George Wishart in the year 1546, at the instigation of Cardinal Beaton. However, the word of God

having been introduced among the people, which, before, they were greatly prohibited from reading, and it being accompanied with the power of the Holy Ghost, so far prevailed, that, about the year 1555, a farther work of reformation obtained, and was carried on by some eminent persons whom God raised up at this time, such as Mr. John Knox and others. And so much and so greatly did the Lord succeed their labours to spread the true gospel of Christ, and to convince the people of their errors, that in the short space of two years, viz. 1557, not only the common people, but many of the nobility and gentry, began to abhor the tyranny of the bishops, and to hesitate whether they could, without sin, give their bodily presence to the *mass*, or offer their children to the papistical baptism: whether those that were in any publick trust, could, with a safe conscience, serve the higher powers, *in maintaining of idolatry*, persecuting their brethren, and suppressing Christ's truth: or whether they might suffer their brethren to be executed for religion, without any declaration that such tyranny displeased them. And from the scriptures they were resolved, that a lively faith requires a plain confession when Christ's truth is opposed; and that, not only are they guilty who do evil, but also they that consent to evil: and this they should do, if they, seeing such things openly committed, should be silent, and so allow whatever was done. From doubts, they came to determinations to endeavour that the glorious gospel should be preached, the holy sacraments truly administered, and *superstition*, *idolatry*, and *tyranny*, suppressed. For this end, having calculated both their right and their strength, they sent eminent persons to the remote parts of the kingdom, to excite the gentlemen and boroughs to adhere to the mutual defence of religion, and of one another in the profession thereof. Accordingly, upon the 3d of December, 1557, several of the nobility, and others, met at Edinburgh, where they entered into a bond, or covenant, "for the maintaining, setting forward, and establishing the true religion of Christ, with their whole power, substance, and their very lives: that they would labour, according to their power, to have faithful ministers truly and purely to minister Christ's gospel and sacraments to his people: that they would maintain, nourish, and defend them, the whole congregation of Christ, and every member thereof, with their whole power, and hazard of their lives: and declare themselves manifest enemies to all *superstitious abominations* and *idolatry*." This was their first covenant. The queen-regent, being enraged at the progress of the reformation, made preparations for suppressing the reformers by force; and in order to carry her designs into execution, she summoned all the ministers in *Scotland* to appear at *Stirling* on the 10th of May, 1559. But when she found that their adherents were numerous, and that they came armed along with their ministers, she desired them to disperse, making fair promises of favour to the reformers. Accordingly they dispersed: but she, like a true Papist, paid no regard to her promises, but held the meeting appointed, called over the names, and outlawed all those who were absent, for contempt.

When the lords of the congregation, as they were now called, perceived the storm arising, they assembled at Perth on the 31st of May, 1559, for the defence of themselves and their religion; and on the 1st of August that same year, they entered into another covenant: and God so favoured their designs, that notwithstanding all the efforts of the queen-regent and her *French* auxiliaries, they made their way, got possession of Edinburgh on the 17th of October, 1559, and at last the whole government of the kingdom into their hands.

The first book of discipline was, by the order of council *April* 29th, 1559, drawn up by the ministers, and presented to the council on the 20th of May following. In this book episcopal church government is condemned, church sessions are established, the thrusting of ministers into reclaiming congregations is condemned, and the superstitious observance of days dedicated to saints is also condemned, &c. &c. This was afterwards approved by the council, who engaged to support it to the utmost of their power, &c.

In the year 1560, the first confession of faith was drawn up, otherwise called the Scots confession. The Geneva confession, which was reckoned too brief and general, was, only, in use before. Some think they drew up their confession by order of parliament. However that may be, this confession was presented to the parliament which met in August that year, and was read and approved of, and then openly avowed, professed, and ratified by them. There were several acts passed by this parliament against Popery, and in favour of the true religion. Popery was, by these acts of parliament, totally abolished: and it was decreed, that no bishop or other prelate within that realm, use any jurisdiction by the pope's authority, in any time coming, under pain, &c. And thus, says Mr. Crookshank, the reformed religion was established by law.

Popery and Prelacy being thus discarded, the first *General Assembly* met and was held at Edinburgh the 20th of December, 1560. In January, 1561, the book of discipline was subscribed by many of the nobility and gentry. In August following, queen Mary, who was married to the king of *France*, who was now dead, came to Scotland, and next Lord's day had mass said, which so offended many, and particularly Mr. John Knox, that he openly rebuked some of the courtiers, who, though professors, suffered this without opposition.

In July, 1565, queen Mary was married to *Henry Stuart*, lord Darnley. On the 19th of June, next year, she was brought to bed of a prince, afterwards James VI. and baptized after the popish manner by the archbishop of St. Andrews. Soon after, she and the earl of *Bothwel* murdered her husband, and afterwards she married *Bothwel*, on the 5th of May, 1567: upon which account they would suffer her no longer to reign; and she raising an army in order to force her way, was defeated on the 13th of May, 1568. Whereupon she fled to England, where she was afterwards beheaded. Her son James was crowned king of Scotland, July 29th, 1567.

From the things which have been noticed in this chapter, it appears, that when reformation took place in Scotland, they seem to be of the

same principles, with regard to the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the church, with the primitive Christians in that nation, agreeable to the Bible: and that the true religion should be established in every nation, and all idolatry and superstition whatsoever suppressed, as is plain from the 24th article of their confession of faith, now ratified by parliament. It appears also, that they were not such tame submitters to civil rulers, as many would represent them; and that when their rulers acted contrary to the laws of God, in their government, they deposed them: and even at the very dawn of the reformation, that those who were in any public trust, hesitated, whether they could serve the higher powers, with a safe conscience, in maintaining of idolatry, superstition, and other wickedness.

## CHAP. III.

*Of the state and success of the Reformation, and the opposition it met with, from the coronation of James VI. anno* 1567, *to the year* 1638.

From the time of the coronation of James VI. being yet a child, the earl of Moray being made regent during his minority, the reformation went on beautifully for a few years. But the regency being changed from the earl of Moray to the earl of Marr, Satan stirred up some of the statesmen against it, who, for the sake of filthy lucre, contrived to have nominal bishops set up, in order to secure to themselves the greatest part of the church rents, and the prelates' benefices, which they were in possession of, giving but a small portion of them to these nominal bishops. Accordingly, several of these nominal bishops were, in 1572, appointed. "These innovations," says Crookshank, "were so disagreeable, that they were condemned by several after assemblies; and particularly, it was agreed by the general assembly, in *October* 1573, that all bishops already elected, shall be required particularly to *submit themselves to the general assembly;* and if they refuse, after admonition, the censure of excommunication was ordered to be passed upon them. And in the year 1580, the assembly unanimously ordained, that all who were called bishops should *demit simpliciter*, because that office had no warrant from the word of God."

The confession of faith, or NATIONAL COVENANT, was, on the 28th of January 1581, subscribed by king James VI. and his household, and afterwards by all ranks of people in the land. In this confession, under the name of hierarchy, is condemned all episcopal government; so that, as Crookshank here says, one might think that *presbyterial* church government was now established upon sure and lasting foundations. But the king had no good liking to *presbyterial* church government, and his prejudices were greatly increased by those who were about him, particularly the duke of Lenox and the earl of Arran. Hence it was thought fit, that he should be from under their management and counsel, by the other lords, who favoured the reformation in agreeableness to the word

God; and therefore some of them having carried him, first to *Ruthven castle*, and afterwards to Stirling, they then gave him his liberty both in his person and government, and deprived Lenox and Arran of the administration. This was resented by the king, and blamed on the ministers as the chief instruments. However, he complied with all their terms, and published a proclamation for restoring the liberties of the church, and freedom of her judicatories. But notwithstanding all his subscriptions and proclamations, he was determined to run them down. This was in the year 1582.

In the year 1584, James VI. having got a parliament to his taste, (for being a weak, proud creature, he aimed at arbitrary power, and claimed an erastian supremacy over the church,) they carried all things to his mind; gave him a kind of supremacy and arbitrary power over all persons and all causes; discharged all church judicatories of a presbyterian form; prohibited the ministers to speak in behalf of the church and the liberties thereof: and such as protested against their illegal proceedings, were forced to fly into England. Upon this, bishops were appointed, and exercised their tyranny to a high degree.

Matters, however, did not long continue so. Assemblies were soon restored again. And now the king professed a very high respect for the presbyterial establishment. The church's success was so great, that in the year 1590, the national covenant was again subscribed by all sorts of persons, and there seemed to be a perfect harmony between the king and the church, and matters seemed to go on delightfully. But the freedom with which the ministers told him his sin and duty, enraged him to such a degree, that he ever after endeavoured their ruin.

In parliament I. James VI. it is ordained, that all kings, princes, and magistrates, shall at their instalment solemnly swear, not only to maintain the true religion of Jesus Christ, but also to oppose and endeavour to suppress all false religions. This was agreeable, not only to the word of God, but to the confession of faith and national covenant, which they had all sworn and subscribed. But the king being very slow and backward in doing his duty, with regard to punishing idolaters and murderers, the assembly sent some of their number, with others, to present certain articles to the king, respecting the repealing of those laws, so pernicious to the church, made by parliament 1584, and to put him in mind of his duty, as a king, in the forementioned cases of punishing murderers and idolators, purging the land of Jesuites, seminary priests, and other evils. But the king was far from relishing such honest and faithful freedom. Notwithstanding,

The privileges and government of the church were ratified by act of parliament, on the 29th of May, 1592, and particularly the powers of general assemblies, synods, presbyteries, and church sessions: and it also repealed the act 1584, which granted commission to bishops, &c. But,

The king still neglecting his duty as a king, and which he was engaged to, not only by the word of God, but also by his solemn oath, the synod of Fife met 1593, and gave it as their opinion, that commissioners repair to the king, "to tell plainly to his majesty, that which all his true

subjects think, touching his too much bearing with, favouring and countenancing of, papistical teachers; his negligence in suppressing idolatry, and of establishing the kingdom of Christ in his realm: and to declare freely to his majesty, the resolution of all his godly and faithful subjects, viz. that they are ready to give their lives rather than suffer the same."

Anno 1596, the assembly renewed the national covenant, and made a faithful representation to the king, of the sins of his person and family. But they had not another assembly like that during his reign; for he ever after encroached upon their liberties.

From the year 1596 till the year 1625, on the 27th of March, when the king died, every effort was used, every nerve strained, by force, craft, and, it is said, bribery, to overturn presbyterial church government, and, with it, the true religion of Jesus Christ, and to introduce Prelacy. But the faithful presbyterian ministers zealously opposed it. All the pretended assemblies convened by the king, for suppressing Presbyterianism, and establishing Prelacy, in the years 1606, 1608, 1610, 1615, 1617, 1618, were, by these zealous men, faithfully opposed: tho' a great number of the presbyterian ministers, for their own ends, conformed greatly to the king's designs, and to Prelacy: yet all those assemblies, convoked in the forementioned years for the foresaid purposes, and other ends, and directly contrary to the order of the church of Scotland, are, by the faithful and zealous ministers of that church, and that time, declared void and null in their very constitution; and all submission to the bishops, and to these pretended assemblies, is, with manly courage and christian fortitude, refused by them. And notwithstanding the king's rage and fury, expressed to a very high degree by constituting a high commissioned court, with power to fine, imprison, or banish, the contraveners of, and non-compliers with, his arbitrary designs, and darling idol, these honest and faithful witnesses, and valiant contenders for the faith once delivered to the saints, could never be brought to acknowledge Prelacy to be agreeable to the word of God, nor even those assemblies convened by the king, though they might seem to be presbyterian, to be lawful and rightly constituted courts of Christ: knowing they were not called for the interest of Christ's kingdom, nor in a right manner, but with a design to introduce Prelacy, contrary to the word of God, and his and their solemn engagements. Therefore they kept themselves separate from those assemblies convened by the king, all along to the reformation, when they were, by the assembly 1638, utterly condemned as unlawful assemblies; and so the conduct of those, who faithfully witnessed against these assemblies convocated by the king, solemnly approved.

The king had taken and subscribed the national covenant; declared publickly that the church of Scotland was the purest church upon earth, and professed the highest respect and veneration for it: but when he conceived that it would answer his own carnal designs, then he used every effort to establish Prelacy in Scotland. He stuck at nothing. Force and fraud, flattery and dissimulation, are all called in to aid in

his nefarious projects; and all at the expense of open and avowed perjury. He died, as was before said, on the 27th of March, 1625. not without the suspicion of being poisoned. It is certain, *says bisho. Burnet*, no king died less lamented or less esteemed, than he did.

Charles the I. his son, succeeded him, and was every whit as zealous for Prelacy as his father. But, for some time, he could not get his intentions on the church of Scotland pursued, being left by his father engaged in a war with Spain, and afterwards entering rashly into a war with France.

However, when time and opportunity admitted, he carried matters in such a violent and arbitrary manner, both in England and Scotland, rejecting all good counsel, and, as it were, refusing to reign without unlimited authority, that he used every effort to make *his own will* paramount to all law.—This course he pursued till, as one observes, he tumbled from the throne, headless.

Notwithstanding that. towards the close of the preceding reign, some eminent ministers were persecuted to a high degree, yet by the special providence of God, many of them had a peaceable residence at their several pastoral charges. Some of them were protected by persons of considerable distinction: for a considerable number of the first rank in Scotland, distinguished themselves by a concern for the purity of gospel ordinances; and remarkable success attended the ministry of those who had not conformed themselves to Prelacy.

It was in the year 1633 that the king made his first tour to Scotland, accompanied by several English lords, and by Laud, bishop of London, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury; a man who seems to have had the sole command of Charles in religious, and, it is thought, in civil matters, and was the cause of his ruin at last. Here, at Edinburgh, Charles was crowned by archbishop Spotiswood. Laud, at his coronation, manifested his bigoted attachment to the superstitious whims of the church of England, by pulling away one of the Scots bishops from performing his part in the ceremony, because he had not on his pontifical robes.—These things gave Scotland a hint of what they were to expect from such bigoted and superstitious gentlemen in favour of Prelacy.

Before the king left Scotland, he erected a new bishoprick at Edinburgh; and afterwards, Laud, being created archbishop of Canterbury, framed articles for the reformation, as was pretended, of the royal chapel at Edinburgh, which were declared, under the king's own hand, to be intended as a pattern for all cathedrals and parish churches in Scotland. When the king was in Scotland, it was reckoned a blemish in the church, that it had no liturgy nor book of canons. Therefore he ordered that the bishops of Scotland should prepare draughts of both, to be remitted to London, to be there revised by Laud, Juxon, and Wren. The book of canons is first prepared and presented to the king, who delivered it to Laud and Juxon, to be modified as they thought fit. It being modified to their taste, and prepared for the press, the king confirmed it by letters patent, under the great seal, May 23d, 1635. These canons, being subversive of the whole constitution of the church of Scotland, could

never be relished by the Scots. But the king did not stop here, but was determined to have a publick liturgy, or common prayer-book, imposed and used in Scotland. But when these innovations came to be put in practice, he found his mistake. It was appointed to be read on Easter day 1637; against which time, all parishes were to be provided with two books at least. It was first set up in the chapel-royal at Holy-rood-house: but the more the people saw the service performed, the more hateful and abominable it appeared to them.

From the representation, given in this chapter, of the sentiments and conduct of our renowned reformers, it is plain, that, as from the first introduction of Christianity into Scotland, so all along, after the reformation, to the period by which this chapter is limited, they believed it agreeable to the word of God, and as they believed, they endeavoured and obtained a legal establishment of the true religion: and that they believed that the word of God required, as they had very good ground to do, that there should be no toleration given to idolatry, blasphemy, or heresy, in any government; but that, on the contrary, these should be suppressed by the civil magistrate, and the guilty punished as the word of God directs, according to the demerit of the crime.

## CHAP. IV.

*Of the state and progress of Religion in Scotland, from the year* 1637 *to the year* 1660.

On the 23d of July, 1637, the dean proceeded from the vestry to the desk, in the great church of Edinburgh, with the surplice on, in the midst of a great concourse of people, to read the service from the now appointed liturgy or common prayer-book, according to his orders from the king. But when he began to read, it appeared so like saying mass, that the people's zeal was kindled against it, and suddenly blown into such a flame, that, in a very short space of time, the whole church was in an uproar; and the dean was forced to desist, and pull off his surplice, lest it should be torn off him. Upon this the lords of council thought proper to dispense with the service, till they should hear from the king. Laud dispatched their messengers with all expedition, to inform them, that it was the king's firm resolution, that they should go on with their work.

A vast number of gentlemen, and others, presented a petition, about the middle of September, to the council, requesting that the service-book might be no farther pressed upon them, till the king's pleasure should be known. The petition was presented to the king, and another signed by 19 noblemen, 300 gentlemen of note, and by the principal inhabitants of Edinburgh: but the king, instead of returning a soft answer, ordered a proclamation to be published from Stirling, forbidding all tumultuous meetings on pain of rebellion.

The glorious Lord being now about to turn back the captivity of Zion, and, when night seemed to be at the darkest, to cause the day-spring

from on high to visit them, he animated both high and low, nobles, gentlemen, ministers, and people, with an holy zeal and courage, to an admiration, to oppose these unhallowed impositions, and anti-scriptural and anti-christian innovations, before mentioned. Hence, when they received the forementioned answer to their petition, from the king, sundry noblemen, barons, ministers, and burghers, met together, and signed the following protest:—1. That it is the undoubted right of the subjects of Scotland, to have immediate recourse to the king by petition. 2. That archbishops and bishops ought not to sit in any judicatory in this kingdom, civil or ecclesiastical, till they have purged themselves of those crimes which are ready to be proved against them. *Reader, observe, the highest and best informed men in Scotland, nobles, barons, ministers, and others, in reforming times, were of opinion, that heinous transgressors of God's law should not be admitted to any place in the government of church or state.* 3dly. That no proclamation of council, in the presence of archbishops and bishops, shall be prejudicial to any of our proceedings. 4th. That neither we nor any that adhere to us, shall incur any damages for not observing the liturgy or book of canons, as long as they are not established by general assembly, nor act of parliament, &c. 5th. That if any inconvenience fall out, (which God forbid) upon pressing the late innovations, we declare the same is not to be imputed unto us. 6th. That all our proceedings, in this affair, have no other tendency but the preservation of the true reformed religion, and the laws and liberties of the kingdom.

Great numbers of people were collected at Edinburgh, which made the counsellors apprehensive of danger. Therefore they advised the people to return peaceably to their habitations, and to leave a number of all ranks to represent them, to which they consented. Accordingly they erected four TABLES at Edinburgh—one of the nobility, one of the gentry, one of boroughs, and a fourth of the ministers. These digested and prepared matters for the general TABLE, formed of commissioners from the other four, where the final resolutions were taken.

All ranks being brought, by these violent impositions, to consider their ways, and what might be the procuring cause of all these evils, and rightly judging that the main was, their breach of covenant with God, they unanimously resolved to renew the same; which they did on the first of March 1638, and which was followed, with few exceptions, by the whole nation. In the bond for renewing the covenant, besides what concerned the former innovations, it, says Mr. Wilson, Defen. p. 240, "contained a qualified allegiance to the king, viz. an engagement to stand to the defence of our dread sovereign, the king's majesty, his person and authority, in the defence and preservation of the true religion, liberties, and laws of the kingdom. They also swear, not only to the profession and obedience, and to the defence of the true religion, but to resist all contrary errors and corruptions specified, according to their vocation, and to the utmost of that power that God hath put into their hands, all the days of their lives." They also engaged themselves to a life and conversation becoming Christians engaged in covenant to God; to all

publick, family, private and secret duties, according to the word.

The king thought to get the TABLES dissolved, and the covenant relinquished, and for this purpose sent the marquis of Hamilton down to Scotland; but to no purpose. The covenanters (for so they were afterwards called) were determined to stand to their covenant; and instead of complying with the king's wishes, they faithfully insisted for a free general assembly and parliament, which at length they obtained. The assembly, by the king's consent and proclamation, met at Glasgow on the 21st of November, 1638. The marquis of Hamilton was the king's commissioner, who, finding that the assembly determined to follow the design of the TABLES, thought fit to dissolve their meeting. But they protested, and went on with their business. This assembly passed the following acts:—An act for disannulling all the assemblies by which Prelacy was introduced and established, viz. those pretended assemblies held in the years 1606, 1608, 1610, 1616, 1617, 1618. An act for abjuring and abolishing episcopacy. An act for condemning the five articles of Perth, book of canons, book of ordination, and the high commission court. An act for restoring presbyteries, provincial and national assemblies; and several others of the same nature. They also proceeded against the bishops: eight they excommunicated; four they excluded from the ministerial office; two, on significations of repentance, they allowed to officiate as pastors, or presbyters.

The king was so enraged at their proceedings, that he resolved, and actually went, against the covenanters with an army, in order to reduce them to his will. They prepare to defend themselves. He is forced to come to a pacification with them, and he agrees that all differences shall be left to the determination of a general assembly, to be held the 12th of August that year, 1639, and to a parliament to meet two weeks after. But not being satisfied with their proceedings, he renewed the war next year, 1640. He is forced again to make as good conditions of peace as he can. In August this year, the king took another tour to Scotland, came to Edinburgh, and on the 19th the parliament sat down; and there he approved of all their late proceedings, in opposing the liturgy, erecting TABLES for defence of their liberties. And it was enacted, "That every member of succeeding parliaments, shall take and subscribe the national covenant, and give an oath in parliament relative thereunto." And thus, presbyterian government and discipline were re-established by king, parliament, and assembly, and abjured Prelacy legally abrogated, says Crookshank, in his history, introduc. p. 31.

A serious misunderstanding having taken place between the king and the parliament of England, which issued in a civil war, the parliament, for abolishing the hierarchy of the church of England, which, they say, "is evil, and justly offensive and burdensome to the kingdom, a great impediment to reformation and growth of religion, and very prejudicial to the state and government of the kingdom; and therefore they are resolved that the same shall be taken away, and that such a government shall be settled in the church, as may be most agreeable to God's holy word, &c." called an assembly of divines, who were men of eminent

learning and godliness, ministerial abilities and fidelity, for consulting about religion and church government, in order to carry on a work of reformation in that kingdom. This ordinance of parliament was made in the year 1643, on the 12th of June, and the assembly met at Westminster, at king Henry the VII's chapel, on the 1st of July, 1643. Commissioners were sent to Scotland, to treat with the assembly there concerning these things. The commissioners arrived at Edinburgh on the 9th of August. On the 12th, they presented their proposals to the convention of estates; and on the 15th, to the assembly. It was agreed, at the first conference, that the best and speediest means for accomplishing the union and assistance desired, was, for both nations to enter into a mutual league and covenant, which was soon drawn up and approved of, and sent into England by the hands of Lord Maitland, Mr. Henderson, and Mr. Gillespie, who, together with other ministers and ruling elders, were commissioners from Scotland to the Westminster assembly. The covenant was examined and approved by the English parliament and Westminster assembly, and was solemnly sworn and subscribed almost in all parts of the nation.

When it was thus approven and sworn in England, the commissioners of the general assembly in Scotland ordered it to be, with all religious humiliation, sworn by all ministers and professors within that church; and next day, October 12th, 1643, the commissioners of the convention of estates appointed the same thing. All this was approved and ratified by act of parliament 15th July, 1644. And thus both nations, in a most solemn manner, abjured *Popery* and *Prelacy*, &c. and it was ratified by the general assembly 1645. This covenant also contains a qualified allegiance to the civil rulers, viz. to preserve and defend them in the preservation and defence of the true religion.

The assembly at Westminster, with the assistance of commissioners from the church of Scotland, agreed upon a confession of faith, something more enlarged, but substantially the same with the Scots confession, and designed to be one main part of the uniformity in religion in the three kingdoms, which they were bound to endeavour by the solemn league and covenant. This confession was received and approved in all the heads thereof, one article only excepted, viz. with regard to the magistrate's power to call synods. This article leaves the magistrate's power unlimited; but the assembly received and approved of it with a limitation; see their act, passed at Edinburgh August 27th, 1647, at the beginning of the confession itself.

A directory for the publick worship of God, was agreed upon by the assembly of divines at Westminster, with the assistance of commissioners from the church of Scotland, as a part of the covenanted uniformity in religion betwixt the churches of Christ in the kingdoms of Scotland, England, and Ireland. It was approven and established by an act of the general assembly of the church of Scotland, February 3d, 1645, sess. 10, wherein they say, that it was approven unanimously, and without a contrary voice, in all the heads thereof, together with the preface set before it; provided always, say they, that the clause of the directory respecting

the communicants sitting about, or at the Lord's table, when the Lord's supper is administered, be not interpreted as if, in the judgment of this church, it were indifferent, and free for any of the communicants not to come to, and receive at the table; or as if we did approve the distributing of the elements by the minister to each communicant, and not by the communicants among themselves. It is also provided, that this shall be no prejudice to the order and practice of this kirk, in such particulars as are appointed by the books of discipline, and acts of general assemblies, and are not otherwise ordered and appointed in the directory. It was approved and established by act of parliament, February 6th, 1645.

The form of presbyterial church government, and of ordination of ministers, was agreed upon by the assembly of divines met at Westminster, with the assistance of commissioners from the church of Scotland, as a part of the covenanted uniformity in religion betwixt the churches of Christ in the kingdoms of Scotland, England, and Ireland; was approven by the general assembly of the church of Scotland, February 10th, 1645.

The general assembly of the church of Scotland made an act, also, August 24th, 1647, called a directory for family worship, or rather, an act regarding that directory, giving directions concerning secret and private worship, and mutual edification; for cherishing piety, for maintaining unity, and avoiding schism and division.

On the 2d of July the larger catechism, and on July 28th the shorter catechism, was approved of by the general assembly of the church of Scotland, in the year 1648. And on the 7th of February, 1649, the parliament ratified and approved the confession of faith, and catechisms larger and shorter, and orders them to be recorded, published, and practised. The pieces of reformation noticed in this chapter, are mostly bound up in that book, called, the Westminster confession of faith.

As the church was greatly pestered with Popery and Prelacy, and had been now for many years by that scheme of pernicious error called Arminianism; so, many years before the period we speak of here, Brownism was introduced into England, so called, from a Robert Brown, first a schoolmaster, and afterwards a preacher, near London. Some of their distinguishing tenets were as follows, according to Mr. Wilson, in his *Defence*, p. 189, 190, taken from Mr. Bailie's *Dissuasive from the errors of the time*. "They affirmed, that in order to admission to church fellowship, it was necessary that one should give satisfaction to the whole church, of his real sanctification and true regeneration; that not only the office bearers, but that all and every member of the church, was a judge of the qualifications of such as should be admitted members.—They also affirmed, that if any who wanted the above qualifications, should be admitted to church fellowship, or to partake in the sacraments, he should quickly so far pollute the whole church, that every member thereof must needs be partaker of his sin; and if, upon admonition, the church did not excommunicate him, she ought to be separated from, as an infected and leprous society. They acknowledged no power of jurisdiction in any ecclesiastical judicatory, above a congrega-

tional church. They rejected catechisms, as set and unlawful forms of instruction. They affirmed, that the civil magistrate has no right to meddle at all with any matters of religion; and they plead for an universal toleration, under the specious pretence of liberty of conscience."—Some of their principles are almost universally received and professed in our time. The little leaven has nearly leavened the whole lump. It gained insensibly in England, for a time, but at last began to make more of an appearance, and by degrees infected a great part of the English nation. Both English and Scots divines set themselves against it, I mean several of them, and especially presbyterians; and the Scots divines used their utmost endeavours to stop its baleful progress. They wrote largely and learnedly against those pernicious principles, as may be seen in Rutherford, Gillespie, Baillie, Dickson, Durham, Ferguson, and many others. Our Westminster assembly, in their confession and catechisms, in what they say of the duty of the civil magistrate to suppress heresy, error, blasphemy, and idolatry, and against the toleration of a false religion, was directly levelled against Brownists and their toleration scheme, which began to make a more publick appearance, and take a more extensive spread through England, and began in some instances to infect Scotland. Cromwell's army was, at least a great part of it, made up of persons, who, though they differed in some things among themselves, were violent Brownists in respect of the magistrate's power about matters of religion, and toleration and liberty of conscience; as was Cromwell himself.

The king having been reduced so low, by the parliament's army, that he despaired of success, threw himself into the Scots army, then in England, who delivered him up to the English, at their request, upon conditions of his good treatment. But Cromwell, now generalissimo of the parliament's army, called and convened a court according to his own mind, who tried and condemned him, and he was beheaded, January 30th, 1649.

The year before, viz. 1648, duke Hamilton, by his interest and intrigues, got the convention of estates to raise an army for rescuing the king out of his captivity, and to appoint himself general. This was called the duke's engagement. It was remonstrated against by the commission of the general assembly; because it was a conjunction of royalists and enemies to their covenanted reformation; and that the junction with the king's party, consisting of papists and episcopalians, was a most manifest breach of the covenant, &c. The duke and his engagement was defeated by Cromwell, himself taken prisoner, and afterwards beheaded. The Scots parliament soon after condemned the engagement for the above mentioned reasons, and passed an act against the engagers, ranking them in several classes, whence it got the name of an act of classes, whereby they were excluded from all offices of publick trust, and from voting in parliament. The commission of the assembly also appointed church censures upon the engagers, to bring them to repentance.

When the news of Charles the I.'s death came to Scotland, they proclaimed his son Charles king, in his father's stead. But, according to the laws of the land, no king could reign there, but upon condition of his swearing and subscribing the national and solemn league and covenant, and engaging to prosecute the ends thereof all the days of his life, and to support and defend the true protestant, presbyterian, covenanted religion. Charles was at the Hague, when he heard of his father's death. The Scots sent commissioners to treat with him. He was very reluctant to comply with their terms: however, at last he pretended to comply with all. He swore the covenants before he landed, and again at *Scoon*. But he had no intention to keep his oath; and therefore he used every artifice to get the malignant party, the enemies to the covenants and the reformation, into places of power and trust, that he might carry all by the strong hand, and be at liberty to act in open hostility to his engagements. Therefore, Cromwell advancing with an army, his first and great pretence was, want of men: for, as the act of classes had excluded the engagers from all offices of public trust, and vote in parliament, so it excluded all the malignant party, and enemies to the reformation in general, who were the very persons he wanted in: and Charles knowing that they were like himself, that would stick at nothing, he proposed to the commission of the general assembly, if now, when men were wanting, those who were excluded by the act of classes from any publick trust, might not be restored upon giving satisfaction to the church; and afterwards, if they might not be allowed to vote in parliament. The commission of the assembly resolved, that any that had satisfied the church for their offences, have renewed and taken the covenant, and are qualified for such places according to the qualifications required in the word of God, &c. might be delivered from the censure of the act of classes, and admitted to places of power and trust in the army and parliament. These resolutions of the assembly were thence called *the publick resolutions*, against which a minority of the assembly and ministers in Scotland protested: for they were persuaded, that those who were under censure of the act of classes, gave satisfaction to the church, and took and renewed the covenant, for no other end but to get into places of power and trust, in order to betray the whole reformation cause; and all parties found, by sad experience, that they were perfectly right. These were, on account of their protest against the assembly's resolutions, called protestors; and those who passed and adhered to the resolutions, were called publick resolutioners.

It is remarkable, that both the resolutioners and protestors publickly professed their principles to be, that none should be admitted to any place in church or state, but such as were qualified according to the word of God; and it must be allowed that many of the resolutioners were sincere in their principles, though a vast many of them were not. The protestors, to a man, gave the clearest evidence, that they believed that no man should be exalted to any dignity, or rule over men, unless he was possessed of the qualifications required by God's word, and now

by the covenants, national and solemn league: and therefore they make it one of the causes of God's wrath against the nation, that they agreed to, and actually invested the king with the government of the nation, notwithstanding many clear evidences of his disaffection and enmity to the work and people of God, in neglecting, hindering, and condemning the purging of judicatories and army according to covenant engagements. But whatever were the principles of some of the resolutioners, the resolutions opened the way for malignants, and enemies to our reformation cause of all sorts, to get into places of power and trust, in the army, committee of estates, parliament, &c. so that they soon had the whole management of the nation in their hands. A late Scots historian remarks, that "thus multitudes *then*, and *ever since*, have been admitted to be the *ministers of God for good* to the nation, in a way of trampling upon the law of God, and plain violation of our solemn covenants with him. No wonder, therefore, that so many of them prove a curse to us instead of a blessing." Brown's Hist. vol. 2, p. 236.

Cromwell and his sectarian army having conquered malignant Charles and his malignant army, and chased Charles out of the nation, Cromwell assumed the reins of government, under the title of protector. Having now usurped the government, and acting as the supreme magistrate in the three kingdoms; and himself and his army, and the rump parliament of England, being all leavened with the Brownistic doctrine of toleration and liberty of conscience, for all sects, and heresies, and blasphemies; commissioners, says Crookshank, Introduc. p. 49, chiefly of the *independent* persuasion, were sent into Scotland, to visit the universities, and to settle an unlimited toleration and liberty of conscience, inconsistent with their ecclesiastical constitution, and contrary to the covenants. On the 26th of July, 1652, a *declaration* was presented to the assembly in favour of the *congregational discipline*, and for *liberty of conscience*; but the faithful members, instead of yielding to the declaration, gave in a protestation against it. Cromwell published a law, giving an unlimited toleration; perhaps the first of the kind ever known among christians since Julian the Apostate's time; but, like most others that pretend to be for liberty of conscience and toleration, it was only in words, not in fact; for they would not suffer the assembly, and other courts of Christ's house, to meet, but at their pleasure, and sent armed bands to dissolve them when met. But as the covenanters all along remonstrated against a toleration of errors, heresies, and blasphemies, under pretence of liberty of conscience, or any other pretext, as contrary to the word of God; and as they remonstrated, to the English parliament, against any toleration being given to hereticks and blasphemers; so now, in the face of all danger, they shewed that they were not going to compliment Oliver Cromwell with their principles. Hence, Mr. Rutherford, Mr. Gillespie, and fourteen or fifteen other ministers, drew up an excellent testimony, as did also the synod of Perth and Fife draw up another, against Oliver's toleration, in which they shew the contrariety of all such toleration of error, heresy, and blasphemy, to the word of God: see these excellent testimonies, bound up with the history of the

indulgence, in a late edition, perhaps about 1783. Oliver Cromwell died September 3d, 1658. His son Richard succeeded him, but was, next year, obliged to resign.

From the things related in this chapter, it is plain that our reformers thought it right to resist the illegal incroachments of the civil magistrate, upon their rights and privileges, by force of arms: That heinous transgressors of God's law, should not be promoted to any place in the government of church or state: That national covenanting is a duty, as well as personal and congregational; that the duties which subjects owe to their rulers, and which rulers owe to their subjects, are proper materials, in their place for a covenant of duty; and that it is proper, in such a covenant, to limit allegiance to the magistrate, to his defending and supporting the true religion: That it is the magistrate's duty to suppress all error, heresy, blasphemy, and idolatry; that the toleration of such evils, is contrary to the word of God and our covenants; and that no man has a right to rule over others, in a christian land, who is not qualified according to the word of God, and such other stipulations as have been made necessary by the laws of the land; and that, by the laws of the land, all prelatists, as well as all papists, were for ever excluded from the British thro. e in general, and from that of Scotland, in particular, more especially.

## CHAP. V.

### *Of the state and progress of Religion in Scotland, from the year* 1660 *to the year* 1688.

After the death of Oliver Cromwell, and the resignation of his son Richard, so many changes took place in the government of the kingdom, that the nation began to be weary of them; and the parliament began to think of, and soon actually called Charles II. home, and put him again in possession of the throne, without any conditions, or taking any security of him for their religion and liberties. Charles "had sworn the covenants, and come under solemn engagements to prosecute the ends thereof, and consented for himself and his successors, to agree to the acts of parliament enjoining the covenants, national and solemn league, and fully establishing presbyterian church government, directory for worship, confession of faith, and catechisms larger and shorter, as they were approven by the general assembly of that church of Scotland, and parliament of that kingdom, in all his majesty's dominions; and that he shall observe the same in his practice and family; and that he should never make any opposition to these, or endeavour any change thereof." All this he had sworn, according to an act of parliament passed in the year 1649, in which it was enacted, "that before the king's majesty who now is, or any of his successors, shall be admitted to the exercise of his royal power, he shall swear," as was just before said he did. Yet at first he seemed episcopal in his judgment, i. e. be-

fore his coronation; but in the time of his banishment he turned papist, but still pretended he was a protestant. His father was a professed protestant, and his mother a professed papist. After all, it was thought that in reality Charles was a deist: he was in effect a practical atheist. He was, at his coronation, a sworn presbyterian; but in heart, both before, even then, and through his whole life, he bore a deadly enmity to it. No sooner had he got himself fixed on the throne, at his restoration, than he began to overturn presbyterianism to the very foundations, and all the glorious work of reformation attained between 1638 and 1650; and, contrary to his solemn oath and engagements, began to rear up abjured Prelacy, first in England, and then in Scotland.

The beginning of his tyranny, and of his breach of his coronation oath, in Scotland, was by his council's casting into prison, some of the most zealous ministers, who had met in order to frame an address to the king, to remind him of his solemn oath at his coronation, and to intreat him to act up to it in the exercise of his kingly power. The council then emitted a proclamation, prohibiting all such meetings without the king's authority, and all petitions and remonstrances under pretence that they were seditious. These ministers, and some elders that met with them for the foresaid purpose, were of the protesting party. They had desired the resolutioners to concur with them in the address; but they would not, nor address him themselves. They placed their confidence in *Mr. James Sharp*, whom they had entrusted to agent their affairs at court, and who effectually deceived them, and betrayed the church of Scotland, as Judas did his master. The ministers who were imprisoned were all afterwards set at liberty except *Mr. James Guthrie*. This imprisonment was in August 1660. The marquis of *Argyle* was seized in July, at London, and committed to the tower, and afterwards was sent down to Scotland, to be tried for alledged crimes; but, in reality, because he was a firm patron and supporter of the covenanted cause.

The parliament, the first after the restoration, met at Edinburgh, January 21, 1661, and instead of the oath of the covenants, which by a former act of parliament every member was to take before he could get a seat in parliament, they were now required to take an oath of allegiance, wherein they swear that they acknowledge the king supreme *over all persons and causes:* and thus the supremacy is introduced, which became the cause of sore trials and persecution to the faithful. This parliament consisted of tools to Charles's mind. They passed an act recissory, by which they nullified all the parliaments held, and all acts of parliament made, between the years 1640 and 1651; and thus removed, and cut off at one blow, all the securities established by law, to the constitution of the church of Scotland, and to the whole work of reformation. They asserted the king's supremacy over all persons and causes. They declared all meetings, assemblies, leagues and covenants, without the king's authority, unlawful. The subjects are discharged to renew the league and covenant, or any other covenants or publick oaths respecting the government of the church, without a special warrant from the king. They gave up the government of the church to be set-

tled by the king, in the way that he judged most agreeable to the word of God and monarchical government; and appointed every succeeding 29th of May, to be kept as a day of anniversary thanksgiving for Charles's restoration.

On the 13th of February, 1661, the marquis of Argyle was brought to the bar of the house, to be tried for pretended crimes; but he answered the fourteen articles, preferred against him in his indictment, which contained nothing but an heap of slander, perversion of matters of fact, and misrepresentations, in so convincing a manner, that they were forced to fix upon his compliance with the usurper Cromwell, after he had conquered Scotland. There were two things which, with regard to the usurper, he was charged with, viz. assisting at the proclamation of Oliver, and his son Richard, and sitting in the parliament of England during Richard's protectorship. He denied being at Richard's, but owned that he was at the proclamation of Oliver: he said he was commanded to come to the English council, and assist at the proclamation, and could not refuse without having his life and fortune made a prey. No law, says he, can make this a crime, far less treason. He also acknowledged that he sat in the parliament of England; but, says he, no precedent can be shewn, in any age in this kingdom, whereby this was made a crime, far less treason. However, nothing availed. They designed to be rid of him, therefore passed sentence of death upon him; and on the 27th of May he was beheaded. Thus this noble marquis sealed the covenanted testimony with his blood, at his death, as he had been a great promoter and supporter of it in his life. The Rev. James Guthrie sealed the same cause with his blood, five days after. Lord Warristoun sealed it with his blood, July 22, 1663.

As Charles claimed an arbitrary power over all persons and causes, and intended, whatever he pretended, by introducing Prelacy, to introduce Popery; so he found his parliament in Scotland very obsequious. At their session in 1662, by their first act, they set up and established abjured Prelacy, though it had no foundation in the word of God: and by this act, the supremacy which Charles claimed over the church, is recognized and established—which begins thus: "Forasmuch as the ordering and disposal of the external government and policy of the church, doth properly belong unto his majesty, as *an inherent right of the crown*, by virtue of his royal prerogative and supremacy in causes ecclesiastical." By this act, the king was made the only fountain of church power, and that exclusive of Christ, the only HEAD of the church, of whom there is not the least mention. No wonder that the faithful party in Scotland rejected such a government, root and branch, afterwards.

By their second act, they declared it to be treason for subjects, upon pretence of reformation, or any other pretence, to enter into leagues and covenants, or to take up arms against the king, or those commissioned by him; and thus established passive obedience and non-resistance.—They also declared, that the national and solemn league and covenants were unlawful oaths, and that there lay no obligation on the subjects from these oaths. Thus they assumed the *pope's* power, *in dispensing*

*with oaths.* And to complete all, they repealed all acts, ecclesiastical and civil, approving the covenants, and all the acts of the assembly at *Glasgow*, 1638. Their third act required all ministers entered since 1649, to take presentations and admission from the bishops. Their fourth ordered all masters of colleges, who refused to submit to episcopacy, to be turned out. Ministers were ordered to attend the diocesan synods, and assist in all things required, under severe penalties. All private meetings or conventicles, in houses, under pretence of religion, are discharged, and none were to preach, keep school, &c. without the bishops licence. By their fifth act, all persons in publick trust were required to subscribe a declaration, whereby they declared it unlawful to enter into covenants upon any pretence whatsoever, and that the national and solemn league and covenants were in themselves unlawful, and that there lay no obligation on any, from these covenants, nor any of them, to endeavour any change in the government as presently established. From which it appears, that both Charles and his parliament thought that there was something in these covenants that required an attempt to overthrow such a government as was presently established in church and state: and it was not difficult to discover it. They issued a proclamation for keeping the 29th of May as an anniversary thanksgiving for Charles's restoration, with certification, that those ministers who would not observe it, should be deprived of their benefices. And as none of the faithful ministers would observe it, it was the occasion of great trouble to them. After this, on their solemnization of this 29th of May at Linlithgow, they in the height of their wicked and mad contempt of the covenants, burned them, together with the causes of God's wrath, lex rex, acts of parliament, acts of committee of estates, acts of assemblies, made between 1638 and 1660, as the solemn league and covenant had been before burnt with triumph at London, by order of both houses of the English parliament, on the 22d of May, 1661. As the presbyterian ministers who had entered into the ministry after 1649, were required to take presentations and admission anew from the bishops, and few had yet conformed, the council met at Glasgow and made an act, that all the ministers aforesaid, who would not receive collation or admission from the bishops, should be deprived of their stipends for the present year, and remove from their parishes and presbyteries, and are discharged from exercising any part of their ministerial office after that time. Too many complied with Prelacy one way or other: however, there were about 200 silenced by this act; and many suffered great hardships for their non-conformity. These acts of parliament, which we have mentioned, laid the foundation for the horrid and bloody persecution that followed, for a particular account of which we must refer our readers to the history of those times. There were several others thrust from their charges, in the synod of *Galloway*, and diocese of *Dunkeld*. Such were the desolations that were then made at the instigation of the prelates.

The faithful ministers of Christ were shocked and stunned for a time, by these unprecedented and violent proceedings, and for some time were silent. But finding that the people were so far from countenancing

the curates, that they despised them, and that they were desirous, to a high degree, of hearing their own faithful ministers, they at length betook themselves to the fields to preach the gospel, exposing themselves to the fury of the high commission court that was erected, rather than withhold the bread of life from perishing souls. They had, indeed, preached to the people in private houses, from which they were driven by the rage and violence of their enemies, the parliament having declared all such meetings, or conventicles, seditious and criminal, and discharged them under the severest penalties. After this, houses were broken up, where people were assembled for hearing the word of God; and many of them were imprisoned, and the laws were executed upon them with rigour. But their betaking themselves to the fields, increased the rage and fury of the managers to an intolerable degree. Many acts of parliament and council were emitted, and put in execution, and all ways of cruelty imaginable taken, to suppress meetings in houses and in the fields; field meetings being discharged under pain of death to ministers, and most afflicting penalties upon the hearers: and oh! what a scene of horrid barbarities now followed: see the histories of these persecuting times under those two tyrants, Charles and James. But all their tyrannical proceedings could not prevent field meetings. The more they were oppressed, the more they increased; and the Lord countenanced remarkably his own ordinances, and blessed them to the conversion, confirmation, and consolation of many.

When these enemies to truth and godliness found that they could not extirpate conventicles by all the cruelties they could invent, but they still increased, they fell upon crafty measures in order to divide them. This was what was called an indulgence, and was allowed to some of the ministers who had been thrust from their charges. The indulgence came down by a letter from Charles to his privy council, bearing date June 7th, 1669. By this the council was authorized to appoint so many of the ousted ministers, as have lived peaceably and orderly, to return to the parish churches where they formerly served, provided they were vacant, and to preach, and exercise the other functions of their ministry, &c. But they were appointed to keep presbyteries and synods, viz. such as depended upon, and were authorized by, the bishops: and they were not to admit any from neighbouring parishes to the communion, nor to baptize their children, &c. and that they should not countenance any who deserted their own parish churches, and resorted to their preachings; and that no seditious discourse or expression be used in the pulpit, or elsewhere, by any of these ministers; viz. that they should not say a word against Prelacy, the supremacy arrogated by Charles, the burning of the covenants, nor the overturning of the fundamental laws of the kingdom, and the like; for to preach against any of these abominations, would be accounted seditious. Thus Charles took upon him to depose and restore ministers at his pleasure, by virtue of his supremacy; and many presbyterian ministers accepted this indulgence, with these and other limitations. It was no wonder, then, that the faithful part of the ministry reprobated their acceptance of that

indulgence, and at length refused to hear them, as well as the curates. This and other indulgences a great many of the presbyterian ministers took, and most of the others lay by and kept silent, or approved of it. After the defeat at Bothwel, the bond of peace presented to the prisoners taken at that battle, was afterwards accompanied with a pretended indemnity, procured by the duke of Monmouth, which proved a great snare to many, both ministers and people, and was the occasion of making great defection and divisions: for as a great many ministers, as well as people, took this bond and indemnity, so there was, and ever since has been, by these and their successors, a preferring of peace to truth, and of ease to duty. But those who were faithful to their master, Christ Jesus, rejected these indulgences, and bonds and indemnities, on the terms proposed, and because of the source from which they flowed, (the supremacy) with indignation, and went on with their work, preaching in the fields, though now but two, viz. Messrs. Richard Cameron and Donald Cargil, who continued faithful through a horrid scene of persecution, even unto death.

As in the year 1669 Charles II. got a formal statutory act of supremacy passed, bearing, that he and his successors have, by an inherent right to the crown, the supreme right, and authority, and supremacy over all persons, and in all causes ecclesiastic, within his dominions, and that the ordering and disposal of the external government of the church, doth properly belong to him and his successors, &c. so the faithful party not only testified against this supremacy in the king, from time to time, but began to hesitate, whether they could acknowledge him as king at all, or not. At last, in the year 1680, they came to a final determination, to disown and reject Charles Stuart, as having any right, title, or interest in the crown of Scotland, and government thereof, as being forfeited several years since, by his perjury and breach of covenant, and his usurpation of Christ's crown and royal prerogatives, and by his tyranny and breaches in the very laws of ruling in matters civil, &c. See their declaration at Sanquhar, June 22, 1680. On the 22d of July that year, Mr. Richard Cameron was killed at the battle of Airsmoss: and now Mr. Cargil is left alone, the only minister the poor persecuted party has to preach the word to them. In September 1680, Mr. Cargil excommunicated several of the principal leaders of this horrid scene of rebellion against God; and among the first, Charles II. king, &c. and James, duke of York, &c. Mr. Cargil received the crown of martyrdom on the 27th of July, 1681, as multitudes had done before him, in Scotland, for twenty years preceding. The poor persecuted party are now left, in the providence of God, without a minister entirely, having none to break the bread of spiritual life to them for several years: but their bloodthirsty enemies unceasingly pursued and hunted them, like wild beasts, through mountains and desarts, where they were forced to hide themselves from their unrelenting fury. Hence many of them were apprehended and hanged; many of them shot, if they were found reading or praying, or suspected to be about any duty, in the fields, or in houses; some were drowned, by tying them to stakes in the sea-mark, and letting

them stand there till the tide gradually swelled and covered them; some they tortured half to death, with boots and thumbkins squeezing the marrow out of the bone, and then hanged them; others they banished after they had used them most barbarously, &c. This was the course pursued, by these murderers under the mask of rulers, for many years before. But all the horrid barbarities and cruelties prosecuted and executed upon these faithful sufferers, could never bring them to acknowledge Charles, or James his successor, as lawful rulers. And as their greatest reason for rejecting Charles was the supremacy, as may easily be seen from their Sanquhar declaration; so they rejected James duke of York, not only for that, but because he was a papist: though they rejected both the one and the other upon other grounds, and for other reasons.

The Lord, in his holy providence, having permitted Charles II. for his own holy and wise ends, to be a plague and a scourge to his own people, took him off by an untimely death, as was supposed, by poison, which his own dear, unnatural brother, James duke of York, administered to him; as conceiving that he was not prosecuting the popish interest rapidly enough, and longing to get at the throne himself, and for fear of being detected as having a principal hand in cutting the throat of the earl of Essex. Charles made hypocritical pretensions of being a protestant while death was at a distance; but when that terror of kings made his approach to this king, who had made his name and actions a terror to all good men in his dominions, then he thought it necessary to clear his guilty conscience by an absolution from a popish priest. And thus, as he had spent his days in all manner of wickedness, so he was all along a papist in heart, and, as appears, died in a delusion, on the 6th of February, 1685.

James duke of York succeeded him; and, as might be expected, those who rejected Charles's government, and now rejected James's, as an usurper, as assuming a supremacy over all persons and causes, and an arbitrary power, and because he was a papist, whose principle, as such, is, that no faith is to be kept, i.e. no bonds or promises are to be kept, with hereticks: for which reason no papist can be entrusted with any office, post, or trust among men, and especially in any protestant country; since by their principles they claim a dispensation to break all oaths, bonds, and promises, if they may thereby advance the popish interest in any kingdom. I say, as might have been expected, the true presbyterians, who rejected James, as being, for the foregoing reasons and others, unfit to rule, and an unlawful ruler, and testifying against him as a papist and a usurper, and still professing and practising Presbyterianism, with great zeal and scrupulosity, and with as much publicity as they could, which thing James hated with a deadly hatred; they were pursued with more unrelenting rigour, if possible, than formerly; orders being given, that the laws enacted against them should be put in execution to the utmost.

This popish duke soon began his work of re-introducing Popery into Great-Britain. He soon began to remove every barrier that stood in

the way of his wicked designs. He soon began to undermine and overturn any of the remaining fundamental laws of the nation, that stood in the way of his darling project. He, by his royal prerogative, suspended all penal laws against papists; turned out professed protestants, and put professed papists in their place, with regard to offices civil and military. He erected popish schools through the nation, and placed popish teachers in the seminaries of learning. He erected or ordered up popish chapels, as in Edinburgh at Holy-rood-house; and by his royal supremacy and arbitrary power, gave an universal toleration to all sects and denominations, except the strict presbyterians, who would publish and vent their presbyterian principles, so hateful to him, and to all heretics, errorists, and wicked men, in spite of all his hellish machinations and contrivances to extirpate them.

This toleration was greedily embraced by all the indulged presbyterian ministers in Scotland, and all others but the persecuted party. The indulged ministers, or a number of them in the name of all the rest, being, it seems, so highly elated at the reception of th toleration from James the papist, that they seem to have forgot their former principles and solemn vows entirely; and in the fulness of their joy, to the shame and disgrace of all presbyterians, send up that fulsome and blasphemous address to this popish duke, wherein they thank him for this surprising favour from his most sacred majesty; the favour being to them, and all the people of their persuasion; and they thank God for putting this in his royal heart, as if God had put it in the heart of any man, to claim a right, and assume a power, to give a liberty to men to practise idolatry, and vent what heretical and blasphemous opinions the devil puts in their head, with impunity. To talk of God putting any such things in any person's heart, in any other way than he is said to harden Pharaoh's heart, is bordering too near blasphemy, we fear.

We mentioned before, that this toleration doctrine was first, as far as we can learn, introduced into Britain by a certain Robert Brown; and it was always, before this, accounted one of the distinguishing doctrines of Brownism, which our presbyterian divines earnestly contended and testified against: but now, from James the papist, it is "a surprising favour," which God "put in his royal heart" to bestow. O the times!!! O shame! O zeal, where art thou gone!!! And how are almost all denominations of presbyterians leavened with this toleration doctrine ever since!!! Only the persecuted party stood to their principles, in the face of all danger. They had no benefit by it: for as they would not accept of a liberty to preach by or under the protecting wings of a toleration, but testified both against the giver and accepters; so they were still persecuted with the utmost violence.

After Mr. Cargil's death, this poor, broken handful of Christ's zealous and faithful followers, had no minister to preach the gospel to them for several years, till Mr. James Renwick, whom the societies sent over to Holland for ordination, came over to them. This faithful and zealous servant of Christ laboured unweariedly among them, under great disadvantages: for he was no sooner come over, than a price is put on his

head, dead or alive: therefore he was searched for every where, by covetous and blood-thirsty men. At last he was apprehended, in the year 1685, and shortly after was executed at Edinburgh, and thus received the crown of martyrdom, and was the last who did so in that period. Some little time before Mr. Renwick was apprehended, he had got some helps in his ministerial labours, which served to ease him a little. These were, Messrs. *Huston*, from Ireland; *Alexander Shields*, author of *the Hind let loose;* and a Mr. Boyd; and, if we mistake not, Mr. Thomas Linning was come from Holland, where he was sent by the societies, at their expense, for education and ordination.

The Rev. James Renwick being apprehended and executed, by the orders of this popish tyrant, James duke of York, his time is but short now—his reign is near an end: for in that same year in which he took Mr. Renwick's life, God cast him headlong from the pinnacle of all his usurped power, grandeur and dignity, by means of his own son-in-law, William prince of Orange, into perpetual banishment. By this providential turn of affairs, these earnest contenders for the faith once delivered to the saints, who, in the face of cruelty itself, opposed manfully, and testified against all the usurpations and encroachments made upon the prerogatives of their Lord and Master, resisting even unto blood, were released from the burning fiery furnace of persecution.

From this chapter we may see, how providentially God carried a remnant through an unprecedented scene of suffering, while they were forsaken by almost all their brethren; and how those who once seemed zealous for the covenanted cause, declined, made compliances with the enemy, deserted their former principles, and even received indulgences and toleration to preach the word of God, with many sinful limitations and restrictions; while the poor persecuted party were strengthened to abide by their principles, to testify for the royal prerogatives of Jesus Christ, and against all the indulgences and toleration, as exceeding sinful.

## CHAP. VI.

### *Of the state and progress of Religion in Scotland at, and some time after, the Revolution, in* 1688.

We mentioned in the last chapter, that James duke of York, who had usurped the throne of Britain, had made many large strides towards the introduction of Popery into that and the neighbouring island, again; and that, for this purpose, he not only repealed all penal laws against papists, and was filling all places of power and trust with them, and putting out protestants to make way for them; but was, as fast as he could, destroying any charters, or fundamental laws, that seemed to stand in the way of his wicked designs; and, to cover his design, gave a toleration to all sects and denominations of professed Christians, which was accepted by presbyterians in geneeal, except the persecuted party, with Mr. Renwick, and the others before mentioned that at last joined with

him, viz. Messrs. Huston, Shields, and Boyd. There were many, both in England and Scotland, who pleaded strenuously for passive obedience and non-resistance. But when James began to encroach upon their privileges, which they conceived would be a personal injury to them, then, though they formerly denounced damnation on any that resisted the powers that be, they began to plead for resistance, and desired help to resist: and therefore many of them were with the foremost, to invite the prince of Orange to help them. The prince of Orange accepted their invitation. He came over to Britain, with an army, in November 1688. James, as soon as he heard that William was landed with an army, took to his heels, fled to France, and abdicated the throne which he had usurped. "The principal articles of Mr. Renwick's indictment," says the associate presbytery, in their testimony published 1736, "were, his affirming that the duke of York, then king James VII. was not rightful nor lawful king of these realms, and that because he was a papist, had never sworn the coronation oath, and was overthrowing the fundamental laws of the kingdom; also his affirming and defending the lawfulness of defensive arms, both for our civil and religious liberties. These principles," say they, "were espoused by this church ever since our reformation from Popery." "These principles:" what principles do they here refer to? Those that were the principal articles of Mr. Renwick's indictment, and for which he suffered, viz. that no papist, no person who had not taken the coronation oath, none who was overthrowing the fundamental laws of the kingdom, could be a lawful ruler in Britain; and that it was the duty of God's people, to defend their civil and religious liberty by arms. These are acknowledged to be the principles of the church of Scotland from its reformation from Popery. But there was another principle espoused by the church, in the best times of her reformation, and that was, that no prelatist could be a lawful ruler over those realms, more than a papist. Had these, which are acknowledged, and this other, which should be acknowledged, to be the principles of the church of Scotland, been strictly adhered to by all her professed sons, it would have prevented much animosity, division, and contention, about the lawfulness or unlawfulness of the present government of Britain.

The poor persecuted party were, while these tyrants were in power, contemned and reviled for singularity, bigotry, and as being actuated by schismatical and rebellious principles, and even being guilty of their own blood; and that not only by papists and prelatists, but by those who professed themselves presbyterians. But now, when James is fled, and a revolution takes place, then the whole three kingdoms justify their conduct in respect to these tyrants, and especially the last. Then they declared that James was never rightful and lawful king over those kingdoms, never having taken the coronation oath, and because he was destroying the fundamental laws of the kingdom; which was the case with Charles, as well as James: and afterwards they gave proof, that they thought his being a papist was sufficient ground to reject his claim to be a lawful ruler among them; for they established it as one article

of their constitution, that no papist, nor even any one married to a papist, should ever be king in Britain.

William, prince of Orange, was, soon after his coming to England, invited to the throne. He readily accepted the invitation. William, it appears, was bred a presbyterian, in Holland; but Erastianism prevailed too much in Holland, and William, no doubt, was somewhat inured to it. He, however, for sake of the crown, and to please the English, it is to be feared, of a presbyterian became an episcopalian, and even assumed to be the head of the church of England and Ireland, and claimed and exercised supremacy over the church of Scotland. William, at first, it appears, was very condescending, and Scotland seems to have had a fine opportunity offered them, for having the church established upon its own heap again. But both church and state were too far gone, and sunk in defection. Churchmen and statesmen had made too many compliances with the late times, to act with becoming zeal for the covenanted reformation. It appears that the statesmen who, under Charles and James, persecuted to death those who would not comply with Prelacy, were not themselves persuaded that it was right: for in the first parliament they held at the revolution, which was composed of a great number of the same men who were for forcing it upon others upon pain of death, they now abolish Prelacy, as a great and insupportable grievance to that nation, and contrary to the inclinations of the generality of the people ever since the reformation from Popery, they having reformed from Popery by presbyters: and in the next session of parliament they establish presbyterian church government in their own way, i. e. according to the ratification and establishment of church government in the year 1592; thus disregarding the whole work of reformation betwixt 1638 and 1650, and also leaving all the acts of Charles II.'s first parliament, and the wicked act recissory, passed 1661, whereby the whole work of reformation from 1638, is razed, and declared seditious and treasonable, unnoticed, and standing in full force. The churchmen too begin now to think of doing something.

The first general assembly met anno 1690. It seems to have been composed of materials very unpromising for a reformation, or for reviving the reformation in church and state, in that purity it had arrived at between the years 1638 and 1650, and as contended for, even unto death, by the persecuted party through the late persecuting period. It was composed, mostly, of men who were themselves *publick resolutioners*, or who approved of them; for certainly if there were any of the *protestors*, they were very few indeed, who, at first, were members of that assembly. Many of them had added this to their publick resolution principles, that they had accepted, and defended their acceptance, of the indulgences given by Charles II. all flowing from his arrogated and usurped supremacy over all persons and causes; and if those who drew up the address of thanks to James the papist, duke of York, then styled James VII. for the toleration granted, are to be credited, it appears they had, a very few excepted, accepted this toleration from James the papist.—Now considering, what is very incident to human nature, that when once

men have embraced any opinion or sentiment, however wrong, and however contrary to their former principles and engagements, they will use every effort and every artifice to defend and support what they have done; so we find, that the men who composed that assembly, considered as *resolutioners*, they had with great fury and violence defended their *publick resolution* principles, although they were as contrary to their former principles as light is to darkness. And thus those of them who had accepted the indulgences from Charles, used all their efforts to defend and support their acceptance as lawful and right; and as they almost all had accepted James the papist's toleration, so we may be sure, had they had time before the revolution took place, they would have defended the lawfulness of the giving and receiving that toleration; and this they gave full proof they would, by giving thanks to the giver for the gift, and thanking God who put such a thing in his royal heart. When these things are considered, we need not be at much loss to account for the silence, and reluctance too, which prevailed in that assembly, with regard to reviving a covenanted work of reformation, as attained unto in the forementioned period: we need not be surprised that there was no inclination among them, for the most part, to renew the covenants; that they were entirely silent with regard to the civil constitution of the nation; that the act of classes, nor the act of the west kirk, &c. was not so much as desired to be revived. And when we consider, that many of them were acceptars of the indulgences flowing from the supremacy claimed by Charles II. over all persons and causes, civil and ecclesiastick, and their acceptance was defended by them, and by others who had not the opportunity to accept of them; this may account for the almost universal submission to the exercise of the supremacy of the civil powers, claimed over them, then and afterwards, in calling and dissolving assemblies at their pleasure, imposing oaths, and commanding them to read their proclamations, under ecclesiastick penalties, claimed to be executed by themselves, viz. the civil powers, and other such like encroachments. Nor need we be surprised, that since the Brownistick principles, viz. that all men should be tolerated to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences, under pretext of liberty of conscience, &c. had so far leavened, as appears, the greatest number, by far, of presbyterian ministers in Scotland, that now there should not be one word of reviving the anti-toleration laws. And the fathers' principles are often received, and especially bad ones, by their children: this may account for the prevalence, in one shape or another, of the above anti-reformation principles, among almost every denomination of presbyterians, who had their derivation from that assembly, or from those who approved of their constitution at that time, such as presbyterians in England and Ireland, and those derived from them.

This revolution seemed to offer a joyful prospect to the persecuted party. But it did not long continue. When the revolution took place they had three preachers, one of them, viz. Mr. Linning, an ordained minister; the other two, we think, were not ordained, viz. Messrs. Boyd and Shields. Persecution had now ceased, and they might think

that such an opportunity being put into the hands of presbyterians, they would joyfully embrace it, to cleanse the house of God, and to have it built again on its own heap: but, poor men, they were much mistaken if they expected this; for instead of this, when their own minister and preachers drew up a paper, containing what they would have them to do in order to pave the way for their joining with them, and in order that they might expect prosperity and success in the ways of God, viz. that they would consider their former ways and doings; their sinful silence; their sinful compliances with the encroachments and usurpations on church and state under the late reigns; their sinful oppositions to the contendings of the persecuted remnant, for the whole of Scotland's covenanted reformation in church and state; the actual hand several of them had in persuading prisoners, and others, to take the wicked and ensnaring bonds and oaths imposed by those tyrants; and many other evils that they had been guilty of; that they would, in the first place, set about confession of their sins, with fasting, and mourning, and weeping, and by turning again to the Lord, from whom they had so deeply revolted; as might be expected from human nature left to itself, and from their former principles and conduct, they rejected this seasonable and necessary paper, and sat down as they were; and these three men, viz. Messrs. Shields, Boyd, and Linning, joined in with them, without any farther regard to their own paper, which they thought so necessary to be observed.

The persecuted people had set up and kept up among themselves, social meetings for prayer and conference; for sometimes they had no minister at all to preach the word among them, every one that adhered to them being put to death by the persecutors, and sometimes they had but one, as was the case towards the latter end of Donald Cargil's life, and for some time in the beginning of Mr. Renwick's ministry among them; and from Mr. Cargil's death till Mr. Renwick came over from Holland, where he was ordained, they had no minister at all. Now from their regular and constant keeping up of these social meetings, they were called the societies. These societies, believing that the settlement of religion at the revolution, was not a settlement for reformation, but for deformation, though all the ministers they had, now left them and joined the assembly, yet they stood their ground, and kept their societies, without any minister to break the bread of life to them, for the space of sixteen years.

It is likely there were a few ministers who joined in that assembly, who were desirous to have the church brought to the reformation standard, and thought that they might succeed best, in getting this effected, by joining with them. But those ministers who were leavened with the former mentioned defections, formed such a great majority, that they soon found themselves utterly mistaken. We think it certain, that some used some endeavours within-doors, to get matters reformed. However these things may be, at length some ministers began to speak and preach publickly of the defections of the times; of their departure from reformation purity; of the nation's departure from the constitution and fun-

damental laws of the nation, which were founded on, and agreeable to, the word of God, and setting up another opposite thereto, and destructive thereof, contrary to the solemn engagements of the nation. And for reasons before mentioned, and many others, they held that the church had departed from the fundamental principles of the church of Scotland in many instances. But as the assembly were determined to go on in their own ways, they used every mean in their power to suppress every appearance, and every effort, to bring them and the people back to the true reformation ground, both with regard to church and state.

The Rev. John M'Millan, minister in the parish of Balmaghie, was one of those who shewed his attachment to the covenanted cause. He contended publickly and privately for it, and opposed the general defections therefrom. In July 1703, he and two others gave in a paper of grievances to the presbytery of Kirkcudbright, in which they gave their approbation of the covenanted work of reformation, and testified against the publick national defections therefrom, craving that the presbytery would use some means to obtain redress of these grievances. But the presbytery did no more than persuade them not to separate; which, it seems, had influence on the other two: but Mr. M'Millan stood his ground, and continued testifying against the defections. His congregation firmly adhered to him. The presbytery being enraged at his open opposition to the publick defections, appointed a presbytery to be held in Mr. M'Millan's parish, Balmaghie, and sent their officer with a libel, to be read at the most potent church door: but Mr. M'Millan read it to his own congregation, and obtested them, if they had any thing against his character, doctrinally or practically, to produce it.

Mr. M'Millan preached before the presbytery. After sermon they read their libel against him, but could not prove any thing contained in it. Hence Mr. M'Millan protested, declined the presbytery, and appealed to the next free and faithful general assembly of the church of Scotland. Upon this the presbytery rose, and nearly one half of them went home. The remainder, with two others from Wigton presbytery, formed themselves into a presbytery, and, notwithstanding his protest, declinature, and appeal, passed sentence of deposition against him. But it being done so illegally and tyrannically, no regard was paid to it by Mr. M'Millan.

We mentioned before, that the remains of the persecuted people would not acknowledge the settlement of religion at the revolution; because, instead of its being a settlement agreeable to the constitution and establishment of religion of that church, in its purest times of reformation, it was in many instances a real burying of it: and because the civil establishment, or civil government, was erected upon the ruins of the fundamental constitution and fundamental laws of the nation, they would not acknowledge it as the ordinance of God, to be submitted to for conscience sake. Therefore they kept themselves all along separate from all others; and as they were forsaken by their ministers, as mentioned before, they kept up their social meetings for prayer and conference, and were thence called the societies; and they were also called the old

dissenters. With these old dissenters Mr. M'Millan agreed in sentiment; and they gave him an unanimous call to the exercise of his ministerial labours among them, which he accepted. He continued the exercise of his ministry for many years alone. At length some other ministers joined with him: but it was above fifty years after the old dissenters, or societies, gave him a call to exercise his ministry among them, before they could conveniently emit a stated judicial testimony. They assumed the title of, *The Reformed Presbytery.* They published their testimony in the year 1761. It was in the year 1707, that Mr. M'Millan joined the societies.

As the great majority of those who composed the general assembly of the church of Scotland at this time, were publick resolutioners, accepters of the indulgences and toleration before mentioned, and as they had received some hundreds of episcopal curates and ministers, we may easily suppose they were not very nice about principles, nor compliances with the times. Therefore, as the state began to impose *patronage* upon them, the majority yielded to it, and were instrumental in imposing it on the people, depriving them of the right to choose their own pastors. When the oath of allegiance and abjuration was imposed, a great majority took it. When an unlimited toleration of all sects and heresies was given by queen Anne, in 1712, the great majority of the assembly acquiesced, or was silent, except the commission of the general assembly, who complain in their address to the queen on the occasion, that "it is such as gives a large license to almost all error and blasphemy, throws up all good discipline, to the dishonour of God, and the scandal and ruin of the christian religion." No doubt there were others, beside the commission, who disapproved of this toleration; but we do not remember that the assembly ever approved of their commission's address.—When Mr. Simpson, professor of divinity in the university of Glasgow, had vented and taught a scheme of most dangerous principles, for which he was called to account in the years 1714, 15, and 16, though the assembly found his Arminian and Pelagian tenets proven against him, they did not so much as rebuke him for them. Mr. Simpson, therefore, went on with his scheme, and at last plainly shewed that he was tainted with Socinian and Arian error and heresy, for which he was again brought before the bar of the assembly, and the libel was proven against him: yet the assembly passed no higher censure on him, than suspending him from teaching in the university, and from preaching. They neither deposed him from his ministerial office, nor excommunicated him.

The assembly took under their consideration, in the year 1720, a book, bearing title, *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, and condemned several precious truths contained in that book. Twelve ministers entered a protest against the assembly's act, and the explanation and confirmation of that act in the year 1722; where, viz. in their act 1722, explaining and confirming their act 1720, among other things, they say, "that it is dangerous to assert, that holy obedience is not a federal or conditional

mean, not has any kind of causality, in order to the obtaining of glory." The assembly still went on favouring the patronage act, by intruding on congregations, ministers who were not the choice of the people, and forcing them on them, contrary to the people's inclinations. A Mr. Campbell, professor of church history in the university of St. Andrews, published a most pernicious scheme of principles, and in the year 1736 was brought before the assembly's bar, to be tried for them; but the assembly totally acquitted him, and even adopted one of his principal errors, viz. "that the sole and universal motives to virtuous actions are, self-love, interest, and pleasure."

These are some instances, and but some, of the defections of that assembly, which was composed of the above-mentioned materials. But we must not conclude, that all the ministers of that establishment were approvers of these defections. There were a few, who contended against all the above-mentioned errors and heresies, and for a reformation in many instances; but could prevail nothing. The Rev. Mr. Ebenezer Erskine, in a sermon preached at the opening of the synod of Perth and Stirling, in October 1732, testified doctrinally against an act of assembly, passed that year, respecting the method of calling ministers; and also against the proceedings of church judicatories in imposing ministers upon dissenting and reclaiming congregations: but the synod condemned his doctrine, and appointed him to be rebuked at their bar; upon which he appealed from them to the general assembly, which met at Edinburgh 1733. The assembly confirmed the sentence, and appointed him to be rebuked at their bar. Mr. Erskine and three other ministers, protested against the act and sentence of the assembly. The assembly appoint their commission to suspend these four ministers, if they do not retract their protestation. When the commission met, they refused to retract their protestation, and gave their reasons why they could not. The commission suspended them. These four ministers, being thus thrust out, began to think of forming themselves into a presbytery. They actually formed themselves into a presbytery, bearing title, *The Associate Presbytery*. They emitted an act, declaration, and testimony, in 1736. The assembly proceeded to depose them from the office, we think in the year 1740; and in the year 1746 a separation took place among them, about a religious clause in some burgess oaths. Those who were against taking that oath, were called anti-burghers, and those who were for taking it, were called burghers.

The same defections and declensions in many instances, especially with regard to error and heresy, and laxness in discipline, took place among presbyterians in England and Ireland, who approved of the settlement of religion in Scotland at the revolution. What is now called the United States, was, at the revolution in Britain and Ireland, and for many years after, British colonies. Many of the people from Britain and Ireland flocked over to these colonies. This induced ministers from the established church in Scotland, the synod of Ulster in Ireland, and some from England, to come over to these colonies also; and pro-

videntially meeting here, they erected themselves into a presbytery. Some of the persecuted people fled hither, from the rage of persecution, and others, who adhered to the reformed presbytery in Britain and Ireland, came over from time to time, called for, and obtained ministers from that body; and people belonging to the associate body, called for, and obtained supplies from that body.

## CHAP. VII.

### *Of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in North-America.*

We noticed at the close of the last chapter, that before, but more especially after, the revolution in 1688, many of the people from the presbyterian bodies in Ireland, Scotland, and England, came over to the British colonies in America; and most of them being from the synod of Ulster, or the established church in Scotland, and from those who were of something similar principles with them in England, whether by any call or invitation we know not, several ministers, at different times, from the synod of Ulster, the established church in Scotland, and from England, followed the people into those colonies; and meeting providentially in the colonies, as is said, without any authority from any of the churches in Europe from whence they proceeded, they formed themselves into a presbytery. By the junction, it is reported, of some congregational ministers, who had settled in the middle states, and adopted the presbyterian system, they formed themselves into a synod. As they were a new and independent ecclesiastical body, they had no ecclesiastical standards by which it might be ascertained whether they were an orthodox belief of the scriptures or not. At length they professed adherence to the Westminster confession of faith, in 1729; but in such a way as left their orthodoxy at as much uncertainty as if they had never professed to adhere to it: for their ministers were required to adhere to it, with a permission and liberty to refuse and reject any article or articles, in doctrine, worship, or government, which the synod, or any presbytery subordinate to it, may judge not necessary or essential; so that the whole of the orthodoxy of the whole body, is referred to that and after synods and presbyteries, without any mean whatsoever to ascertain whether these synods and presbyteries will, themselves, be orthodox or not; for who could possibly predict what they would account necessary and essential? or whether, at last, they would account an adherence to any article of that confession, or any other creed or confession, essential?

In Oxford, in England, there was a society formed, who denominated themselves methodists, and were afterwards called, *The Oxford Method-*

ing. Of these, two, viz. Mr. George Whitefield and Mr. John Wesley, made a conspicuous figure in the world. Mr. Wesley was a professed Arminian. Mr. Whitefield professed himself to be a Calvinist. They were both episcopal curates. Mr. Whitefield, as well as Wesley, professed a design to endeavour a coalition of all Christian denominations. Mr. Whitefield, it appears, thought that there was no essential difference among any of the denominations of professed Christians, except, perhaps, papists, that might prevent them from joining in christian fellowship and ecclesiastical union. He travelled through England, into Scotland, and through America, to disseminate his latitudinarian tenets. In America, as in other places, often, where he preached, some of the people seemed to faint, fell into hysterick fits, convulsions, bodily agonies, and strugglings, as Mr. Robe, in a preface written by him, recommending that work at Cambuslang and Kilsyth, preface p. 8 and p. 7, says. The bodies of some of the awakened, are seized with trembling, fainting, hysterisms, in some few women, and with some convulsive motions in some others. This, according to Mr. Robe, was exactly the same, in its appearances, as what was carried on by the instrumentality of Mr. Whitefield, as principal, and others, in America. Robe's preface, page 7, says, "as there were the very same appearances, i. e. the very same bodily agitations, accompanying such an effusion of the Holy Spirit in some of our American colonies, so the same objections were made against them, which have been made against this appearance of God among us." So Mr. Whitefield, in the postscript of his letter to Mr. M'Culloch, at Cambuslang, says, recommending a sermon of Mr. Edwards's preached and printed in defence of that work in America, "you would think the author had been at Cambuslang." Several of the ministers and people of the synod of Philadelphia, fell in with this vagrant latitudinarian, and his delusive whims and vagaries: but others strenuously opposed him, and those of their brethren who took part with him. [illegible] a breach ensued. The followers and adherents of Mr. Whitefield were commonly known by the name of the *new-side*, and those who opposed him and his ways, the *old-side*. The *new-side* ministers, if they were not agitated in their own bodies, were very much agitated in their minds against the *old-side* ministers, because of the opposition they met with from them in their new ways. Hence they raged and stormed exceedingly, pronouncing the old-side brethren to be cold, rotten-hearted hypocrites, dead and lifeless professors, wolves in sheep's clothing, and such like. But the old-side, on the other hand, galled them to the quick, by bearing on them heavier metal; by pronouncing and manifesting the work to be an entire delusion; by collecting and presenting before them, the manifold errors of their great patron, Mr. Whitefield, which they carefully gathered from his own sermons and writings, and the great irregularities committed and allowed at their meetings for worship, &c. The objections of the old-side to that pretended revival of religion, under Mr. Whitefield and his adherents, it appears from Mr. Robe's preface, page 7, as before noticed, were the same that were made to it in

Scotland. These two bodies, after some time, united, without, as far as we know, any concessions on either side. It is likely that, after the union, they were called, *The Synod of New-York and Philadelphia;* for we do not know the precise time of the event. Some of the old-side ministers never agreed to the union, and therefore remained in a state of separation till their death. Some of the ministers on both sides, and perhaps most of the people, though they were in a state of union, retained a warm attachment to the principles they maintained before the union; and it is likely some, at least, of the people of the old-side retain their aversion to the principles and practice of the new-side until this day. And it is certain, that a considerable number, both of ministers and people, have not only retained, but at different times have endeavoured to revive, the principles and practice both, of Mr. Whitefield and the Brunswick presbytery, under the notion of a revival of religion: a specimen of which we have had in this western country for several years past.—This work, like the former, was attended, in the subjects of it, with hysterick fits, apparent convulsions, bodily agonies and strugglings, screamings, bodily distortions, and the like; with lukewarmness and indifference to many of the doctrines of the word of God, both in ministers and people, and to many of the precepts also; with a violent opposition to creeds, confessions, and testimonies for truth and against error, as terms of communion; with a bitterness of spirit, to an uncommon degree, against all those who cannot allow their commotions, confusions, and irregularities, to be a work of the Spirit of God, and a revival of true religion, even to a declaring that such as oppose it, or speak any thing against it, are guilty of the sin against the Holy Ghost. Formerly and latterly the devotees of that extraordinary work, (as they call it) made high pretences to charity. One would be ready to conclude, to hear them talk, that none could exceed them in charity. But to whom does their charity extend? Who are the objects of their charity? Are they such as shew a zealous attachment to truth and opposition to error? No: their charity and their "patience have given up the ghost" towards such. Such are influenced by nothing but "party zeal," "bigotry," "an enthusiastick fear of enthusiasm," yet "cold as the Alpine snow and the inhabitants of Nova Zembla," and such like charitable epithets. Is it to such, their charity extends, as endeavour to shew them, what appears convincing to themselves, that their extraordinary work is nothing upon the whole, but a delusion? O no, no; you must excuse them in this, and pardon them in this matter. To such their charity must not be extended. Such are destitute of grace, and shall have none. For such there is no hope. Who, then, are the objects of their charity, since they lay such high claims to it? Indeed, if we may judge from any little of their publications we see, magazines, letters, sermons about this extraordinary work, their charity appears to be pretty much confined to those, who flatter them that their work is an extraordinary one indeed, and a revival of true religion; or such, it may be, who say nothing, but profess to wait for the result; such as, although erroneous

themselves, yet say nothing against error; and especially such as are against creeds and confessions as terms of communion, and as are against such as are "ranging through the church, sword in hand, to find dreadful errors and grievous idolatry," and then lift the banner of a testimony against these; for testimonies against error, are grievous, hateful things to errorists, who are determined to go on in their own ways. This, if we are not mistaken, is modern charity.

The forementioned work has been, wherever it made its appearance, called an extraordinary work of the Spirit of God, and a revival of religion. But what part of this work is it, that is an extraordinary work of the Spirit? It has been said, by its advocates, that there have been some convinced and converted; yea, perhaps they say a good many have. Now, admitting that this has been the fact, though they must give us leave to hesitate a little, especially as they tell us themselves, in one of their prints, that they themselves are not absolutely certain of the real conversion of any; but suppose the case was so, surely the extraordinary work of the Spirit is not presumed to consist in this; for all that ever came to have true religion, in heart and life, were convinced and converted by the influences and operations of the Holy Spirit. This, then, cannot be what is called extraordinary in this work; for this is what he ordinarily does with all that are converted. It cannot be, we conceive, called an extraordinary work of the Holy Spirit, because these conversions were brought about by "preaching the doctrines of the cross, and their influence, in connection with the other ordinances of divine institution," as it is said they did, by Mr. Porter, in his sermon before the synod of Pittsburgh; for if they did, if by "the doctrines of the cross," he means the doctrines of the gospel of the grace of God, then surely this is the ordinary way and means by which the Holy Spirit converts sinners. We see nothing, then, that we, or they, can attach this extraordinary work of the Spirit to, except what Mr. Robe, in Scotland, said happened to the people who were the subjects of the same work there; falling down, hysterick fits in women, convulsions in others, and bodily agonies and strugglings, we suppose, in all; and what Mr. Porter, referring to the same thing, we suppose, in his sermon at the opening of the synod of Pittsburgh, page 13, calls "bodily agitations." We have conversed with some of the ministers who were greatly attached to this work, who would not venture to say, that the falling and bodily agitations were a work of the Spirit of God. Mr. Robe is plain on it, "that these bodily agitations are no evidences of persons being under any operations of the Spirit of God, else all persons under convulsions, cramps, hysterisms, &c. would be such." He says, indeed, that "they are no evidences that these thus affected are under a spirit of delusion. Bodily agitations, says he, considered in themselves, are no symptoms of persons being under the influence of either a good or bad spirit." And Mr. Porter, in his synodical sermon, page 13, says, "bodily agitations are no certain evidences of a revival of true religion; for when they may be traced to affecting exercises of mind, which has generally

been the case in this part of the church, they only prove the existance of those exercises, but afford no certain testimony respecting their origin, nature, and tendency." Only, like Mr. Robe, he says, that they "afford no conclusive evidence, that the work, to which they are appendages, is not a revival of religion," &c. So then, all that has any appearance of any thing extraordinary in it, about this work, instead of being a work of the Spirit of God, according to themselves, affords no evidence that it is a work of the Spirit of God at all, nor any evidence of a revival of true religion; and when traced, even to the affecting exercises of mind, which they were supposed to produce, as it is declared they were, then they afforded no certain testimony, even of their origin, nor their nature, nor their tendency. How could they know that this was a work of the Spirit of God, if they could not know its origin, nor its nature? And how could they know that this was any way productive of true religion, or any religion, when, after they traced it up to the affecting exercises which it was supposed to produce, they neither could know its nature, nor its tendency? Well, but by its fruits you shall know it. It produced a revival of religion. So, it appears, they would have us to believe. But what evidence of this do they give? Why, there has been a number converted. But, suppose that was the case, which they will allow us to scruple, till we have better evidence than we have yet obtained, how will this prove, that the part of the work which only could be supposed to have any thing extraordinary in it, was a work of the Spirit of God, in the point of view which they would have us take these terms? The judgments of God have sometimes produced convictions, moral seriousness, a greater degree of attachment to duties and ordinances, in appearance, and a seeming zeal for truth and against error, which these revivals we hear of in our times do not; and even real conversions have been a consequence of judgments, such as war, plagues, famine, and the like, in a land, or in a particular part of a country, or in cities and towns: but are these judgments any time called the work of the Spirit of God, in the sense these terms are used concerning the work in question? Surely not. It is plain, then, by concession, that there is no proof from these bodily agitations, in themselves, that they are the work of the Spirit of God; nor from their consequences, even admitting the consequences were as they would have them; for if the same consequences follow different antecedents, and neither of these antecedents belong to, or are of the ordinary means of God's appointment for the conversion of sinners, and reviving his work in their souls; and if it be proved that one of these antecedents is not the work of the Spirit of God, though these consequences follow, namely, conviction, moral seriousness, &c. and regeneration and real religion; neither can the other antecedent be proved, by these consequences, to be a work of the Spirit of God. And since it can be proved neither by its nature, nor consequences, to be such a work, it must be proved some other way, if it can be. If it be said, that the one might be a work of the Spirit of God, though the other is not; this proves nothing: we may say, it might not; and if any will hold the

affirmative, let them prove it. But, it may be said, however that be, there has been a revival of true religion among them. If it be so, we would be glad to know it. If we thought so too, we would rejoice with them. But how shall we know that true religion is revived among any people? We will not be able to conclude that it is so, from people saying they have believed in Christ, if they can give no other evidence; nor from their saying they have such and such experiences, if they have no better evidence to produce; nor from both these, accompanied with attendance on duty, upon the ordinances publick and private; for all this a person might profess and do, and yet be living in the practice of some sins, from which he refuses to be reformed, though they are things plainly required or forbidden in the word of God; or he may evidence an obstinate and cold indifference to sin and duty, both in himself and others. What farther evidence, besides what was before mentioned, would be necessary to shew, convincingly, that there is a revival of religion in any soul, or among any people? To this we reply, that a man, or a people, must, like the Psalmist, "esteem all God's commandments concerning all things, to be right, and hate every false way." This, we apprehend, implies a receiving all revealed truth in the love of it, and an honest endeavour to comply with all commanded duty; and this we ought to shew that we do, not by raging and storming at every one that would shew us our duty, and would have us strictly bound up to the performance of it; but by receiving the doctrines of God's word with all meekness and readiness of mind, and by setting ourselves in opposition to all sin in ourselves and others; and this must flow, not from saying we believe in Christ, but from actual believing in him, renouncing all our duties, qualifications, and experiences, as any ground of our faith; and renouncing all the forementioned things, viz. duties, experiences, and qualifications, and faith itself, as giving us any title to life, or deliverance from hell and damnation, and trusting in Christ and his righteousness alone for salvation, as he is revealed to us in the gospel. These are marks of a revival, which we do not remember were ever given, either formerly or latterly, of those kinds of revivals amongst us. A true revival of religion, wherever it takes place, will kindle some true zeal for duties, and desire for true experiences of the grace of God upon the heart; but not these only, but also, and equally, a zeal for all the doctrines of God's word, and against all opposite errors. True believers are persuaded, that all the truths and doctrines of God's word, are required to be believed, by the same authority by which the precepts of his word are enjoined; and therefore are persuaded that a disbelieving, or indifference respecting the one, is as much a sin as a doing, or refraining to do, or indifference about doing, or refraining to do, what is forbidden, or required, respecting the other. And as every error is opposite and contradictory to some truth of God's word, so, in proportion as any one loves God's word, he hates every error. If a man does not love God's word at all, he will have no proper hatred at error, as such, at all. If he be indifferent about God's word, so will he be indifferent about truth

or error: error will be, with such an one, a very simple, harmless thing. Now, what kind of a revival of religion is that, which renders the subjects of it indifferent to many of the truths of God's word; which is plain from their indifference to the opposite errors? What for a revival of religion is that, where the leaders, the ministers, encourage and strengthen their hands in this indifference; where sin is made light of; for surely error is sin; and where, when others shew their dislike of it, by testifying against it, they are held up, among their people, to scorn and mockery? What for a revival of religion is that, which induces its adherents to reject a great part of our covenanted reformation; creeds, confessions, covenants, and testimonies, and several of the doctrines and precepts contained in these? Can that be supposed to be a revival of true religion, which allows, and confirms people in their indifference, opposition, and prejudices against one main part of religion, the truths and doctrines of the word of God, and several of the precepts too? Is a revival of indifference respecting many, yea, most, if not all, the doctrines of the Bible, a revival of true religion? Is a confirming of people, even the subjects of that work which they call a revival, and, as far as they can, all others, in their opposition to, and prejudices against, many of the doctrines and precepts of the word of God, a revival of true religion? Was there ever a work, that could be called a revival of true religion by any that rightly considered what a revival of true religion means, in any period of the church's existence, that the instruments of it, the ministers of religion, endeavoured, with might and main, to infuse such opinions into the subjects of that revival? But has not this been the case through the whole course of what is insisted on to be a revival in our times, and formerly?

A good many years ago, the synod of New-York and Philadelphia agreed that there should be synods formed in different parts of the country, and that they should meet thereafter, at convenient and appointed times, in one general assembly. The general assembly, after some years, took the confession of faith compiled by the Westminster assembly, into consideration; and after they had cast out many things contained in that book, commonly called the Westminster confession, and modelled, to their own taste, the thirty-three chapters of the confession, properly so called, and the catechisms contained in that book, they adopted it as their constitution. Yet it appears that they neither made it a term of ministerial, nor christian communion. This appears from their admission of ministers of other denominations, to preach with them, in their presence, and in their pulpits, one preaching, sometimes, the one part of the day, and the other the other part. This is plain, also, from the propositions made to the associate reformed synod, May, 1799: one of which propositions was, that the ministers of both parties should be admitted to preach in one another's pulpits, when convenient: and another proposition was, that, when convenient, the people, when recommended, should be admitted to communicate in each other's congregations; and all this without any union supposed, between these different bodies,

ar, in these propositions, required. Here, then, was the foundation for the forementioned indifference, laid, and, we think, openly proclaimed. And this plan of indifference being laid, it has been further improved on by the synods belonging to, and which compose that assembly, at least several of them, as, the synod of the Carolinas, the synod of Kentucky, and the synod of Pittsburgh.

Mr. Samuel M'Corkel, D. D. pastor of the church at Thyatira and Salisbury, in Roan county, North-Carolina, published a sermon which was first preached by him at an ordination, February 2d, 1792, and again, with some alterations and additions, at the opening of the commission of the synod of the Carolinas, September 3d, 1792; in which sermon the following pernicious doctrines were taught: That the doctrine of the divine decrees, original sin, free will, and the perseverance of the saints, and every article of the confession of faith, ought not to be terms of communion; that the light of nature is a sufficient foundation for the Spirit of God to operate the conviction, conversion, and sanctification of a heathen sinner, without the knowledge of the holy scriptures; that the prayers and alms of a western savage, may go up as a memorial before God, as well as Cornelius's, before Peter came to tell him of Jesus of Nazareth; that creeds and confessions check inquiry, violate liberty, ensnare the conscience of clergy by holding out temptations to prevaricate, and come at last to contradict the actual opinions of the church whose doctrine they profess to maintain. It appears by the preface to that sermon, that some were offended with several passages of that sermon, and that there were complaints made; but it appeared that no prosecution could be admitted against him; for the commission, in their pastoral letter, had adopted these two following principles, viz. 1. That in matters of opinion, nothing should be pushed forward publickly in the face of any judicatory whatsoever, unless it be a matter *essential* to the very existence of the Christian religion. 2d. That all Christians, of every denomination, that is, all who appear by their lives and conversations to be followers of Jesus, may have communion with one another. Here, then, between the Doctor and the commission, not only the doctrines of the decrees, original sin, free will, and the perseverance of the saints, but every other article of the confession of faith, and doctrine of the scriptures, are made indifferent matters; so that whether a man believes them, or contradicts and opposes them, he may be a very good Christian. And it may be considered whether, according to their doctrine, the precepts of scripture are not matters of indifference, in a great measure, too, since a pagan; who has not the scriptures, may be a follower of Christ as well as any other, or, at least, have such a conversation as will entitle him to be looked upon as a saint, and to admission to the privileges of the church, without even seeing the scriptures. And did not the commission's pastoral letter encourage the Doctor, and all others, to broach and support what principles they pleased, however erroneous and heretical, if they only appeared by their lives and conversations to be followers of Jesus? And did not the commission's letter

tend to harden the Doctor in his heresy, and also to harden all others, under that synod, who were tainted with his principles, or any other, however wicked and abominable; since it appears by the commission's principles, compared, that nothing, with them, is essential to the Christian religion, but appearing to have lives and conversations such as they can be accounted followers of Jesus? Now, according to these principles of that synod, of what use are the scriptures? And did ever that, or any other synod belonging to that body, or their general assembly, testify, by any publick act or deed of theirs, against these principles? If not, what is the consequence? Is it not, that they have seen no great injury done by them, and that they are in their eyes, innocent, harmless matters; and consequently, that they are all much of the same mind?

As to what passed under the synod of Kentucky, during the late revival there, as it was called, all of us, we suppose, have heard of the indifference that prevailed among them, to almost all doctrines and opinions; so that we need hardly waste time and paper to relate any thing of it.

The synod of Pittsburgh have improved on the indifferent scheme laid by the general assembly: for since they did not see proper to make their confession, or constitution, a term of communion; so the synod of Pittsburgh have shewn us that they like the plan very well, and have extended the principle its full length. A certain Mr. Porter, minister at Congruity, in the county of Westmoreland, delivered a discourse at the opening of the Synod of Pittsburgh, October 2d, 1805, entitled, *A Revival of true Religion delineated.* The synod agreed to request Mr. Porter to furnish them with a copy of the sermon for publication, which he delivered at the opening of the synod. Mr. Porter complied with their request, and they published it. This shews that this synod were agreed with the doctrine contained in this sermon, as they have published it, without making any observations that any part of it displeased them. All the notice we take of it, at present, is this: that if we are to judge of the revival of religion among them by this sermon, and if the principles held forth in this sermon, be the principles that reigned and prevailed through this so called revival; then, we apprehend, the title of the sermon should have been, *A Revival of true Indifference, and disregard to one principal branch of religion attempted to be supported.* That this is so, appears to us from the sermon itself. He allows, indeed, of a standard of religion, a very excellent one truly, the scriptures: but the very first thing, almost, he falls upon, is creeds, confessions, covenants, and testimonies, as standards of religion, and we suppose, though he does not plainly say so, as terms of communion. Taking creeds and confessions in this point of view, he labours, with blustering words and declamation, totally to discard them. He excepts none, small nor great. The least creed that can be conceived, formed by man, it being then a human creed, is rejected by him as a term of communion, upon his own principles, and for his own reasons. Now this being, we conceive, undeniably the principle he maintains, and the synod with him, then it must

be presumed that they never propose any human creed, or confession, to any, even the smallest, as a term of admitting them to church communion; which if the person or persons seeking admittance should refuse, they would not attempt, for any consideration, to keep them back; for the smallest human creed conceivable, will be liable to their objections against creeds and confessions in general, viz. mutability and imperfection; for if one article might be perfect and immutable, so might ten, an hundred, a thousand, &c. It seems that the perfect and immutable sense of scripture has never, could never yet be ascertained in any one article of a human creed or confession; and if this be so, what prospect have we that it will hereafter be the case? And if this be so, and it be also so, that they must not be made terms of communion unless they be perfect and immutable, of what use are they at all? O, says Mr. Porter, "human creeds and confessions, judiciously composed, are of great utility in the Christian church, in this mixed and imperfect state, where so many contradictory opinions are supposed to be derived from divine revelation. By these creeds and confessions, the sense in which their friends understand the scriptures is ascertained;" (so say we) "and thereby the persons who are united in religious sentiments, can discover each other." We think, indeed, that they are of great use, and for one reason which Mr. Porter gives, though this is far from being the only reason why we think they are of use. But, however judiciously composed, we cannot see of what use they can be to people of Mr. Porter's principles; for, according to them, the perfect and infallible sense of scripture cannot be ascertained in any one article of any human creed or confession; and since they cannot be sure that any creed or confession contains the proper sense of scripture, of what use would one of a dubious or uncertain sense be? Is a dubious and uncertain sense of scripture, of any use for attaining the true sense of scripture? Surely not. If we should take a person for a guide, who we were sure there was no certainty that he knew a foot of the road, we might as well have none at all. It would rather appear, that instead of this synod and Mr. Porter being willing to allow creeds and confessions their proper place, they would be full as well pleased that they had no place at all. Another use assigned to creeds and confessions is, that thereby the persons who are united in religious sentiments, can discover one another. But how can they be of any use for such a purpose? How can any one be certain who will be united in religious sentiments, upon their principles? Surely a creed or confession could be of no use for such a purpose, since there can be no certainty that any two of them understands any one article of them in the same sense? Though it might be, that two or more might stammer on the same sense: but surely a confession could give no certainty that this would be the case, since none are bound to believe it in any other sense than what pleases them best. How can such as are not required to believe or subscribe their confession at all, be united in religious sentiments with any of those that profess to adhere to that confession; for they admit people, as might be expected from their principles, and is

confessed, to full communion with them, whom they do not require to believe and subscribe their confession, as Mr. Porter acknowledges, sermon, page 9. Are such accounted friends to their confession? If not, how can they be discovered, by it, to be united in sentiments with those who believe it, if there be any such? If it be said that they are friends to their confession, how can that be proven? Are those who refuse that they believe, and so refuse to subscribe it, (for if they believed it, they could not reasonably refuse to subscribe it,) notwithstanding, friends to it? How can these things be?—Mr. Porter, in the same place, gives the reason why they admit people to communion in their church, without requiring them to believe, and so subscribe their confession. It is this: that notwithstanding they do not subscribe their confession, i. e. people whom they admit, &c. they may be good Christians, and go to heaven. But do they think that any one man may go to heaven who denies, and refuses to believe and subscribe, every article of their confession, as it stands? If they can or may, although they deny, and refuse to believe, *every article of it*, just as it stands; then, of what use is this confession for ascertaining the sense in which they understand the scriptures, and particularly, the way of salvation according to the scriptures; since a man may go to heaven who understands the scriptures, and particularly the plan of salvation, in a contradictory sense to the sense given in their confession. Is it worth our time and pains, to give a sense of the scripture, and talk that that is the way we understand the scriptures, and the way of salvation, when we acknowledge that a contradictory sense of these is just as safe, and so as good? Now, they must mean, to be consistent, that any man may go to heaven, notwithstanding he disbelieves every article of their confession, as that article is expressed therein; because if they made any article or articles, as expressed in their confession, a term of communion, this would be making a human creed a term of communion; which is the very thing they so violently oppose. According to this scheme, the grossest heretick that ever disgraced the Christian church, might have communion with them. It is only declaring, in other words, their adoption of the commission of the synod of Carolinas' principle, that all Christians of every denomination, that is, all who appear by their lives and conversations to be followers of Jesus, may have communion with one another. Here there is no mention of any doctrine, as necessary to be believed; but only his outward behaviour. What a promising revival of religion must that be, which flourished under the auspices of such doctrines as these. If all professed Christians understood the scriptures in the same sense, and if human nature was naturally inclined to receive truth whenever they heard it, then there would be less need of confessions of faith. But as there are so many different, and opposite, and even contradictory opinions, respecting the scriptures, among professed Christians, and that not only about some, but about every article of the Christian doctrine; and as every man, by nature, is averse to these doctrines, and inclined to error; hence the necessity of expressing the true sense of the scrip-

tures in creeds, confessions, and testimonies; that if any one will profess that he believes the scriptures, and professes himself a believer in Christ, the church may ascertain, as far as it is competent to her, whether such a person has a true or a false apprehension of the doctrines of the word. But according to Mr. Porter's and the Pittsburgh synod's scheme, no term of communion can be proposed to any, but a belief of the scriptures, in the very express terms thereof, without requiring any declaration of their believing them in any determinate sense, so as to know whether they understand them in an Arian, Socinian, Arminian, &c. or an orthodox sense, and according to their true meaning. Mr. Porter tells us, that the revival of religion among them, "has taken place under the preaching and influence of the doctrines of the cross, in connection with the other ordinances of divine institution;" ser. page 19. But how does he know it has done so? Has he or the synod made any trial, to ascertain that these now converts understand and believe the doctrines of the cross, and the other ordinances of divine institution? Does Mr. Porter and the synod understand the doctrines of the cross, and the other ordinances of divine institution, in the same sense as they are represented in their confession of faith? If they do not, of what use is their confession, respecting the ends of confessions mentioned by themselves in the synodical discourse, page 6? If they do, then it is presumed that they are fully persuaded, that this is the true, genuine, scriptural sense of these doctrines and institutions: and if so, and it be also so, that these new converts were regenerated under the preaching of the doctrines of the cross, &c. then it must be presumed that these new converts understood these doctrines in the same sense as they understood them, or in a different sense. If they understood them in a different sense, how could they suppose them to be converts at all, according to Mr. Porter and the synod? It would be absurd to suppose they were converted by doctrines, which they did not believe in the scripture sense of; and it is yet as absurd to pronounce them converts, and that they had a right to communion, in sealing ordinances, with the church, without taking every proper mean to ascertain, whether they understood those doctrines, &c. according to their genuine, scriptural meaning: and according to the supposition, that that meaning is expressed in their confession of faith. And therefore, according to this supposition, that this confession contains the form of sound words respecting these doctrines, &c. and as there are very heterodox, erroneous, and heretical opinions among professed Christians respecting these doctrines, &c. was it not necessary, in order to pronouncing these, with any degree of certainty, to be converts, that they should profess and confess their belief and adherence to this form of sound words? And if they refused to do so, must they be accounted converts after all? Ah! but this would be requiring them to believe and adhere to a creed, in order to communion, &c. and these creeds are horrid, frightful things, to people who have a right to think for themselves; a right which, it seems, people under the gospel have got; a right to think wrong.

Indifference and lukewarmness, with regard to religious practices, and with regard to the doctrines of the word, we had thought, had prevailed rapidly enough in all countries, and in this country in particular, if it should have received no encouragement from the professed ministers of religion. But now the doctrine of indifference, at least in regard to the doctrines of the Bible, seems to be openly pled; and all shackles and restraints, to prevent men from thinking as they please about them, are reprobated, as impositions on conscience, checks upon inquiry, violations of liberty, calculated to ensnare the conscience of clergy, (and why not of the laity also?) holding out temptations to prevaricate, &c. all which are charged to the account of creeds and confessions; and thus, as far as man can do, the flood-gates opened to the utmost licentiousness of opinion, respecting every doctrine of the Bible. It is an avowed principle with the general assembly, to which these synods are subordinate, that every man has a right to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience, free from all human restraint, (though they have not informed us who gave them this right, or where or by whom it is established;) and the above-mentioned principles, it must be acknowledged, are calculated to extend toleration, or liberty of conscience, to its proper limits, (if this toleration principle be right; but we take the the liberty to deny its rectitude;) for if one human tribunal has no right nor authority to take cognizance of the overt acts which proceed from an erring conscience, and for this reason, viz. because it is human; then, for the same reason, neither can any other human tribunal do so, unless it can be shewn, that there is an express order from heaven for the one, and none for the other.

These loose, latitudinarian, Laodicean principles of the above-mentioned synods, seem to be prevalent through the whole body to which they belong, or with which they are connected: for, as was before observed, the wild, anti-scriptural, and heretical principles exhibited by Dr. M'Corkel, were never judicially testified against by any synod or assembly since, as far as is known to the world: nor have they ever, as far as we could learn, lifted up any judicial testimony against any of the various errors that abound in that body, or have been maintained by its particular members; such as the gross errors of Mr. Henry Patillo, of Granville, North-Carolina, in his sermons and tracts, edition, Wilmington, 1788. The following doctrines are taught:—That there are probably teachers in heaven; so that "when an infant soul, or pious pagan, first arrives, some one learned in the great salvation, may be employed to teach them the Saviour, by whose merits they found entrance;" p. 88. "That it was possible for our Saviour, while on earth, to have been guilty of sin;" p. 94, 95. That Christ's human soul was created before all worlds, and that the covenant of redemption was made with it; that he is called the Son of God, with regard to the human nature only, and not with regard to his divine person: that he doubts if it be good divinity, to call Christ the eternal Son of God, if any more be meant than the existence of his soul prior to all other creatures; p. 118, 119, 120.

This is, we suppose, a revival of Doctor Watts' heresy, at least so far. The Doctor, indeed, went farther, or spoke plainer, and refused that there are three persons in the Godhead, and, as Doctor Gill says, was plainly a Sabellian, as appears from a dissertation of his, published 1725, and his memoirs. We scruple if Mr. Patillo be the only one of that body, who held, or does hold, the doctrine of Christ's sonship as he held it.

As Watts' psalms and hymns, and those of others, were allowed to be sung publickly and privately, and as these had been preferred by the ministers in general, and many of the people, to David's psalms, and as they were greatly blamed, for so doing, by some other denominations of presbyterians, a certain Mr. Black, of Marsh creek, wrote two pieces to shew the preference of Watts' and other psalms and hymns of human composure, to the psalms of David: and as it appears that he thought he would be hard put to it to support his opinion, if the medium through which the grace and mercy of God is communicated to sinners, was discovered to the old testament church; that the types were beneficial to those under the Mosaic dispensation, for pointing them to the Messias, and his atoning sacrifice, (of which opinions Mr. Lata, in his preface to a piece on the same subject, seems plainly to agree with Mr. Black;) and if the old testament be a rule of faith and practice, as well as the new testament; and if the words of scripture, when translated, are to be accounted the words of the Holy Ghost, as well as the Hebrew or Greek originals; therefore he utterly denied all these: and instead of any testimony being given against these horrid tenets by any superior or inferior judicatory of that church, we find Mr. Porter, in his sermon before the synod of Pittsburgh, informing us, declaring boldly, that the contest respecting psalmody has been triumphantly managed by Messrs. Black and Lata; sermon, p. 11, 12. Triumphantly! and yet drove to such shifts as to deny the forementioned positions! Surely this is curious triumphing! If this may with any propriety be called a triumphant management of a controversy, then no one need be afraid of triumphing, however bad their cause may be, in any controversy; for as it seems they have a right to think for themselves, so their tongue is their own, and they may say what they please too; and however absurd and erroneous, yet it must be taken for a triumphant management of the controversy. This is, perhaps, a contrivance calculated to lower the pride of the real victor, by transferring the honour of the victory to the party that ran away.

Mr. Bellamy's *Letters and Dialogues*, is a book highly prized with a great many of this body of presbyterians, and especially with the ministers and people of the synod of Pittsburgh; and hence his sentiments and opinions are taught from the pulpit; such as, that the gospel should not be preached to any, till they are thoroughly convicted by the law, so as to approve of it in all its rigour, and see it to be amiable and glorious in itself; and therefore we must love God and his law, and have evangelical repentance, before we can reasonably look to Christ for par-

don; and thus, according to this scheme, we must have some gracious qualifications, as our ground and warrant to believe in, or come to Christ. Now these qualifications must be either pleasing or displeasing to God; not displeasing, for then how could they be our warrant? and yet they cannot be such as are pleasing to God, for that would be a contradiction to scripture, which informs us that without faith that is impossible.—According to the forementioned doctrine, they also teach, that sanctification is previous to justification. But this is also contrary to the scripture, which informs us that we must be dead to, and delivered from the law, in order to the bringing forth fruit, and serving God in newness of spirit; and that while we are under the law, we are under the curse, and therefore under the strength and dominion of sin. They also hold, with Mr. Bellamy, that there is no assurance, or a confidential appropriation of Christ, belonging to the nature and essence of saving faith; and that the gospel offer is not to be made indiscriminately to all the hearers of the gospel. It is also maintained by the generality, perhaps, in this body, that the covenant of redemption and the covenant of grace are two distinct covenants; and that faith is the condition of the covenant of grace. Many of them, for they all do as they please in this matter, use and practise the superstitious mode of swearing by kissing the gospels.

Indeed we are not in the belief, that every member of the general assembly of the presbyterian church in North-America, and of the different synods of which it is composed, is agreed with, and says amen to, all and every one of the forementioned heterodox opinions, and superstitious practices, that have been broached and practised by too many, both of ministers and people, in that body of professed Christians. No, we are of opinion, that several of them abhor some of the forementioned opinions as heterodox, and the practices as superstitious; and perhaps some are opposed, in sentiment, to every one of them. It seems, however, by their conduct, that this one opinion is universally received, viz. that every man has a right to think for himself.

This sentiment seems, at first view, to have a reasonable appearance. But when we come a little nearer to it, and take a closer view of its import, as it plainly appears to be understood by them, in our opinion it is not right, and consequently cannot be reasonable; for whatever is not right, cannot be reasonable. The rule of all right, and of all reason, is, the will of God revealed; especially in matters of religion, and consequently of all duties we owe either to God or man. Now the import of the proposition, viz. that every man has a right to think for himself, is, as we conceive, according to them, (their conduct is the evidence we give in proof,) a right, not barely to think, but to express their thoughts, by speaking, writing, or acting according to what they conceive to be agreeable or disagreeable to the revealed will of God, without being accountable to any human tribunal, but accountable to God, at the great day, only. That all men have a right to speak, write, and act, with propriety, in agreeableness to the scriptures, free from the

controlment of any man, or set of men, is certainly just: but that any man has a right to speak, write, or act, contrary to the scriptures, because he thinks he is speaking, writing, or acting, agreeable to them, without any control from even human tribunals, is a position which is itself contrary and contradictory to the revealed will of God; for the word, or God in his word, institutes two kinds of human tribunals for punishing or chastising men, (each kind of tribunal in its own way,) for their speeches, writings, or actions, which are contrary to the word of God, in various cases, viz. civil and ecclesiastick courts. This has been proven beyond the contradiction of any, except such as are determined to pay no regard to the scriptures, any farther than they agree with their own corrupted notions of right and wrong, by many eminent casuists and divines, such as, Rutherford, Gillespie, Durham, Dixon, Ferguson, Brown of Wamphrey, Brown of Haddington, and many others: and the confessions of faith of the reformed churches, as far as we can find, universally set their seal to the truth of this; see *The Divine Right of Presbytery*, by the ministers of London, chap. 9, sec. 1. pag. 61—71. The ministers of London confirm what we have said of the civil power, in the first part of that section from the scriptures, and in the latter part of it by the authority of the reformed churches; and in other parts of that book, they shew us that ecclesiastick courts are to take cognizance of errors and heresies, as scandals, &c. Now, it is absurd and unreasonable to plead that as a right, which men may be lawfully punished for exercising, either by civil pains, or by ecclesiastick censures: we say by either the one or the other of these; for even suppose idolatry, blasphemy, heresy, errors, superstition and profanity, subjected men to the censures of the church only, and not to civil pains, yet even this would be sufficient to shew the absurdity and unreasonableness of claiming that as a right, which would subject us, justly, to church censure. We know there is no way to get clear of this reasoning, but by peremptorily denying that any, or at least some, of the foregoing sins, do deserve church censure, or civil pains; and this is the very course that is taken. The greatest part of the professors of Christianity have, boldly, ventured to deny, in the very face of the Bible, that men should be punished by the civil magistrate, for any erreneous, idolatrous, or heretical and blasphemous opinions or practices; and many, and among others the general assembly of the presbyterian church in North-America, have gone a great length, if not the whole length, to deny that any errors whatsoever are censurable by the church. For if their confession of faith, nor any other creed nor confession, should be made a term of communion; and if every one has a right to speak, write, and act, as he thinks agreeable to truth, however disagreeable he speaks, writes, and acts, to all truth, and however he perverts the scriptures to his own and others destruction; we say, if these things are so, and it verily appears to us that they are precisely so; then, of consequence, they must deny that any man should be censured for his errors, however abominable, provided he does not deny the scripture, but retains its language. For how could

they censure any man for doing that which themselves maintain he had a right to do; or for doing any thing, when there is no obligation on him to do otherwise than he has done? Let it be considered, then, if this is not an opening of the flood-gates to all error, and, in effect, to invite men to broach errors and heresies, and encouraging and strengthening the hands of all such as have already pestered the church and the world with their pernicious errors. By claiming such a right, they usurp that which was never given them; and by pretending to give such rights to others, they assume to give that which they never had, or which never belonged to them. If God will not give men liberty to think and act as they please, it seems that some men will venture to take that liberty at all events. But in opposition to all these false opinions and practices, and to shew the absurdity of maintaining that all men have a right to think for themselves, i. e. to profess, write, and speak as they please, especially in religious matters, when, according to the scriptures, they may be punished by the civil magistrate, by civil pains, or censured by the church of Christ on account of them, there is nothing farther necessary but to direct to the scriptures where such punishments, or censures, are either expressly required, or unquestionably implied. As to civil pains, any one acquainted with the Old Testament must acknowledge, that the precepts and examples are plenty. We shall only touch at some of the precepts: see, then, Levit. 24th chapter throughout; Deut. 13th, from the beginning, and 17th chapter from the 4th verse, and a little downwards; Ezra, 6th ch. 7—12, and 7th ch. 25, 26, 27 verses. But for church censures, see 1 Tim. 5th ch. 20; Tit. 3d ch. 10; Rom. 16th ch. 17, 18; 2 Thess. 3d ch. 6, 14; and 2 Epist. of John, ver. 10, 11; and various other places. But surely it will not be denied, that every error is a sin; that every error is contrary to the doctrine of scripture; that every error is contrary to the tradition and epistles received from the apostle, and contrary to the doctrine of Christ.

## CHAP. VIII.

### *Of the Associate Presbytery, now Synod, in North-America.*

We, in a preceding chapter, gave a short account of the rise of the secession, and the associate presbytery, in Scotland. We also mentioned, that several of the people belonging to that society, having emigrated to America, applied for, and obtained supplies from that body in Scotland. This they themselves tell us, in the eighth chapter of their narrative prefixed to their testimony, emitted in America in the year 1784; where they say, "some people belonging to the secession in Scotland and Ireland, having at various times removed to this country, they and others, who judged it their duty to join with them, made application to the associate synod, stating their reasons why they could not join in church fellowship with the general body of presbyterians here, and desiring the synod to take them under its inspection. Their request was granted; and two ministers were sent to them, and directed, if they saw cause, to constitute themselves into a presbytery, with the assistance of ruling elders; which they accordingly did, 1754. And as further applications were made, the synod, from time to time, sent others, for their assistance, to labour in the work of the gospel." We stated before, that in the year 1746, but we find that it was in 1747, a division took place, about a religious clause in some burgess oaths, in Scotland; and that those who were opposed to the taking of these oaths, were called anti-burgher, and those who were for, or in favour of them, were called burgher, seceders. Each of these parties formed a synod in Scotland. Those who form, and adhere to, the associate synod in America, are of the anti-burgher body of seceders. The burghers have no existence, as a body, in this country: when any of their ministers come from Europe, they join the associate reformed synod; that is, since the union between the associate and reformed presbyteries: but before that it was not so; for there were people, who adhered to the burgher seceders, that came over from Scotland and Ireland to this country, long before the revolution, and who, it appears, made application to the burgher synod in Scotland, for taking them under their inspection. Their request was granted. They therefore formed a distinct body for some time. In the year 1765, they formed a union with the anti-burgher associate presbytery, which was carried farther into effect in 1767. "The basis of this union," says Mr. Marshall, Vind. p. 7. "was the secession testimony, and an adhering to all the principles of seceders, as professed before the breach in the associate synod." This union was interrupted and dissolved in 1771, by the order of the anti-

burgher associate synod, who sent over, for that purpose, Messrs. Smith and Rodger, with their resolution, importing that, if the union was not dissolved, Messrs. Rodger and Smith should, with any other of the brethren of the presbytery of the same views with them, constitute the presbytery, as they shall see cause; Marsh. Vind. p. 7, 8. The burghers continued separate ten or eleven years longer, and then were absorbed, as a distinct body in this country, in the union betwixt them, the associate and reformed presbyteries.

The union just now referred to, took place, and was completely concluded, in the year 1782, between all the ministers of the associate presbytery of New-York, the Rev. Messrs. Cuthbertson, Linn, and Dobbin, of the reformed presbytery, and all the ministers of the associate presbytery of Pennsylvania, two only excepted. The Rev. Mr. Telfair had joined the reformed presbytery some short time before the union took place. The two ministers belonging to the associate presbytery of Pennsylvania, who did not join in this union, were, the Rev. Messrs. Marshall and Clarkson. They protested against the union, and appealed to the associate synod in Scotland; and when the presbytery refused to admit their protest and appeal, they again protested, that the powers of the associate presbytery of Pennsylvania were now vested only in them, who were adhering to the true principles and constitution of said presbytery. They then withdrew to another apartment; and considering themselves the true associate presbytery, still constituted, but by this affair deprived of their moderator, they proceeded immediately, without constituting anew, to choose a moderator: and Mr. Marshall, who was clerk of the former presbytery, having, upon expecting this breach, previously gathered up and secured the presbytery's papers; they therefore went on with their business as a presbytery. And thus the associate presbytery continued, notwithstanding the union. The synod in Scotland, to which they adhered, approved of their proceedings, and gave their sanction to what they had done in the business of the union; and therefore, from time to time, sent them ministerial aid. Their society has greatly increased in this country. Besides a number of ministers sent in from Scotland and Ireland to their aid, they have a number of ministers who were educated in this country; and it is our opinion, though we are not certain, that they form at least four presbyteries at present. A few years ago these different presbyteries agreed to form themselves into one synod, bearing title, we suppose, *The Associate Synod in North-America.*

The two seceding ministers who first came over to this country, in 1754, were soon assailed by the presbytery of Newcastle, in *A Warning* published by them, wherein the principles of seceders, in several cases, were represented as very pernicious, and their secession from the established church of Scotland as schism. To this *Warning* the seceding ministers replied; and vindicated their doctrine, and their secession from the established church of Scotland. A sharp controversy ensued, in which some members of the Newcastle presbytery were the dispu-

tants on that side, and the Rev. Mr. Gellatly was the principal disputant off the seceding side. As far as we had access to the consideration of this controversy, (for we did not see it all,) we are of opinion that Mr. Gellatly had the right side of the controversy, and managed it with advantage against his opponents.

Mr. M'Knight, of New-York, published a set of sermons on justifying faith, wherein he reprobates the doctrine of assurance, as being of the nature and essence of faith. Mr. Anderson, minister at Mill creek and Harman's creek, Allegany county, Pennsylvania, also published a set of sermons on the same subject, in which he vindicates the assurance that is in the nature of faith, and proves it plainly, and shews the absurdity of the objections raised against it by Mr. M'Knight.

The Rev. John Black, minister, then, at Marsh creek, published a little piece, as would appear, against singing the psalms of David in New Testament worship, and in vindication of singing psalms and hymns of human composition in gospel worship. To this the aforesaid Rev. John Anderson replied. Mr. Black wrote a second piece in answer to Mr. Anderson's. Mr. Anderson replied to this last piece of Mr. Black's, and, lastly, took some notice of a piece written by Mr. Latta, on the same subject as Mr. Black's. The friends to Messrs. Black and Latta's doctrine, have, in a late publication, declared that they managed this controversy triumphantly. We conceive, that the cause and ground of triumph was plainly on the other side.

Mr. Bellamy's dialogues and letters were reprinted in Washington, Pennsylvania. These dialogues and letters were written against Hervey's dialogues, Mr. Marshall's tract on sanctification, and others. Mr. Anderson, aforesaid, published a little piece, for the purpose of clearing and vindicating the doctrine of these great men from the false aspersions, and ignorant or designed misrepresentations of it, by Mr. Bellamy; which he has done, we think, to the conviction of any who have a mind to know the truth, in those doctrines taught by Messrs. Boston, Marshall, Hervey and others, which were opposed by Mr. Bellamy.

The associate presbytery had no other judicial testimony, in America, than that emitted by the associate presbytery in 1736, till the year 1784, when they published a testimony, in three parts, with a narrative prefixed thereto. The greatest part of this testimony we are heartily agreed to. The representations of the doctrines of grace therein, we, as far as we can at present recollect, heartily subscribe to. Indeed we, without any reluctance, declare it as our belief, that there is no denomination of professed Christians, who have clearer views of the doctrines of grace, than the associate synods in Europe and this country. None need, therefore, be surprized, when we say, that it is with heart-felt sorrow that we see matters stand as they do; and that we are under the necessity of opposing any of the principles of the associate synod, or any other denomination of professed Christians, and especially presbyterians, who hold the doctrines of grace so clearly as they do. Had they, or any other denomination of presbyterians, dropped any one doctrine that never

had been made a part of the church's testimony, notwithstanding it had been contended for by great men in the church, that would not seem so hard; or if they had barely dropped the doctrines and principles which they have let fall to the ground, though they had been part of the church's testimony, though this would have been hard, yet it would not be so grievous. But what renders the matter so grievously difficult, and lays us under the most disagreeable necessity of opposing some of the principles and proceedings of the associate synod, and other denominations of presbyterians, especially, is, that they have not only departed from some of the principles of the church of Scotland, which were part of the church's testimony in her purest reforming times, but have violently opposed these principles, and run them down as pernicious. But this is not all; for they have proceeded to exclude all those who abide by these principles, and account it their duty to do so, as being in their opinion, whatever has been said to the contrary, agreeable to, and founded on the word of God, from communion with them in sealing ordinances: that is, they have made it a term of communion, to any that will join with them, that they renounce the principles, at least some of them, perhaps all of them, which we shall presently notice, and which, we think, must be acknowledged to be part of the church's testimony in her purest times of reformation. The confession of faith compiled by the assembly of divines at Westminster, must, we think, be acknowledged, without any exception, to be a considerable part of the testimony of the church of Scotland, in her purest times of reformation: but the associate synod in North-America have expressed their determination, in their testimony, not to adhere to it all without exception, but only in as far as it agrees to their principles. The words of their testimony are these: "If any article in our confession of faith, seems to give any other power to the civil magistrate, in matters of religion, than what we have now declared to be competent to him, we are to be considered as receiving it only in so far as it agrees with other articles of the same confession, in which the spiritual nature of the church is asserted, and the keys of the kingdom of heaven denied to belong to the civil magistrate: *and in so far as it agrees with this declaration of our principles.*" Here it is plainly and unequivocally declared, that they will adhere no farther to the aforesaid confession, than that confession agrees with the declaration of their principles. The confession of faith, as received by the general assembly of the church of Scotland, was commonly denominated the standard of that church: but the associate body makes the declaration of its prineiples the standard of that standard, by which the truth of it must be tested among them. They need not have said, as they have done in the paragraph now quoted from their testimony, p. 9. "If any article in our confession seemed to give," &c. for they very well knew that the confession of faith did not barely seem to give, but actually gave, quite other powers to the civil magistrate, than they give. They know that the Westminster assembly spake very plainly, in some articles of the confession, in direct opposition to the princi-

ples they maintain about the power of the civil magistrate, in matters of religion, as did all sound presbyterians at that time: and they knew, that they have produced plain passages of scripture for proof of their doctrine, which none can do, who hold the doctrine which the associate synod do in this matter. But as they knew, as we humbly conceive, these things, so they give pretty plain hints, that they, viz. the Westminster assembly, had contradicted themselves; for they say, "we are to be considered as receiving it only in so far as it agrees with other articles of the same confession, in which the spiritual nature of the church is asserted, and the keys of the kingdom of heaven are denied to belong to the civil magistrate." Now this is a plain intimation, that the representation, given by the Westminster assembly, of the spiritual nature of the church, was inconsistent with the power given by them to the civil magistrate; as if the power given to the civil magistrate by the assembly, had any tendency to ruin the church, rather than help it, or gave him a power to act above his sphere, and make him some kind of a church officer; and as if denying him the keys of the kingdom of heaven, were inconsistent with the power they give him in respect to the church: as if the magistrate could in no respect judge of, and punish for the same things, which the church judges of & censures for in her way, but he must be chargeable with assuming the keys of the kingdom of heaven. But though the associate synod could not see how these things could consist with each other, we hope it is no good reason why the Westminster assembly, and others, could not see that they can consist very well together. Hence it was a part of the church's testimony in the purest times of reformation, as is plain both from the old Scots confession and the Westminster confession of faith, that it is the duty of the civil magistrate, as a magistrate, to purge out of his dominions, all idolators, blasphemers, and hereticks, whatsoever; i. e. such as are guilty of these in the gross sense of these terms. But this the associate synod, in their testimony, deny that he has any right to do; which shews that they have departed from the testimony of the church in this matter. That they have so departed from the testimony of the church of Scotland in this matter, will plainly appear to any who will but take the pains to compare what they say on this subject, testimony, p. 8, 9, with the 14th article of the Scots confession, and the 23d chap. 3d sect. of the Westminster confession, and that their doctrine is a plain contradiction, and designed opposition, to the doctrine of both these confessions on this subject, and, indeed, to almost all the confessions of the reformed churches at the reformation from Popery; see *The Divine Right of Church Government*, by sundry ministers of London, chap. 9, sect. 1, page (mihi) 69, 70. Now their doctrine on this head, though in opposition and condemnation of the doctrine of the reformed churches, and the doctrine and testimony of the church of Scotland, yet is part of their testimony, and so a term of communion with them, so that every person who adheres to the testimony of our church in the purest times of reformation, and to the scriptures upon which that testimony is founded, as binding

yet as much as ever, are excluded from communion with them: or, in other words, are excommunicated.

And as we might expect, as a native consequence of this doctrine of theirs, they hold and maintain, in opposition to the testimony of the church of Scotland, in her confession of faith and other testimonies, the doctrine of toleration, or liberty of conscience, as it is called. Compare the 20th chap. of the Westminster confession of faith, sect. 4, which treats of liberty of conscience, with the 9th page of their testimony, where they say, "to worship God after that way and manner they judge most agreeable to his will, is a right common to all men. They may, and often do, err, and offend the Most High by substituting a false worship in place of that which he requires; but no power on earth may take their right from them." Strange doctrine! A right to err, and substitute a false worship in place of that he requires, and thus to offend the Most High! A right to commit the grossest acts of sin, under pretext of worshipping God! A right to do wrong! Was there ever such a right? Who gave them this right, or where did they get it? Now this very strange aud diverse doctrine is part of their testimony, which they have set in opposition to the testimony of the church in her purest times of reformation; and being a part of their testimony, none can have communion with them, unless they agree to their doctrine, in opposition to the doctrine and testimony of the church of Scotland on this subject, and the scriptures on which this doctrine is founded. Surely this is hard measure to the genuine sons of the church of Scotland.

The covenants, national and solemn league, were part of the church of Scotland's testimony in her purest reforming times; and the civil part of these covenants, as well as any other part. Our renowned covenanters framed them, and swore them, with the civil part as much as any other part. But the associate synod, in their testimony, tell us, page 11, "as to what may be called the civil part of these covenants, it is what we neither have, nor ever had, any thing to do with." We had thought that all Christians, especially, had something to do with the moral law, and the duties required thereby; and that any moral duties were very suitable for a covenant of duty. Quere—Is not what is called the civil part of the covenants, founded on the moral law? on the fifth commandment? Some people, in order to apologize for themselves for casting off the obligation of these covenants from themselves and others, weakly enough object, that if the form of these covenants, even with regard to circumstances of place and the like, be changed, then the covenants cannot with any propriety be accounted the same: they must mean, substantially the same. But if not only the circumstantials, but also the moral substance of the covenants, is changed, and not only so, but rejected; then we will ingenuously confess, that we cannot comprehend how these covenants could be accounted the same as were framed and sworn by our forefathers. We think that we may venture to assert, that no man would have been accounted a genuine covenanter, in the purest times of reformation, who would have declared, that he would

have nothing to do with what is now, by some, called the civil part of the covenants. for there was, and still is, good reason for giving the duties required in the fifth commandment, a place in the national and solemn league and covenant. And we are of opinion, that such as declare now, that they never had any thing to do with the civil part of the covenants, had they lived at the time when these covenants were first framed and sworn, must have rejected these covenants wholly; for they would not have been admitted to take them with their limitations. However, their way of managing the covenants is a part of their testimony; consequently a term of communion with them: so that every one who holds fast the testimony of the church of Scotland, in her purest reforming times, is excluded from all communion in sealing ordinances with them. This is hard dealing, truly.

It was a part of the testimony of the church of Scotland, in her purest times of reformation, that the true religion of Jesus Christ should be established in every nation where it is professed. This is plain from their diligent and zealous endeavours to have the true religion of Jesus, which was professed in Scotland, established there. And as they zealously endeavoured to procure the establishment of the religion of Jesus Christ there, so they actually obtained it. And they zealously maintained the duty and propriety of having the true religion established by the laws of the land, with success, against the English sectarians, who denied, and violently opposed, all civil establishments of religion. Now although, as far as we remember, the associate presbytery in America has not, in their testimony, said any thing for or against religious establishments; and, therefore, we know not that they do, or do not, make it a term of communion to such as join with them, that they shall not maintain the duty and propriety of civil establishments of religion: yet we conceive that it is certain, that they are opposed to religious establishments. This we gather from these circumstances, viz. First, the, at least almost, universal disgust, that the people of that denomination have, at religious establishments. Secondly, the high estimation in which Mr. Graham's *Review of Religious Establishments*, is held by the ministers and people of that denomination, who have had the opportunity of seeing that book. Thirdly, a hint they give in the 11th chap. page 57, of the narrative prefixed to their testimony, where they reckon, that the civil establishment of religion was the occasion of the many evils, which they there relate, prevailed in the established church of Scotland. They know very well, that the best things may, and often are abused to vile purposes, by men of corrupt minds. These things, however, taken in connection, make it plainly appear to us, that they are also opposed to this part of the church's testimony. In these and other doctrines, which we may afterwards notice, the associate presbytery, now synod, contradict and gainsay the doctrine of the church of Scotland, in her purest reforming times, and go the fearful length, in their opposition in most of them, as to make their opposite and contradictory doctrines, terms of communion; that is, they exclude all professed

Christians from communion with them in sealing ordinances, who do not profess that they are, with themselves, opposed to the forementioned and some other doctrines of the church, at the forementioned reforming period. But this is not all: for they oppose and contradict the doctrines, and even exclude from their communion every man who holds and maintains the doctrines, which the first and purest seceders professed and maintained in their writings, and particularly in their act and testimony, which the then seceders say, was, at a meeting of presbytery at Perth, December 3d, 1736, unanimously approven. We have already shewn, that the associate presbytery, now synod, in America, oppose and contradict several of the doctrines maintained by our purest reformers. Now, in these very doctrines, they contradict and oppose the first and purest seceders. For instance, the first and purest associate presbytery, or seceders, in their forementioned act and testimony, received the confession of faith, and the larger and shorter catechisms, compiled by the assembly of divines at Westminster, without any limitation or exception whatever: the confession of faith as it was received by the general assembly of the church of Scotland in the year 1647, and the catechisms as received in the year 1648. In their forementioned testimony, unanimously approven December 3d, 1736, they express themselves thus: "We acknowledge and approve of all the several pieces of reformation attained unto by this church, in her several reforming periods; particularly the confession of faith compiled by the assembly of divines who met at Westminster, with commissioners from the church of Scotland: which confession they receive and own as the confession of their faith, as the same was received and approven by act of assembly, 1647, sess. 23. And also they receive and own the *whole* doctrine contained in the larger and shorter catechisms, compiled by the foresaid assembly at Westminster, and approven by acts of assembly, 1648, sessions 10th and 19th, as part of the uniformity in catechising, for the three kingdoms; and ratified by act of parliament, February the 7th, 1649." Here, then, it is undeniable, that the first seceders professed and testified an unlimited adherence to these standards, as they were received and approven by the above-mentioned acts of assembly.

In the protest given in by several ministers of the established church of Scotland, against the act of the general assembly of that church, passed in the year 1720, condemning several doctrines contained in a book entitled *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, the protestors declare their adherence to the Scots confession, and especially to the Westminster confession of faith, as received A. D. 1647, and to the larger and shorter catechisms. Two of the protestors, at least, viz. Messrs. Ebenezer and Ralph Erskine, tho' not at this time, yet afterward, were among the first and principal seceders, and their doctrine was, in this case, the same after, as it was before they were seceders, as may plainly be seen by the quotation which we have made from their own testimony; compare the forementioned protestation, which may be seen in Mr. Ralph Erskine's

book, entitled *Faith no Fancy*, page 399, 400, with the associate presbytery's testimony, unanimously approved by them, December 3d, 1736, page 109, 110.

Mr. Wilson, of Perth, in his book entitled, *A Defence*, &c. page 371, says, "the seceding brethren have always refused, and they do upon good ground refuse, that they have made any secession from the church of Scotland. If the church of Scotland is considered as her principles are held forth, from the word of God, in her confession of faith, larger and shorter catechisms, &c." And page 413, speaking of the conduct of the general assembly towards the seceding ministers, he says, "they sentenced eight ministers to deposition, who own and acknowledg — the whole doctrine contained in our confession of faith, as the confession of our faith," &c. But seceders in America tell us, testimony p. 9, that "if any article of our confession seems to contradict their notions, they are to be considered as receiving it only in as far as it agrees with the present declaration of their principles." Thus they choose their own ways.

The doctrine of seceders in America, held forth in the 8th and 9th pages of their testimony, concerning the power of the civil magistrate to punish idolators, blasphemers, hereticks, &c. is evidently far from the doctrine of the first seceders, as well as it is far from the doctrine of the reformed churches, and that of the church of Scotland in particular; and above all, it is far from, yea opposite to, the doctrine of the scriptures on this head. The doctrine of seceders in America, in their testimony, with regard to the power and duty of the civil magistrate, in matters of religion, as held forth in the just now mentioned pages of that testimony, is, according to former seceders, who must be allowed to know both their own principles, and those of the English sectaries, whose peculiar doctrines they professedly opposed; we say, that the doctrine of present seceders on this head, according to the first seceders, is just the sectarian doctrine; the doctrine of the Brownists. The Rev. William Wilson, of Perth, was one of the first four ministers who made the secession from the established church of Scotland; and had, no doubt a principal hand in framing their testimony, which was unanimously approven 1736. Now in his book, entitled *A Defence*, &c. pag. 201; Mr. Wilson's defence was written against, or in answer to, a Mr. Currie's *Essay on Separation*,—Mr. Currie had mentioned the principles of two men, a Mr. Johnson, a rigid Brownist, and Mr. Roger Williams of New-England, as bearing a resemblance to the principles of seceders relative to their separation from the established church; "but (says Mr. Wilson) how comes our author to conceal another principle of his," viz. Mr. Williams's, mentioned by Mr. Mather in the place quoted by him, viz. "*his violent urging, that the civil magistrate might not punish breaches of the first table of the laws of the ten commandments.*" "Our author," says Mr. Wilson, "has no doubt his own reason for not mentioning this sectarian principle," &c.

The first seceders did not believe, if we may give credit to their testimony, published 1736, that every man has a right to worship God after the way and manner they judge most agreeable to his will; nor that no power on earth may control them by force and corporal punishment; as is maintained by seceders in America, as is plain from their testimony, pages 8, 9, 10. For in their first testimony, published 1736, as it was unanimously approved by them, pages 38, 39, 40, they condemn the boundless toleration given by James the papist, duke of York; and they also condemn the boundless toleration given by queen Anne, 1712. And they declare, that all such tolerations are contrary to the word of God; and they quote a number of passages of scripture, to prove, both from the old and new testaments, how contrary all such tolerations are to the word of God, and also contrary "to the principles of this church," say they, "contained in confession, chap. 20, sect. 4, chap. 23, sect 3, and the answer to the question in the larger catechism, *What are the sins forbidden in the second commandment?*" And Mr. Wilson in his defence, (compare pages 189 and 190, tells us it was one of the principles of the Brownists, "that the Christian magistrate had no right to meddle at all with any matters of religion; and they pled for an universal toleration, under the specious pretence of liberty of conscience." And he says, a little downward in page 190, "the above are the principles that the most part of our divines, cited by the author of the essay, do reason against; and the principles of seceding ministers are as far distant from them, as east from west." Mr. Fisher in his *Review*, &c. charges Mr. Robe, and his adherents in the Cambuslang work, as being promoters of boundless toleration and liberty of conscience; see the *Review*, &c. bound up with Mr. Erskine's *Faith no Fancy*, p. 479; which Mr. Robe pretends to count a calumny.

The seceders in America say, in their testimony page 11, "as to what may be called the civil part of these covenants," meaning the national and solemn league and covenants, "it is what we neither have, nor ever had, any thing to do with." Now if they mean, in America, what they there say may be true. But certainly the first seceders did not pretend to reject any part of the covenants, when their testimony was composed and published; for therein, see page 109, they "assert and own the perpetual obligation of the national covenant, as approven and explained by the general assembly, 1638, and sworn by all ranks of persons, anno 1639, and ratified by act of parliament 1640. As also they own and assert the perpetual obligation of the solemn league and covenant, taken and subscribed by all ranks of persons in Scotland and England, anno 1643, ratified by act of parliament of Scotland, anno 1644, and particularly as renewed, &c. in Scotland, anno 1648; concerning which oaths and covenants they declare and assert, that as to the matter of them, they were lawful, being plainly contained in the word of God; and as to their ends, they were laudable and necessary; and therefore they did, and hereby do, declare their adherence to the same." See Mr. Wilson's defence, bottom of page 371, and beginning of page 372.—

How much of the covenants is, by the associate synod in America, reckoned of a civil nature; we do not pretend to determine. But surely the parts of these covenants which, as Mr. Wilson speaks, contain a civil allegiance to the king, must be reckoned among the civil parts of them. Now Mr. Wilson, def. p. 240, says, that "the bond subjoined to the covenant, contains a qualified allegiance to the king;" and shews there how it was qualified: and in the 301st page of the defence, he says, "by a religious oath, I suppose, our author means, an oath, the subject-matter whereof is religious things only. But he should have considered, that our national covenant contains, also, a civil allegiance to the king; and no doubt this is likewise a religious duty, to which we are bound by the fifth commandment." Here, again, present and former seceders differ widely.

We are firmly of the opinion, that the associate synod in America are, for the reasons before-mentioned, and from the very nature of their principles, expressed in the 8th and 9th pages of their testimony, opposed to the establishing of the true religion by the laws of the land; or, in other words, to give the civil sanction to such acts and constitutions of the judicatories of the church of Christ, as are founded on the word of God. We might shew from several passages in the act and testimony of the first seceders, that the opinions of our present seceders are opposite, in this matter, to theirs; but we shall content ourselves with quoting a passage or two from a principal one of the first seceders, who, we apprehend, speaks the sentiments of all seceders at that time. It is Mr. Wilson, of Perth. Mr. Currie had quoted a passage from Mr. Gillespie's miscellany questions, in his essay on separation, written against the secession from the church of Scotland by Mr. Wilson and others; which passage begins thus: "Beware of separating new-lights, &c." Mr. Wilson, in his reply to Mr. Currie, defence, p. 295, 296, says, "he (viz. Mr. Currie) ought to have told his reader, who these new-lights are, that Mr. Gillespie cautions against. And if we look to the beginning of that chapter, whence the above citation is taken, Mr. Gillespie observes, that, "'tis pleaded by some, who pretend to more tenderness than others, that to establish, by the law of the land, a confession of faith, or a directory of the worship of God and of the government of the church, and to appoint penalties or punishments upon such as maintain the contrary doctrines or practices, is to hold out, and shut the door upon, new light." Mr. Wilson adds, "'tis to be regretted, that such new lights have of late appeared in our horizon, who plead against the establishment of confessions of faith, &c. by the laws of the land." Mr. Wilson asks a question at Mr. Currie, defence, p. 302; viz. "May not the church, not only advise the magistrate, but also directly apply to him for the civil sanction to such acts and constitutions of her judicatories, as are founded on the word of God? And is it not the duty of the civil magistrate, in this case, as he is guardian of both tables of the law, to give the civil sanction to such ecclesiastical acts and constitutions?" Mr. Wilson adds, "if our author is in any doubt about this;

he may consult our presbyterian divines, such as Messrs. Rutherford and Gillespie, upon this head."

A very long and tedious controversy, betwixt the associate and reformed presbyteries, about the origin and qualifications of the civil magistrate, has been carried on, with a great deal of warmth and animosity on both sides. They both agreed, that magistracy was founded in the law of nature; but they seemed to differ widely about what the law of nature is. The reformed presbytery maintain, that the law of nature is substantially the same as the moral law, a perfect copy of which is given us in the Bible; and therefore they said, that magistracy was founded in the word of God, in the Bible; because the perfect copy of the law of nature, or moral law, which we have in the Bible, is the word of God. The associate synod maintain, that magistracy is founded in the law of nature, but deny that it is found in the word of God in the Bible, and seem to hold, that the moral dictates of right reason is the law of nature; and thus would seem to us to hold, that the law of nature and the moral law are substantially different; for if, in their opinion, the moral dictates of right reason, and the moral law, were the same thing, why need they dispute about words? And if the law of nature, and the moral law, be substantially the same, and if that most perfect copy we have of this law, in the Bible, be the word of God, why need they refuse that magistracy is founded in the word of God? If they say, that the law of nature is the same substantially as the moral law; then why do they not insist upon following the most perfect copy of that law, instead of the most imperfect copy of it among heathens? But if it be insisted on, that these laws are substantially different, and that the moral dictates of right reason are the law of nature, distinct from the moral law; then by what rule shall we know, that the dictates of reason are right? Should not the dictates of reason be counted wrong, if they are not agreeable to the law of God? And when we have a most perfect copy of his law, in the Bible, is it a dictate of right reason, to make the dictates of reason, of heathens, or of any, not tested by his law given in the Bible, our rule in this or any other moral duty? But not to insist farther on this; surely our reformers, in our best reforming periods, held that magistracy, and magistrates, should be according to the word of God, where a people are favoured with it. We have shewn, in the course of this narrative, that both the resolutioners and protestors were of this mind.

It is maintained by the reformed presbytery, that scripture qualifications are essential to the being of lawful magistrates; and they produce, from the scriptures, such qualifications as God required in magistrates among his people; and they maintain, that whatever stipulations, agreeable to the word of God, any nation makes essential to the being of magistracy among them, are always essential to its being among them.—The associate synod deny both, if these qualifications rise any thing superior to what might be in a heathen. God commanded Israel to set none over them, as rulers, but known men, just men, men fearing God and hating covetousness. Now we should think, that all should allow, that these are essential qualifications, since it cannot be supposed, even

according to the dictates of right reason, that the natural interests of men can be secure in any other hands, but such as are possessed of these qualifications in some measure. But these qualifications are required in the Bible. With regard to any religious qualifications being made necessary, by any deed or constitution of a nation, to the being of magistracy among them, they say, "they apprehend that no deed of the civil constitution, can make religious qualifications necessary to the being of magistracy among that people where this is done." Marshall's vindication, &c. page 15. In the same page and paragraph they say, "it is the duty of professed Christians, to attend to the directions given on this head in the scriptures." If it be a duty for professed Christians, &c. then it is required of them in his word; and then it is a sin to do otherwise. And seceders themselves being judges, this principle of theirs is contrary to the principles of the church of Scotland, and to the principles which they themselves formerly held. In their testimony, unanimously agreed on in 1736, they say, "the principal articles of his" (Mr. Renwick's) "indictment, and for which he suffered, were his asserting, that the duke of York, then king James VII. was not rightful nor lawful king of these realms, and that because he was a papist, had never sworn the coronation oath, &c." And they say, "these principles were espoused by this church ever since our reformation from Popery, and were justified by all the three nations at the revolution." Test. pag. 36, 37, (mihi.) And as our present seceders make a great handle of these words in our confession, as a proof, as it would appear, that according to it, a nation might, notwithstanding their civil deeds of constitution to the contrary, set up an infidel, or papist, to rule over them, and that such would be a lawful ruler in that nation; the words of our confession are: "Infidelity, or difference in religion, doth not make void the magistrate's just and legal authority:" so both with regard to the qualifications just before mentioned, and the doctrine of our confession just now quoted, which have a near connection with each other, they differ widely from former seceders. We think that none of the seceders of Mr. Wilson's time, condemned any part of his defence, nor his continuation of that defence. Now Mr. Currie had asserted, that what the seceders had said about Mr. Renwick's grounds and reasons for rejecting the government of James, duke of York, were not principles espoused by the church of Scotland from the reformation—That, because one was a papist, he could not be lawful or rightful king of these realms. Mr. Wilson, after quoting the words of the testimony, in the pages to which we have above referred, asks what these principles were, and mentions them one by one, particularly concerning the duke of York being a papist, for which he could not be lawful or rightful king of these realms, &c. He says, "if Mr. Currie calls in question the truth of what is asserted, he is the first of the presbyterian persuasion, as far as I know, that has alledged the above principles were not espoused by the church of Scotland ever since our reformation." Mr. Currie's principles on this head, it would appear, were pretty much of a piece with the principles of our present seceders; for he adds, says Mr. Wilson, "if a

papist hath been set upon the throne by the people, they having sworn allegiance to him, he ruling according to law, and defending the subjects in their rights and privileges, sacred and civil, he may be a lawful and rightful king, according to the doctrine taught in our confession, chap. 23, art. 4. But Mr. Wilson replies, "though I humbly judge the words of the presbytery's act, do not determine in the question as stated by Mr. Currie, yet he appears to me to pervert the words of the confession." Then he quotes the words of the confession, and goes on thus: "But according to our principles received immediately after the reformation, when queen Mary abdicated the crown, as also according to the principles which were espoused by the three nations at the revolution, one that is a professed papist can *never* have a just and legal authority, and consequently it is nowise contrary to our confession of faith to assert, that a professed papist cannot be lawful nor rightful king of these realms, even though all Mr. Currie's *ifs* should be taken in." Continuation of defence, chap. 5, page 484, 485. Upon the same principles Mr. Wilson should have taken in a prelatist, as well as a papist; for both were excluded by the laws of the land. And the proper design of that 4th article of the 23d chapter of the confession of faith, given here by Mr. Wilson, is, in effect, the same which Mr. Steuart, in his Collections, &c. says, was generally understood thus, viz. "That the principles of our holy and peaceable religion do not deny, but infidels and papists may be lawful magistrates in such countries or kingdoms where these false religions are established; and if any of our religion happen to sojourn in those territories, they ought to own their just and legal authority, and obey their lawful commands. But in other countries or kingdoms, such as this of Scotland is, where professing and defending of the protestant religion is made a condition of government between the magistrate and people; in that case, if he shall either be of, or fall away to, a false religion, and violate the said condition and agreement, then there is ground and reason for the people's representatives to claim their right, and declare him on that account to have forfeited his right to the crown, and declare the throne vacant, as did our meeting of estates, April 11th, 1689."

The associate body maintain, if we understand them right, that whosoever rules over men by God's providence, does rule also by his precept; that there is no difference between the providence and precept of God in this matter; but that providential magistrates are also preceptive. In this they actually contradict the sentiments of our reformers on this head, as may be shewn in many instances. At present we refer the reader to Mr. Shields' *Hind let loose*, in various places, particularly head 2d, concerning owning of tyrants' authority: a book written by one of the persecuted ministers in the very time of the persecution; in these times that tried men's souls: see pages 231, 232, Glasgow edition, 1710. The reformed presbytery maintained, that none but preceptive magistrates, were lawful and rightly constituted magistrates.

The associate synod maintains, it appears, that the choice of the people, without any consideration of any other qualification, constitutes the formal ground of subjection to civil rulers; for it is, by them, accounted one of the errors of the reformed presbytery, to maintain, that any scripture qualifications are also required, &c. Survey of the Presbyterian Churches in America, published at Philadelphia, 1797, page 35. It appears plainly to us, that the sentiments of the reformed presbytery were agreeable, and theirs contrary, to the sentiments of our most zealous reformers, as will appear from the following quotation from the Sanquhar declaration, wherein they "protest against the foresaid proclamation of James, duke of York, as king; in regard that it is the choosing of a murderer to be a governor, who hath shed the blood of the saints; that it is the height of confederacy with an idolater, forbidden by the law of God, contrary to the declaration of the general assembly of the church, July 27, 1649, and contrary to many wholesome and laudable acts of parliament, and inconsistent with the safety, faith, conscience, and Christian liberty of a Christian people, to choose a subject of antichrist to be their supreme magistrate." It appears plain from this declaration at Sanquhar, which was the declaration of the poor persecuted remnant of the church of Scotland, who contended even unto death for her principles; we say, it appears from this declaration of the persecuted party, that they utterly rejected that principle, that the choice of the people constituted, without any regard to any qualifications required by the word of God, the formal ground of subjection to civil rulers. It is plain that, according to their declaration, the choice of ever such a great majority of the people, could no way make a murderer, or an idolater, a lawful civil ruler among Christians, in a nation professing Christianity; and therefore they rejected the government of the aforesaid James, duke of York, as being unlawful, he being both a murderer and an idolater, which are contrary to the 2d and 6th commandments of the moral law. Exod. 20th, 4, 5, 6, 13. Notwithstanding he was proclaimed king by the professed representatives of the nation, and acknowledged by a great majority of the people, and as it would appear, of professed presbyterians too, as appears from their humble address to the king's most excellent majesty, as they style him, viz. James the papist, duke of York, to which address they subscribe themselves, "your majesty's most humble, most faithful, and most obedient subjects." "Subscribed in our names, and in the name of the rest of our brethren of our persuasion, at their desire." This address is dated at Edinburgh, July 21st, 1687. See Mr. John Knox's propositions, prosecuted in his *Second Blast*, &c.—2d. "No manifest idolater, or notorious transgressor of God's holy precepts, ought to be promoted to any publick regimen, honour, or dignity, in any realm, province, or city, that hath subjected themselves to Christ Jesus, and his blessed evangel;" and therefore, if any people have chosen such, they may lawfully reject them, yea, and punish them. Prop. 4. The persecuted party in Scotland, who rejected the authority of the two brothers, one after the other, were a very small minority indeed

And they did not reject their government barely because they were tyrants; for they rejected the government of James, at least, because he was a murderer, and a papist, and so an idolater. They did not believe that doctrine, maintained by most in our times, viz. that whatever government the majority agrees to have over them, good or bad, agreeable or disagreeable to the word of God, binds the minority; or the minority are bound to acknowledge it as lawful authority. Therefore, often when the martyrs were interrogated thus: "Do you own the king's authority?" they would reply, they owned all authority that was agreeable to the word of God: but as they utterly refused to own the lawfulness of the government of both Charles and James, so their answer plainly implied, that they would own no government that was not agreeable to the word; and their persecutors so understood them, taking such an answer as no better than refusing to acknowledge the authority of Charles, or of James; and therefore, notwithstanding of such an answer, if they were not more explicit in owning the authority, they were put to death. But such principles and conduct are now reckoned criminal, and erroneous, and that among presbyterians too. We are really got to a pretty pass, when, among professed Christians, and presbyterians especially, it is accounted very faulty and erroneous, to say and maintain, that the word of God is the standard of all God's ordinances, of which magistracy is one; to say that the moral law, as we have it in the 20th of Exodus, is that in which magistracy is founded. The 20th of Exodus, we hope, is admitted to be the word of God.

The associate presbytery count it an error in the reformed presbytery, that they maintain that the civil magistrate should punish men for idolatry, heresy, blasphemy, &c. We are surprized to find such strange and bitter reflections thrown out by the associate presbytery, against any body of professed Christians, upon no better grounds and reasons than we find in the following passage, taken from the narrative prefixed to their testimony in this country, page 54. "As to the missions of the reformed presbytery, though we wish well [illegible] people of that denomination, and esteem whatever we see good in them; yet we much doubt, whether their attempts to increase their party, ought to be acknowledged as flowing fr[illegible] zeal for the purity of the gospel, and as laudable endeavours to promote it." What is such a hard and uncharitable opinion founded on? What reasons are given, to induce any one to believe that this charge is founded in truth? All we have is the following strange, unaccountable reasons, from the professed followers and successors of our reformers. "Had they succeeded to the declared extent of their wishes, it would have been no desirable event to us and others, whom they accounted enemies to the Lord's work. If any one desire to know how they would instruct their duly qualified magistrate to deal with such, he may consult their testimony." These reasons are plainly taken from the above-mentioned principles of the reformed presbytery, viz. that it is the magistrate's duty to punish idolaters, hereticks, blasphemers, &c. as such. But, brethren, have the reformed presbytery taught,

or endeavoured to instruct their duly qualified magistrate, in this matter, any other way than our reformers, our Westminster confession and catechisms, instructed the civil magistrate in these very matters? than almost all the reformed churches, in their confessions of faith, instructed him in these matters? If they have exceeded them, let it be shewn. If not, is it not a pretty compliment paid to almost all the churches of the reformation, and the church of Scotland in particular, that it is questionable, whether any of them had any proper zeal for the purity of the gospel? Why? Because they maintained anti-toleration principles.—O shame! O shame! For if the zeal of the reformed presbytery be, so is that of all others who held the same principles, in this matter, doubtful and questionable.

## CHAP. IX.

### *Of the Associate Reformed Synod in America.*

This body of professed Christians was composed, and took its above-mentioned denomination, from the union of two presbyteries, in America, of very different principles about civil government; the one entitled the Associate, and the other the Reformed Presbytery. The contest between these two presbyteries commenced in Britain, and was originally about the morality and legality of the government of Britain. The Associate Presbytery maintained, and the Reformed Presbytery denied, that the British government was a moral government; or, in other words, that the government of Britain was the ordinance of God, which ought to be submitted to for conscience sake. Ministers from both these bodies in [illegible], or in Ireland, came over to the British colonies in North-America, a considerable time before the American revolution, and formed themselves into separate presbyteries; each assuming the title, and maintaining the principles, of their respective denominations in Britain, to whom they belonged, and from which they proceeded. But the British colonies having revolted, and declared themselves free and independent states, and having constituted a temporary government of their own, which continued during the war, and for some time after, both these denominations of professed Christians seemed to acknowledge, and subject themselves to, this temporary government of the United States; and it is presumable that they were sincere in this matter. As the Reformed Presbytery and their people never acknowledged the government of Britain as the moral ordinance of God, so, doubtless, it was a joyful day to them, when independence was declared, and the British yoke cast off. It is perhaps no uncommon thing, that the minds of men are, especially men in their situation,

too much elated with a liberation from so hateful a yoke, as the British government was to the Reformed Presbytery; so that they, in some measure, forget consistency with their former conduct and principles. This want of consistency in the principles and conduct of the Reformed Presbytery, the Associate Presbytery thought they plainly observed on that occasion; for the Reformed Presbytery maintained, that some measure of scripture qualifications was necessary to the being of lawful magistrates; and the Associate Presbytery thought that they were not so nice now, about their scriptural qualifications, as they use to be; and therefore they did not neglect to improve so favourable an opportunity to expose men who opposed their principles so vehemently. They told them of it pat and plain. But the Reformed Presbytery, in their turn, thought that they observed full as much inconsistency in the conduct, compared with the principles, of the Associate Presbytery, in acknowledging the government of the United States, now just revolted from Britain, as they could observe in theirs; for the Associate Presbytery maintained, that whatever government the majority of a nation set up, or constituted, the same was a lawful government, and that the minority were bound to submit to it for conscience sake: and it must be acknowledged, that they are far from being singular in this opinion. The principle is highly plausible, but often contradicted in practice: and if the Associate Presbytery contradicted their principle by their practice, at the revolution, it must be confessed that they were not singular; others did so as well as them. The British colonies in North-America, were, before the revolution, under the British government. These colonies did not, perhaps, count one-fourth of the number of British subjects, at the revolution; and a great number of *them* were against the revolution.—The colonies, then, according to the principle, that the minority should, and are bound in conscience to yield subjection, for conscience sake, to whatever government the majority chooses to appoint over them,—must have been guilty of a wicked rebellion against lawful government; which is as the sin of witchcraft, and surely should not be acknowledged for lawful government. This inconsistency the Reformed Presbytery thought they saw in the Associate Presbytery; and they were no way backward to tell them of it at convenient times: for the Associate Presbytery acknowledged the government of the United States, though they were a small minority, against a great majority. Perhaps some of both parties saw the other's inconsistencies, but did not see their own: and perhaps some, more sagacious than the rest, saw that both parties had acted inconsistent with the principles they held. However this may be, both parties rejected the government of Britain, and both parties acknowledged the government of the United States. The Reformed Presbytery never acknowledged, but always rejected the government of Britain, and denied that the choice of the majority of a nation, without any other consideration, could bind the minority to a conscientious subjection to its dictates in any case, and that the conscience can only be bound by the law of God; and as the Associate Presbytery main-

tained the direct contrary principles, but now, notwithstanding, rejected the British, and owned the American government; they might think, that principle was now given up by Seceders. And on the other hand, since the Reformed Presbytery was willing to own the government of the United States, without appearing to be so nice as formerly about their scripture qualifications, the Associate Presbytery might think, that they had as good as given up that principle, and were come, so much, closer to them. However all these things may be, a union between the two parties was, very soon after the commencement of the American revolution, thought plausible, and probable, by some: for so early as the year 1777, they had a conference at Donegal; and another, in March 1778, at Pequea; and a third, in October following, at Middle Octorara. They had a fourth conference, at Pequea, June 9th, 1779. And now it appeared as if neither party had seen their inconsistencies; for both parties vigorously supported their distinguishing principles. Some time before any of these conferences took place, the Associate Presbytery of Pennsylvania was divided into two, viz. that of Pennsylvania, and that of New-York. The members of the New-York Presbytery, it appears, were all in favour of the union. Some of the members of the Pennsylvania Presbytery were for it, and some against it. Although they disagreed very much in their sentiments, at the conference, June, 1779, yet they agreed to hold another, in November that same year, at Deep Run. Messrs. Linn and Dobbin, of the Reformed Presbytery, attended, with some ruling elders. Members were expected to attend from both the Associate presbyteries. However, none attended but Mr. Marshall, of the presbytery of Pennsylvania. Mr. Marshall says, he firmly expected Messrs. Smith and Proudfoot, of his own brethren, and Messrs. Mason and Annan, from the presbytery of New-York. This disappointment was charged to the account of Mr. Marshall; and he acknowledges, Vind. p. 19, that he "did write to Mr. Mason, that he intended to prevent the meeting at Deep Run, to close the union." The hopes of a union seemed now at an end. Some time in the year, 1780, notwithstanding, the union was closed between the Associate Presbytery of New-York, and the Reformed Presbytery; and in 1782, by all the ministers of the Associate Presbytery of Pennsylvania, Messrs. Marshall and Clarkson excepted, with the Reformed Presbytery.—Thus, in 1782, the union was completely closed between these parties. The articles upon which the union was founded, were the following, according to their own account of the matter.

1. That Jesus Christ died for the elect only.
2. That there is an appropriation in the nature of faith.
3. That the gospel is indiscriminately addressed to sinners of mankind.
4. That the righteousness of Christ is the only proper condition of the covenant of grace.
5. That civil power originates from God the creator, and not from Christ as mediator.

6. That the administration of the kingdom of providence is committed to Jesus Christ, the mediator; and magistracy, the ordinance appointed by the moral governor of the world, to be the pillar, or prop, of civil order among men, as well as other things, is rendered subservient, by the mediator, to the welfare of his spiritual kingdom, the church; and besides, the church has the sanctified use of that, and every common benefit, through the grace of our Lord Jesus.

7. That the law of nature, and the moral law revealed in the scriptures, are substantially the same, although the latter expresses the will of God more evidently and clearly than the former; and therefore, magistrates, among Christians, ought to be regulated by the general directions of the word, as to the execution of their offices, in faithfulness and righteousness.

8. That the qualifications of justice, veracity, &c. required in the law of nature for the being of a magistrate, are also more explicitly and clearly revealed, as necessary, in scripture. But a religious test, any farther than an oath of fidelity, can never be essentially necessary to the being of a magistrate, except where the people make it a condition of government; then it may be among that people necessary, by their own voluntary deed.

9. That both parties, when united, shall adhere to the Westminster confession of faith, catechisms, larger and shorter, directory for worship, and propositions concerning church government.

10. That they shall claim the full exercise of church government and discipline, without dependence on foreign judicatories.

These articles, the 8th excepted, as far as they go, are not much different from our own sentiments in these matters. With regard to the 8th article, we shall, at present, only notice its absurdity. In that article it is said, that "a religious test, any farther than an oath of fidelity, can never be essentially necessary to the being of a magistrate," &c. The oath of fidelity here spoken of, cannot consistently mean any other, than the magistrate's oath to the people, to perform faithfully the duties of his office; for this, by the article, is spoken of as a magistratical qualification. Now this oath of fidelity, is allowed to be a religious test; and this religious test is admitted to be essentially necessary. An oath is an appeal to God, the searcher of hearts, as a witness of the sincerity and truth of what the swearer asserts or promises, and for vengeance on him if he deals falsely. It is admitted in America, and perhaps in other countries, as lawful, to swear either by lifting up the right hand to heaven, by God alone, or it is allowed to be lawful swearing, to say they swear to the truth of what they promise, or assert, by laying their hand upon and kissing the gospels. Now it is believed that there are some professed Atheists, and very many who, although they do not openly profess it, yet act in all respects so as to give sufficient ground to believe, that they, like the fool spoken of in scripture, say in their heart, that there is no God. There are, it is believed, a considerable number of Deists in several countries. Now how absurd and unreasonable is

it, to maintain, that an oath of fidelity is an essentially necessary qualification in the very being of a lawful magistrate, and yet to deny, that the belief of the divinity of that by which he swears, is essentially necessary. An oath is necessary, in order to give the highest security to the ruled, that the rulers will act for their proper interest. But what security can it give, of one who does not profess to believe, or acts as if there was no God? Or how can a Deist give any security, by laying his hand on and kissing the Gospels; a book which he boldly denies has any divinity in it? You would have just as much security by swearing him on an old almanack. It is one of the greatest of all absurdities, to maintain that an oath of fidelity is essentially necessary to the being of a magistrate, for securing the rights of the people, and yet to deny that that is essentially necessary, on which all that security depends: for if we have no security, that he who swears that oath, believes in the divinity of that by which he swears, what security can people possibly have from his oath? Surely not the least. And since the people of America act in such an unscriptural manner, as to admit that laying the hand upon and kissing the Gospels, is swearing, they ought, to be consistent with themselves, and, as far as it is possible, to secure their own interests, to require and demand of every man bearing an office of trust in the United States, that he make a publick and open declaration of his belief that there is a God; that all men, in every station, are accountable to him for all their actions; that there is a state of future and eternal rewards and punishments; and that the scriptures are a divine revelation, given by inspiration of God, and the only rule of faith and obedience. Without this, the people of the United States delude themselves, if they think themselves sufficiently secure, even with regard to their temporal affairs.

They being thus united, they immediately formed themselves into a synod, bearing title, *The Associate Reformed Synod;* and soon after published, what they called, their constitution, and gave the people encouragement, as they thought, that they were in favour of covenanting, and would as soon as possible publish a testimony; which for the present amused the people. Several, however, at length began to get uneasy at the delays of synod, and began to petition for a testimony. Then it began to come out, that the confession of faith was their testimony, though they were not themselves agreed about it, but had left several matters contained in it, to an after discussion. And that they might amuse the people a while longer, with appearances, they, on the 16th of May 1787, appointed Messrs. Mason, Annan, and Smith, to be a committee to prepare a draught of an overture, for the purpose of illustrating and defending the doctrines of the confession of faith, and to have it published before the next meeting of synod. The overture was accordingly prepared. The synod, however, did not see cause to pass it into an act; but, notwithstanding, they saw cause to recommend it to the people as a good book, without the least intimation that it contained any errors whatsoever: and in different after acts of synod, they give it their high-

est approbation, designating it, "an excellent illustration of the confession of faith." These high and unqualified encomiums tended, and perhaps were intended, to induce their people to swallow it without exception, as genuine truth, and as completely answering, in every chapter, and in every sentiment, the purpose pretended, and required of their committee, i. e. "An Illustration, &c." although when they came to try it themselves, to pass it into an act, somehow, or for some reasons, they could not swallow it. But what the synod could not do, it might be, the people could do; and they gave it to them. There was truly something strange and mysterious in their conduct in this matter: for if that overture was, as they gave out, "an excellent illustration of the confession," then it surely answered the end proposed by synod; and, then, why not pass it into an act? But if it contained errors and corrupt doctrines, then why give it so often, or at all, such high and unqualified recommendations? Some have conjectured, that the members of synod were not all agreed about it, at that time; but perhaps to keep Mr. Annan in temper, who, though but one member of the committee, is thought to be the parent of that overture-offspring, and a very fond one; and who, it is believed, takes it very ill, to have any reflections, however well founded, cast upon any of his progeny; therefore they recommended it as a good book. But if the members of synod were then of the sentiments they are at present, the overture was secretly approven by them. But as it was, and must have been observed, that the illustration was, in several instances, in direct contradiction and opposition to the text, and and as it was expected that this would be observed by several of the people; and had they passed the overture into an act, they might expect that the people would be alarmed and disgusted at their departure from, and opposition to, the doctrines of our standards. But in order that the people might not be too much surprised and alarmed at first, and that they might be gradually softened and reconciled to their erroneous tenets, they recommended it as a good book, and an excelent illustration of our confession of faith.

Let it not be supposed, from what we have said, that we condemn every thing contained in that overture. No; we are persuaded that there are many things good and sound therein. But there are some things very unsound, therein also. We shall here take notice of two or three of the most material errors in that overture. That overture is entitled, "An Illustration and Defence of the Confession of Faith," viz. the Westminster confession. In the 10th chapter of that confession of faith, the text to be illustrated reads thus:—2d. Article. "This effectual call is of God's free grace alone, not from any thing at all foreseen in man, who is altogether passive therein, until, being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it."—Illustration, overture, chap. 10th, paragraph 2d: "But we are not to imagine, that the soul of man is passive in regeneration: such an opinion leads into many errors."

This is really a curious illustration of the text. Perhaps this is the first time that the contradicting and condemning the text, in express terms, was ventured to be called an illustration and defence of it; and when it is boldly asserted too, that the doctrine of the text leads into many errors. If this is an illustration and defence, then these terms have never been rightly understood. Our dictionaries have never given a complete definition of these terms: they should have added, it seems, *oppose*, *contradict*, *condemn*, to the definitions which the best of them have given. However, it happens, to the disgrace of the illustration, &c. that it is itself that is very erroneous, and leads into many errors. It is not only in direct contradiction and opposition to, and condemnation of, the doctrine of the confession of faith, and of all sound and orthodox divines, but also of the holy scriptures, which represent men before regeneration, as dead in trespasses and sins; enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, nor can be; not sufficient of ourselves to do any thing as of ourselves; and that it is God who worketh in us both to *will* and to *do*, of his good pleasure; and who gives us the new heart, and new spirit, and takes away the stony heart, and gives a heart of flesh.

It is exceeding trifling, to talk of the activity of the soul of man, as an active being, and not ceasing to act before, in the time of, or after regeneration, as any apology for that egregious error; because there never was any dispute about the activity of the soul of man, or about its ceasing to act before, or in time of, regeneration; but about whether it has any active hand in its own regeneration. And it is yet, if possible, a more trifling apology for this wonderful illustration, &c. to say, as the author of it did, before the whole members of synod, May 1799, that the soul of man was active in opposing regeneration; as if he meant no more by being active in regeneration, than being active in opposing regeneration. This was a poor, flimsy, puerile come off. But the sequel of that illustrating chapter will shew, that he had no such meaning when he wrote it. His words are these: "Here, then, is a two-fold agency noticeable,"—(N. B. He is speaking of regeneration)—"the agency of the Spirit of God, and of the man's own spirit." N. B. In regeneration. "The agency of the Spirit of God is concealed in the agency of the creature"—N. B. In regeneration. "The man is conscious of nothing, but of his own perceptions and volitions: yet he could as easily pluck the sun out of the firmament, as command these perceptions and volitions without the Spirit of God." All this is in regeneration. Here, then, it is clear, the author of the illustrations has no idea of the soul being active in opposition to regeneration, but plainly maintains, that the soul has an active hand in its own regeneration. True, indeed, he makes the Spirit of God the prime mover of the soul in regeneration: but by his agency he makes the soul have an agency also in it. But, according to orthodox divines, the soul of man is not an agent, but a patient, or recipient, in regeneration. The Rev. Mr. Annan, the author, as is believed, of these illustrations, declared before all the members that composed the synod, May 1799, that he thought that the Cal-

vinists went to an extreme on one hand, and the Arminians to an extreme on the other hand, in this controversy. The Rev. John M. Mason declared, before all the members of aforesaid synod, that he was able to defend the doctrine, that man's soul is not wholly passive in regeneration, or the doctrine of the overture on this head, it is not remembered which now, against any that would oppose it. No member of synod, two of us only, who were complainants, excepted, intimated, by any one word, their dislike or disapprobation of any of these things.—The Rev. Adam Rankin, of Lexington, Kentucky, in his Review of the Revival, &c. page (nobis) 67, calls the doctrine of the soul's being passive in regeneration, a fatal scheme. "With him," says he, "the fatal scheme would be true, that the soul is as wholly passive in regeneration, as if it was lifeless matter." Thus this pernicious doctrine spreads through the whole body.

In the 21st chapter of the overture for illustrating, &c. page 98, speaking of singing psalms in the worship of God, and, as they would have us believe, we suppose, against singing psalms and hymns of human composition; yet the following words slily slip out. "And we do not mean to say, that hymns of human composition may not be lawfully used in any case whatsoever. But we think it safest, generally to adhere to the scriptural psalmody."* Perhaps this may account for the way they express themselves, about singing human compositions in worship, in their code of discipline, bound up with their new confession, in which they pronounce it a corruption of the worship of God, to sing psalms or hymns of human composition in the congregation; but they say nothing about families. There was an act of synod passed several years before their new code of discipline had any existence, in which they express this matter in perhaps the very same terms, viz. that it should be accounted a corruption of the worship of God, in any of their congregations; but when some of the members of synod required, that families should also be inserted, it could by no means be obtained; and the writer of the illustrating overture, strongly objected against inserting families in the act, asserting, "that every man was prophet, priest and king, in his own house." So, here, "they do not mean to say, that hymns of human composition may not be lawfully used in any case whatsoever."

The 23d chapter of the overture for illustrating, &c. contains their views of the power of the civil magistrate, with regard to matters of religion, or rather irreligion: and it is plain they deprive him of all power of punishing the most irreligious pretender to worship God, unless his irreligious conduct should tend to disturb the external order of church or state. Here, again, the illustration contradicts the text, and opposes its salutary doctrine; as any one may easily observe, by carefully comparing the 20th and 23d chapters of the confession of faith, with this pretended illustration. But we may have occasion to take farther notice of their doctrine, on this head, afterwards.

The constitution of the Associate Reformed Synod, before mentioned, having been, on account of its equivocation, pretty severely, and not al-

together unjustly, animadverted on,—once, at least, by the Reformed Presbytery in Britain, and on various occasions by the Associate Presbytery in America,—the synod, in the year 1790, perhaps to stem the clamour with some, and to save appearances with others, passed an act, which they entitled, "An act to amend the constitution of the Associate Reformed Synod." And it must be allowed, that it had room enough for amendment. But, in our opinion, instead of amending it, they made it a great deal worse. It was now that they passed those chapters of the confession of faith, which, in their constitution, they had left to an after discussion, in review. It is likely that, at first, there were some of the members who composed that synod, who had some impressions of the propriety of the doctrine of the confession, on account of which the whole chapters were left to an after discussion, and of the harmony of these doctrines with the word of God; and therefore it was thought best, not to hazard a discussion of them at first, till these men should be got simplified to the views of other members, who were unfriendly to the doctrines alluded to; and made pliable as melted wax, so that they might be moulded into any shape, and capable of receiving any impression. In 1790, the time for this purpose had already arrived. The synodal phalanx, who were all along hostile to the doctrines of the confession, and of the Bible, with regard to the authority the civil magistrate should be vested with, for punishing idolaters, blasphemers, and hereticks, were, it is presumed, satisfied, that they might now safely hazard a discussion of the reserved articles of the confession, without any hazard of losing their aim, or of meeting with much opposition. The result was,—the doctrine of the confession, and of the Bible, is denied, opposed, and materially condemned. And this is what is called an amendment,&c. O rare amendment!!! Well had it been, had they suffered these reserved articles to have slept quietly in their reserved state forever, rather than that they should have been awaked to such an ignominious fate; and that, at last, to the rending of the church.

The synod had, as the people took it, given encouraging promises, that they would set about testimony-bearing, we suppose it was understood, as soon as convenient. The people, therefore, petitioned frequently for a testimony. It is probable that the testimony which the synod intended, if they intended any at all, when they encouraged the people with the hopes of one, and the testimony the people expected, were very different in their form, and perhaps considerably so in their matter. What is called a stated judicial testimony, was what the people expected, but what perhaps the synod never intended: or if they did, they soon changed their minds; for it was not very long till it began to leak out, that the confession of faith was their testimony, and all the other testimony they intended to emit, should be only occasional testimonies. And this they insert in their act amendatory, in 1790, with the addition of the catechisms larger and shorter, directory for worship, and form of church government, as received in that act. This, in another act of theirs, is called their resolution. Their words are these: "And

after the most impartial and serious deliberation, find it their duty not to recede from the above resolution." Now the directory referred to in the act 1790, was the old directory bound up with the Westminster confession: for whatever was in contemplation at that time, there was no other in existence. And this is one branch of their testimony, their fixed testimony, which they say, in their act 1797, after the most impartial and serious deliberation, they find it their duty not to recede from: when it is most probable to us, that they were, in the year 1796, determined to cast the old directory off, and put one of their own framing in the place thereof, and a worse one too. In the year 1796, their overture for a new directory was published. This was impartial, serious work, with a witness. The people, however, were by no means pleased, but looked upon themselves as disappointed in their expectations, and the proposed testimony as an evasion only; and therefore were determined to persist in petitioning for a testimony,—a stated judicial one. But the synod was also determined they should have no other than what they had proposed in their amending act 1790. Therefore they passed an act on that very subject, in the year 1797, in which act the forementioned resolution, to adhere to what they had done in 1790, is contained. Some of the people were highly discontented; but the greatest part acquiesced, and swallowed all.

The synod's constitution, with all their amendments, though, no doubt, it was more pleasing to some objectors, who were, equally with the synod, hostile to the forementioned doctrines of the confession, and of the scriptures produced by the Westminster assembly to prove that doctrine; yet in other respects it was no better in their eyes; and the whole of it was now more disgusting than ever, to those who were the friends and adherents to the doctrine of the Westminster confession, now evidently opposed and condemned by their amending act. Therefore, as appears to us, to extricate themselves from the odium of one set of objectors, and to bring the objectors among themselves, who were reduced to a small number now, in their apprehension, and in reality, to either acquiesce or separate; several members of the synod contemplated a renunciation of their old constitution, and to reprint the confession of faith, and such other parts of the book which generally goes under that name, as they thought proper, with such alterations and modifications as were agreeable to their taste and inclinations, (for it does not appear that they consulted their Bible much on the subject,) and to denominate this, their constitution, and the terms of ministerial and christian communion with them. Perhaps most of the members were in the secret: but some of us can truly say, that we never heard that any such thing was in contemplation, for several months after it was passed into an act, (for it never made its appearance in overture,) though it must have been several years in contemplation. This act of synod was passed, we think, in May 1798: and notwithstanding that three of the members of presbytery to which Mr. M'Coy belonged, were collecting subscriptions, for their new confession and constitution, through that whole period,

viz. from May 1798 till May 1799; yet none of them ever so much as mentioned, that any such act had been passed by synod, nor any one thing about it, till in April, about a month before the synod was to meet in 1799. It is not remembered that he had any opportunity of seeing Mr. Warwick all that year, as he went to Kentucky and Miami in the summer, 1798, and came back with a design to move shortly to the Miami, to take the charge of a congregation there, and which he did early in the spring 1799. There was a presbytery held after Mr. Warwick's return, indeed, at which Mr. Warwick was loosed from his former charge; but Mr. M'Coy was not at it, consequently did not see him; nor did he then know whether Mr. Warwick knew any thing about the synod's designs or procedure, nor what his sentiments were about this matter.

At the presbytery in April, previous to the meeting of synod May 1799, Mr. M'Coy gave intimations, that if the report was true, that the synod had passed an act for altering the confession, and making their new confession a term of communion, he would withdraw from their communion. He was strongly solicited to go to synod, previous to such a step, and try if he could have any influence to prevent what he disliked. He thought this was but reasonable, and he went. The business was introduced in an extra-judicial conference, but before long was brought before open synod, and the matter, some would call it, debated: but O such reasoning as was there! or rather, the greatest part of it, if not the whole of it, either declamation or nonsense! and no scripture! and yet the foundation of a term of communion!!! O shame! O the times we live in!! There were but two of us, to defend the doctrine of the Bible, and the Westminster confession, viz. Mr. Alexander M'Coy, and Mr. Mathew Jamison, then, one of the Rev. Mr. Henderson's elders. We cannot take room here, to represent what was said in opposition, or defence of the doctrine of the confession, with regard to the magistrate's power respecting religious matters: only we may just observe, that we proposed to produce direct proof from the scriptures, in support of the doctrine of the confession of faith, which they were about to discard; and called upon them to do so, in favour of their opposite doctrine, if they could. They neither asked us to produce our proof, nor did they, as far as is remembered, as much as say they had any: and sure we are, they produced none, except, as Mr. Matthew Jamison thinks, a certain Mr. Kerr, in some of his harangues, mentioned the words, or some of the words, of the 12th ver. of the 7th chap. of Matthew's gospel; "whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them:" which text, if it is to be applied as Mr. Kerr would have it, would put an end to all punishments, at once, for any crime whatsoever. We are verily of the opinion, that no passage of scripture can be produced, direct or indirect, as a proof of their doctrine.

We know that there have been objections made to the doctrine of the Westminster confession, with regard to the magistrate's power in respect of religion, as it is called: and there have been several passages

of scripture quoted for the proof of toleration and liberty of conscience. We shall take a short notice of such as occur to memory at present.—Some object, that God was king of the Jews, and gave the laws in the Old Testament: therefore they are not fit for other nations. Ans. We should think that if God gave them, as he did, they must certainly be very good ones, and should be received by all nations, unless he has repealed them again.—But some object, he has repealed the judicial law. Ans. Not all, we hope. What comes of the laws for murder, robbery, &c. if this be so? Whatever law can be shewn to be repealed, we grant it is no longer binding on any nation: therefore, if it can be shewn that the laws in question are repealed, we that moment give up our argument: and till this be done, objecting is vain.—Some object, that these laws were peculiar to the Jews, and their circumstances. Ans. This is much of a piece with the former. If it can be proven that it was so, then we give up our argument. But if it was peculiar to the Jews, then no other nation could warrantably make the like laws, according to the objection; for upon this principle it is, that it is thought unwarrantable for any nation now to make such laws. But how, then, could the laws made by Darius, by Nebuchadnezzar, by Artaxerxes, (see Ezra vi. 7–12, and vii. 25—27, Dan. iii. 29,) be approven? Surely these men were no Jews, nor their nation a Jewish nation.—Some have objected, that as God was the king of the Jews, their political king, the reason why the Jews were ordered to be put to death for idolatry, &c. was not for idolatry, as idolatry simply; but for rebellion against their civil sovereign, which was God. Ans. Who told such objectors that this was the reason? This is a reason of their own framing, to answer their own purpose. There are no such reasons given in the Bible. Let such objectors consult the 13th of Deuteronomy, and they will find other and better reasons. If this was so, then neither was a murderer, nor any other capital criminal, put to death, because he murdered a man, &c. or because his crime dishonoured God, as the supreme and universal sovereign; but because he rebelled against him as his civil sovereign. How absurd? If this argument be good, then this law must have ceased, when God ceased to be their civil sovereign: and this took place when the Israelites chose a king, like the nations around them; for God says, they then rejected him from being king over them; and he permitted them to have a king of their own choosing, in subordination to his prescriptions. But did these laws cease then? We expect no one will say so. But some may say, he still remained their civil sovereign, after, as well as before, the Jews rejected him. But who will believe it? But it may be said, that he calls himself their king, long after that event. So he calls himself the king of all nations.—Some have objected, that our doctrine makes the magistrate a judge of doctrines; which he is not competent to; and therefore it is not right. Ans. Our doctrine makes the magistrate no otherwise a judge of doctrine, than the magistrates under the Old Testament: and let it be considered, if magistrates now might not be as competent as, in an ordinary way, they were then. But the magis-

trate then, or now, would have no more to judge of but the law; for these things being passed into civil laws, would be as easy to judge into as other civil laws.—Some have objected, that our doctrine and that of the confession makes the magistrate a church officer, and puts the keys of the kingdom of heaven in his power. This objection, if it has any meaning in point, it must be this, we think: that if the church censures for any sin, and the magistrate punishes with civil pains for the same sin, then the magistrate assumes the keys of the kingdom of heaven. If this be so, then the church must cease from censuring, or the magistrate from punishing any breaches, even of the second table of the law; for if one or other does not cease, the magistrate will be a church officer and assume the keys, &c. What a dilemma this fine objection has brought church and state to!—Some have objected, that some of the laws of the Old Testament, i. e. judicial laws, are repealed in the New Testament, and therefore all of them are repealed. Ans. To argue from a particular to a universal, has neither sense nor reason with it.—Some have objected, that Christ nor his apostles never taught any such doctrine. Ans. Then it seems, according to this, that it was not the spirit of Christ that inspired the Old Testament penmen. The precepts for punishing idolaters, blasphemers, &c. it cannot be denied, were given under the Old Testament. Now the silence of Christ and his apostles is so far from being an argument against, that it is a strong argument for our doctrine: for although they were persecuted for their doctrine to the highest, and thereby had a proper occasion, if any there could be, for declaring the civil magistrate had nothing to do, under the gospel, with taking cognizance of doctrines good or bad, and that the laws under the Old Testament which gave such power to magistrates were now disannulled; but there is not a word of this in all their writings. The same objection in other words is, that there is no precept in the New Testament for punishing idolaters, blasphemers or hereticks. Ans. This is in effect to say, that the unrepealed laws of the Old Testament have no force under the New: and that is the same as to say, the unrepealed laws are repealed, which is a contradiction. There are no precepts in the New Testament for punishing murderers, robbers, thieves, &c. but the laws of the Old Testament requiring such to be punished, are unrepealed; therefore they may be justly punished by the authority and laws of the universal king of heaven and earth.—Some have objected, that the doctrine of the confession, consequently the doctrine we espouse in this matter, infringes on, and destroys the rights of conscience. Ans. Surely it infringes on, nor destroys the rights of conscience now, no more than it did formerly. The Jews had consciences as well as Christians, or any others. Upon the grounds of the rights of conscience, it has been said, by a minister in the communion of the Associate Reformed Synod, that it is more the duty of a professed Atheist, Deist, Arian or Socinian, provided he be conscientious in his profession, not only publickly to profess his Atheism, &c. but to endeavour to persuade all his neighbours, &c. that Atheism, or Deism, &c.

is right, than even to be silent. These were his words, as far as can be remembered. God has, in his word, prohibited all such opinions and professions, under pain of damnation. If such professions and persuadings be a duty at all, it must be so because some law requires it. The laws of God forbid all such professions, &c. No other can be alledged but conscience, then, as we conceive. And if to profess Atheism, &c. and to persuade others to be Atheists, &c. be more a man's duty, than not to profess Atheism, &c. and not to persuade others to be Atheists, &c. when the man is conscious that Atheism, &c. is right; and if it be so that God, in his word and by his authority, forbids any to profess Atheism, Deism, Arianism, &c. and therefore pronounces such professions great and heinous sins; and if it be so, that when conscience requires such professions, &c. it becomes more his duty to obey its dictates, than the dictates of God; then, we cannot conceive how less can be inferred than this, viz. that conscience is (Lord preserve us from blasphemy) greater than God; and the dictates of a blinded, erring conscience, superior to the laws of God; and the authority of a conscience seared in wickedness, as with a hot iron, more to be revered and honoured, than the authority of him who is Lord of all !!! To what horrid lengths do bad principles drive men! God threatens with dreadful punishments, all such as the forementioned persuaders and professors, i. e. Atheists, Deists, Arians, Socinians, and such like. But how can this ever come to pass, according to the horrid doctrine under consideration, if these monstrous professors and persuaders be conscientious in their professions and persuadings, when it is, according to this Atheistical doctrine, their duty, and more their duty, than not to profess nor persuade, &c.? Can men be justly punished for doing their duty? Such a scheme of doctrine is calculated to encourage the workers of iniquity to go on in their sins, if they be but conscientious in their wickedness. It is calculated to abrogate the threatnings of heaven, and set the conscientious worker of iniquity free from danger. In a word, it is calculated to level all distinctions between right and wrong, between truth and falsehood, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not, in all cases where men are conscientious: for conscience is made the supreme rule of duty; so that if he acts agreeable to his conscience, however disagreeable he acts to the law of God, he is doing his duty. For instance, a man, who is given up of God to strong delusions, that he should believe lies, because he received not the knowledge of the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness; and under this strong delusion, comes to be conscientious that there is no God; then it becomes his duty, openly to profess that there is no God, and to endeavour to persuade all that he has access to, that there is none; and he would be out of the line of his duty if he did not do so: and so in all similar cases, according to this dreadful scheme of doctrine. May God, in mercy, preserve his church and people from the snares that are laid for them; whether ignorantly or designedly, God only knows. It is surely designedly in the old serpent: it is hoped that it is ignorantly, in respect

to many men. But when conscience is trumped up to a supremacy above the word of God, by so many, it looks as if there were sad times approaching.

There have been several texts of scripture quoted by many, in order to prove that the magistrate has no authority to punish men for any irreligious tenets, however openly professed or practised, if they be conscientious in their profession and practice, unless they tend to disturb the peace of church or state. But when we look into the passages of scripture, so often produced for the above purpose, we see not but they might have quoted any other passages whatsoever, to prove their point, with equal propriety, since none of them have any appearance of giving any directions to the civil magistrate, as such, either one way or the other. The parable of the tares; the two disciples desiring fire from heaven to consume the Samaritan villagers, who would not entertain Christ, because his face was as if he would go to Jerusalem, and Christ's answer to them; Christ's order to Peter, to put up his sword; for all they, says he, that take the sword, shall perish with the sword; Christ's answer to Pilate, "my kingdom is not of this world;" Paul's saying, that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, &c. the answer of Peter and John to the Jewish sanhedrim, when they commanded them not to teach nor speak at all in the name of Jesus, viz. Whether it be right, in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye: and "Gallio cared for none of these things." Now what need we spend time and paper, to shew that none of these passages of scripture are any thing to the point intended to be proved by them. We may say this to them in general:—Either some or all of these passages give directions to the civil magistrate, with regard to the matter in question, or they do not. If neither some nor all of them do give such directions, to what purpose are they produced, seeing, if this be so, they prove nothing for the producers' cause? But if it be said, that they do, either some of them, or all of them, contain some directions to the magistrate, as such, respecting the duties in question; then let this be shewn, if it can. For our parts, we deny that any of these passages of scripture speak any thing of the duties of the magistrate, as such, and especially respecting the point in question; or that any of them were spoken to any that so much as bore the name of a magistrate, save that one spoken to Pilate, who bore the name of a magistrate: but there is no direction given to Pilate, respecting the matter in debate, in any thing our Lord replied to him. Some have thought, that when Christ said, "my kingdom is not of this world," that this was greatly in their favour for proof on their side, of the point in question. If it be, then it must be for this reason, viz. that under the Old Testament dispensation, Christ's kingdom, in the point of view he speaks of it to Pilate, was of this world; but now, under the New, it is not. We apprehend, that none will venture to affirm that this was the case. And yet unless this was the case, what advantage can be supposed to arise to the opposite cause,—to the cause in favour of which it is produced,—since all the punishments &c.

quired to be inflicted upon idolaters, blasphemers, &c. were perfectly consistent with Christ's kingdom not being of this world.

After the business of the confession had been cavilled awhile, for form's sake, for that was all that was intended by the synod, the vote was taken, and the old doctrines of the old confession, before noticed, were voted to the door, by all the members present, ministers and elders, except the two before-mentioned, who had been endeavouring to defend it, and who now voted against the proposed alterations, and that the old confession should remain as it was. That evening they both entered their declinature of the authority of the synod, as they were determined to abide by their covenanted principles, so well established by the scriptures. There was a part of their new confession, or constitution, then printed; and after some time it was published. In an act, or order of theirs, passed at Greencastle, May 31, 1799, and which is to be seen in the front of their constitution, they say, "the synod having judicially ratified the Westminster *confession of faith*, and *catechisms larger* and *shorter*, with a modification of the doctrine concerning the power of the civil magistrate in matters of religion; and having also ratified the overture for the government and discipline of the church, and the directories for worship, publick and private, &c." And they declare that they consider the said confession of faith, and the other parts before mentioned, as their FIXED TESTIMONY; and it is their resolution to emit occasional testimonies, in particular acts, against errors and delusions. They farther say, "that the terms on which any person or persons shall be admitted as a member or members of this church, are, a profession of faith in the holy scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as the perfect and only rule of faith and practice; together with an approbation of the confession of faith, larger and shorter catechisms, form of church government, and directories for worship, as therein received," &c.— Thus they make their new confession, with their alterations and modifications, a term of communion to every person or persons, member or members, joining in communion with them: and thus, every person who adheres to the doctrines and the scriptures which they have cast off and rejected, are excluded from their church fellowship. They require a belief of the scriptures, as the perfect and only rule of faith and practice; and immediately, in effect, they tell every man, that if he adheres to all the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, he can have no communion with them. What a mockery of profession, and of men, is here! Now people would expect, that they have modified the confession to their mind. But if any one should so believe, we are of the opinion that he would be much mistaken. We are verily of the opinion, that there are at least a considerable number of the ministers, to say nothing of the people, who do not believe their modified confession and catechisms, in all things, as they stand. Let any one recollect what we said, of a leading member of synod proposing to defend the doctrine of Annan's overture, viz. that man is not wholly passive in regeneration, before all the members of synod, 1799, and their silence; and let

him compare this with the 10th chapter of their new confession, and he will soon see how they contradict each other. Nor can it readily be believed, that any of them can be agreed with some things said in the duties required in the second commandment, in the larger catechism, which they have no way altered, when these things are compared with their other principles. They have modified the sins forbidden in that second commandment; cast out the words, "tolerating a false religion;" for it seems, according to them, it is duty to tolerate a false religion; or why strike out these words? Well, let it be that they account it duty to tolerate a false religion, as they have proven by striking out the words where it was reckoned one of the sins forbidden in the second commandment: but they have retained the opposite duties, at the close of the answer to the question, What are the duties required, &c. The duties we refer to are these: And according to each one's place and calling, removing it, i. e. all false worship, and all monuments of idolatry. Now, can any reasonable man persuade himself, that they believe both these doctrines, viz. that it is a duty to tolerate a false religion; and yet that it is the magistrate's duty, according to his station and calling, to remove all false worship, and all monuments of idolatry.—It is really curious to observe them quoting the 6th, 7th, 8th verses of the 13th of Deuteronomy, to prove some of the doctrine of the sins forbidden in the second commandment, and thus fully admitting their binding authority under the New Testament; and at the same time, to favour their famous modification of one sin forbidden in that commandment, rejecting the authority of the 9th and several following verses, though in the strictest connection with the 6th, 7th and 8th verses;—which 9th and following verses were quoted, in the old confession, to prove it a sin to tolerate a false religion; but they have cast them out of theirs. In the 23d chapter of their confession, they have cast out all scriptures quoted in the old one, and put in some which they thought would make a shew to answer their modification. We mention two of them: Jam. iv. 12. Who are thou that judgest another? and to the same purpose, Rom. xiv. 4.—And if their sense of these texts be right, then neither church nor state must judge any man, so as to censure or punish him; for this was directed to the church, not the state.

## CHAP. X.

### *Of the Reformed Presbytery in North America.*

In a preceding chapter of this narrative, we gave a short account of the rise of the Reformed Presbytery in Britain and Ireland; and that several of the people who adhered to that denomination having emigrated to America, from Britain and Ireland, and others born in America who connected themselves with them, supplicated, at different times, the Reformed Presbytery in Britain and Ireland, that they would send over, from their body, some ministers, to take the pastoral charge of them, and break the bread of spiritual life among them. It is believed that the Presbytery paid all the attention to these supplications, that the necessities of the supplicants, and their own circumstances, would admit. The people in America, who professed adherence to the principles of the Reformed Presbytery, kept themselves separate from all other denominations of professed Christians, and met by themselves, in social meetings, for prayer and conference. They seemed to get a temporary relief. The Rev. Mr. Alexander Craighead, a member, as it appears, of the Presbytery of New-Castle, professing an adherence to, and a strong zeal for the purity of reformation principles, as contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith, Catechisms Larger and Shorter, Covenants, National and Solemn League, Directory for Worship, and Form of Presbyterian Church Government, and to the Testimonies of the Persecuted Remnant of the Church of Scotland under Charles 2d, and his brother James, Duke of York; and also professing an high disgust at, and zeal against the conduct of the Presbytery and Synod to which he belonged, on account of the manner in which they received the Confession of Faith, and their other declensions from reformation attainments; did, for such professed reasons as the foregoing, enter his declinature of any farther connection with, and the authority of foresaid Presbytery and Synod, on the 3d Wednesday of September, 1742. Mr. Craighead then connected himself with those people who still had adhered to the principles of the covenanted reformation: next year he and they proceeded to the renovation of the covenants at Middle Octarara, Pennsylvania. It does not appear that Mr. Craighead's scheme was altogether approved by the Reformed Presbytery, or that they ever recognized him as one of their body. However, Mr. Craighead, after some years, renounced his covenanted profession, and returned to the communion of the very body whose authority and principles he had, a while before, declined. The people still professed to adhere to the Reformed Presbytery: and they applied to it for minis-

terial aid. The Presbytery granted their request; and the Rev. John Cuthbertson was sent over to them, some say, in the year 1752, others say, in the year 1751. They could obtain no farther ministerial assistance for the space of twenty years or upwards. Mr. Cuthbertson was all the minister they had till the year 1773, when Messrs. Linn and Dobbin came in from Ireland, and also Mr. Martin, who went to the Carolinas; but perhaps Mr. Martin came over in 1772. The Reformed Presbytery, in the narrative prefixed to their testimony, published in America, say, that "Messrs. Linn and Dobbin were sent to this country by the Reformed Presbytery of Ireland," and that Mr. Cuthbertson received assistance in 1774; intimating that Messrs. Linn and Dobbin did not come to this country till the year 1774; but this, we conceive, is a mistake. These ministers were sent over on purpose, it appears, that, in connexion with Mr. Cuthbertson and ruling elders, they should constitute a presbytery in this country; which they did shortly after they came into this country. The Reformed Presbytery in their forementioned narrative, say, it was in the year 1774. We apprehend it was in the year 1773. This Presbytery assumed the same title and were professedly of the same principles as the Presbyteries from which its members proceeded. The testimony published by the Reformed Presbytery in Scotland in the year 1761, they held as their received testimony: nor had the people who adhered to the Reformed Presbytery, nor even the present Reformed Presbytery in this country, any other till the year 1806, or we should perhaps say 1807.

We have in a former chapter related that these three ministers, who composed the Reformed Presbytery in America, viz. Messrs. Cuthbertson, Linn and Dobbin, formed a union with the Associate Presbyteries of New-York and Pennsylvania; with the former in the year 1780, and with the latter in 1782. It appears that Mr. Martin of Carolina did not join the union. The people belonging to the Reformed Presbytery, who did not join the union, were left destitute of any to preach the word, or administer the sacraments to them, in any part of America, save Mr. Martin in Carolina; and it was not long till he, by his irregular conduct, rendered himself useless, for these purposes; so that in a short time they had none at all.

They turned their attention again to Europe: but were for several years without any attention paid to them. At length, we think, in the year 1789, they were so far considered, as to have a missionary sent, to examine the state of affairs in America; this was the Rev. James Reid. He having, as we suppose, accomplished the design of his mission, returned to Europe in the summer 1790, and, as is most likely, reported favourably of their connexions in the United States: for the next year, 1791, Mr. M'Garragh is ordained by the Reformed Presbytery of Ireland for the church in America, and is sent over to Carolina that same year. Mr. King came over to the United States in the year 1792, with instructions to join Mr. M'Garragh, and to form themselves into a committee of the Reformed Presbytery of Scotland, that they might be in

a capacity judicially to conduct the concerns of the church under their inspection. In 1793, the Rev. James M'Kinney from the Reformed Presbytery of Ireland came over to America. In the year 1797, the Rev. William Gibson emigrated to this country. Messrs. Wylie and Black, two young men, who, with an eye to the ministry, had gone through the ordinary course of collegiate studies at Glasgow, in Scotland, accompanied Mr. Gibson to America.

There were now, it appears, four young men, who were preparing for the work of the ministry, viz. Mr. Alexander M'Leod, Mr. Samuel B. Wylie, Mr. John Black, and Mr. Thomas Donelly; but they had no higher judicature than a committee of presbytery. Mr. M'Kinney suggested the idea of dissolving the committee, and of forming themselves into a presbyterial judicatory. This proposition was agreed to; and accordingly they met at Philadelphia, in the spring of the year 1798, and constituted the Presbytery. This opened the way for licensing the aforementioned young men to preach the gospel; and they were licensed for that end the next year, 1799, in the month of June. The Rev. William King was expected to meet his brethren at the first constituting of the Presbytery at Philadelphia in 1798; but he died some time before.

Messrs. M'Leod, Black, Wylie and Donelly were soon ordained, and settled in congregations: Mr. M'Leod in New-York, Mr. Wylie in Philadelphia, Mr. Black at Pittsburgh and its vicinity, and Mr. Donelly in Carolina.

Mr. Martin was restored to the exercise of the ministry, by the committee of presbytery in Carolina; but soon returned to his accustomed acts of intemperance, and, we suppose, was given up for good and all. Mr. M'Garragh was suspended for some misdemeanors, and we never heard that he was restored. Mr. M'Kinney was appointed to Carolina; he went according to his appointment, and shortly after died, in August 1803. Mr. Donelly is the only minister they have at present in Carolina. They have licensed three others to preach the gospel, viz. Messrs. Williams, Wilson, and M'Master. Mr. Williams is ordained, and is fixed to a pastoral charge, in Pennsylvania, to the west of the river Allegheny. Their ministers, fixed to pastoral charges, are six in number; and they have one or two probationers. These six being placed far distant from each other, they meet only once a year in Presbytery; but they form committees of presbytery of the ministers most contiguous to each other, who do such business as is competent to them, during the adjournment of presbytery.

The Reformed Presbytery in North America, as they bear the same name, so they profess and declare, that they are of the same principles with the Reformed Presbytery in Britain. This we presume is the case for the most part; but we think, not in every part. We have seen the terms of communion, of the Presbytery in Britain, published by themselves, in a particular paper, which contained but these terms of communion, and an explication of them; and we have also seen them in

another publication of theirs: but in neither of these exhibitions of their terms of communion, have they said one syllable of the Directory for the worship of God, although they have made particular mention of every other part of our reformation principles contained in that book, commonly known by the name of the Westminster Confession of Faith; hence it is plain, that the Reformed Presbytery do not make the Directory a term of communion: but the Reformed Presbytery in this country, do profess to take it some way, into their terms of communion. This then is a material difference in their principles. But though they differ so widely in their principles about the Directory, yet it must be granted, that they agree but too well in their practice respecting it, at least some of it: for neither the one nor the other have, to this day, paid any regard, in their practice, to some of its directions. That Directory directs to begin the publick worship of God with prayer; but neither in Britain, nor America, have the Reformed Presbytery complied with the direction. It is said, that the Reformed Presbytery in America have some designs of complying with this direction in the Directory hereafter; at some convenient time we suppose; when they can get the concurrence of the Presbytery in Britain. When they do so, it will be so far well.

The Reformed Presbytery profess, that *they* are the genuine successors of our reformers, in the purest times of reformation; that *they* are supporting the same principles, and maintaining the same testimony which our enlightened and stedfast reformers supported and maintained: and we are informed, that they have, in their publick discourses, declared, that they have not departed, in one tittle, from the reformation principles and testimony. We, for our part, do not hesitate to say, that they have said, in this affair, more than they can prove. We are willing, indeed, to admit, that they, for a time, thought as they spake; but we can scarcely believe, that they are of the same opinion now. There has a circumstance occurred, which, we suppose, must have convinced them, that they hold some principles which our reformers never held. What we allude to is this: we had understood that some members of the Reformed Presbytery, had charged us with departing from the principles and testimony of our purest reformers. This we denied. After some time we thought proper to address a letter to the Reformed Presbytery, respecting the differences which subsisted between us, in which letter, we took occasion to mention, that we had heard that they charged us with departing from the reformation principles; this, we informed them, we denied; and we called upon them to shew, if they could, by any document, that we had so done. They sent us an answer to our letter, in which they shewed plainly that they had observed our demands; but they did not pretend to point out, so much as in one instance, what we had dropped of the reformation testimony. We are persuaded, that they possessed a strong enough inclination to have done so if they could. And we cannot help being of opinion, that this must have operated conviction, that we stood precisely upon the reformation

ground. But the Reformed Presbytery, by concession, hold principles, in several instances, other and different from what we hold: therefore, since they have as good as granted, that our principles are the same as those of our purest reformers; their principles then, howsoever far, and in however many instances, they differ from ours; just so far, and in so many instances, do their principles differ from the principles of our purest reformers.

We know that the principles of the Reformed Presbytery are in unison with those of our reformers, when they maintain, that every possessor of a throne, or who may, by any means, acquire the supreme power over a people, or nation, is not a lawful magistrate. Thus, tho' Oliver Cromwell assumed and exercised supreme power over England, Ireland and Scotland, for many years; and perhaps, upon the whole, managed the interests of the nation to better purpose than many others, who were accounted lawful magistrates; yet our covenanted reformers would never acknowledge *him* as a lawful magistrate. But though in this the Reformed Presbytery and the reformers agree; yet we are firmly of opinion, their principles differ widely, with regard to the question, what may a people do, or not do, under such a government? May people who account the government immoral, serve in any office under such government, where they are required to promise or swear nothing, in itself unlawful, as a condition of holding such office? May they serve as jurors? If I must be a servant, may I choose my master, if I have the liberty of choice? To all these the Reformed Presbytery would answer in the negative. But do they content themselves by saying, "we think that people under an immoral government should do none of these things?" If they did, this would be comparatively, but a light matter. But they stretch their opinion to the utmost length, and exclude from the communion of the church, all such as cannot see the propriety of their opinion, and their conduct, in this matter. But, were our reformers of the same opinion with them? Did they maintain any such principles? Did they, under Oliver Cromwell's usurpation, exclude all, or any of the people, from the communion of the church, who would serve, or did actually serve in any office, under the forementioned limitations? Did they exclude such as served as jurors; or such as made choice of any of those who, by the strong hand, would rule over them? If it should be alledged, that such were their principles and their conduct; then we may ask, where is it recorded? With regard to serving in offices, as before limited, we admit that there were some who scrupled at the propriety of it: but it must be also admitted, that there were others who did not; for some of the principal men of the Scottish nation did actually serve under Oliver Cromwell; and some of those, too, who most strenuously adhered to the principles of the Church of Scotland; some of the protestors: such were the noble Marquis of Argyle, and Lord Warristoun, two noble and principal covenanters; both protestors; yet both served under Oliver Cromwell. But did the protesting ministers, to which party these two noblemen

allered, ever think of bringing them under censure for their so serving? No. Did the Marquis himself conceive, that his so serving was any crime? No: in his defence before the parliament, he expressly says, that "no law can make this a crime, far less treason." And a little downward he says, "as for his sitting in the parliament of England, after so long an usurpation, no precedent can be shewn, in any age in this country, whereby this was made a crime, far less treason." Crookshank's History, vol. I. p. 86. But it may be thought and said by some, that this question was not so much agitated then, nor so thoroughly sifted and examined as it came to be afterwards, by the persecuted party, who rejected the government of Charles II. and his brother, James VII. Well, when they had sifted and tossed this problem, to the close of that persecuting period, what is the result? Do they condemn the conduct of their predecessors, under Oliver's usurpation? No: so far from that, that they grant that it was right, and that any people in like circumstances, i. e. under an immoral government, may lawfully do the same. It must be granted by every unprejudiced man, that Mr. Shields, author of the Hind let loose, understood the principles of that poor, oppressed, persecuted party, better than any can pretend to at this distance of time; he himself being one of them, a preacher among them, and a man of learning and great parts; and, towards the close of Mr. Renwick's days being a dear and intimate friend and companion of his, at which time he wrote his Hind let loose, he had every opportunity to know what they granted, and what they condemned in this matter. And we think we have good ground to be persuaded, that the vindicator of that persecuted remnant, did not give a false representation of their principles. Now, what says Mr. Shields to this question? He says, head 2d, contession 7th, pag. (nobis) 205, 206,—"2. In divers cases there may be some compliances with a mere occupant, that hath no right to reign; as upon this account the noble Marquis of Argyle and Lord Warristoun suffered for their compliance with the usurper Cromwell. Such may be the warrantableness, or goodness, or necessity, or profitableness of a compliance, when people are by Providence brought under a yoke which they cannot shake off, that they may part with some of their privileges, for the avoidance of the loss of the rest, and for the conveniency and profit, peace and safety, of themselves and their country, which would be in hazard if they did not comply. They may do whatsoever is due from them to the publick weal; whatsoever is an *office* of their station or place, or which they have any other way a call unto; whatsoever may make for their own honest interest, without wronging others, or the country's liberties, in their transactions with these powers, even though such compliance may be occasionally to the advantage of the usurpers; seeing good and necessary actions are not to be declined for the ill effects that are accidental to them, and arise from the use which others make of them." But as the principles and practice of the Reformed Presbytery are contrary to those of our most zealous reformers, in this matter, so are they to those of the church both under the Old and New Testaments.

They themselves maintain, that the Chaldean and Persian government under the Old Testament dispensation, and the Roman government at the commencement of the New Testament dispensation, and for many years after, were all immoral governments. Now it is as clear as it can be, that several of the saints of God served in very high offices under the Chaldean and Persian governments; and that some who were converted to the faith of Christ, still held their offices; some of them very high, as Sergius Paulus, &c. It appears that neither the Old nor New Testament church had prohibited them from doing so, by excluding those from the communion of the church, who did serve in any office. And it also appears, that our reformers took the conduct of the saints, in this matter, for an example. Thus, Mr. Shields, in his Hind let loose, in the forementioned head, anent concession, page 206, says,—"We find, indeed, the saints enjoyed places under those who were not their magistrates; as Nehemiah, and Mordecai, and Esther was queen to Ahasuerus. But here was no compliance, &c. Only some of them" (he does not say all of them) "were extraordinary persons, raised up in extraordinary times, for extraordinary ends, as Esther's marriage; and all of them in their places kept the law of their God, served the work of their generation, defiled not themselves with their customs, acted against no good, and engaged to no evil, but by their compliance promoted the welfare of their country, as Argyle and Warristoun did under Cromwell."

Our reformers did not exclude from their church fellowship, such as served as jurors in the time of Oliver's usurpation. If the Reformed Presbytery maintain that they did, let them shew it to be so, by any document, if they can: for we deny it. They may perhaps say, that they should have done so. But we may say, with all becoming deference to the judgment of the Reformed Presbytery, that our zealous and enlightened reformers knew what was their duty, in such matters, as well as they could tell them. Our reformers were something more cautious, about terms of communion, than some others.

The Reformed Presbytery tell us, in their Narrative prefixed to their Testimony, that they have passed an act, prohibiting their people from serving on juries on pain of censure, as we understand it; that is, they have made it a term of communion. And they also inform us, that they have determined to publish a warning against this practice, which some, who in other things profess an attachment to reformation principles, have considered as consistent with their Testimony. By the "some persons" here, is intended the Reformed Dissenting Presbytery. They say, that these "some persons, in other things profess an attachment to reformation principles." By this they suggest, that one of our reformation principles was, that no man could lawfully serve as a juryman under an immoral government. Now when they write their warning, we hope they will be so good as to shew us where this reformation principle is declared. And they will be so kind as to inform us, if the church, in any period of it, from the beginning of the

world, made serving on juries a term of communion, till they, or their body, did so: for if this be a reformation principle, or if ever it was made a term of communion before they did so, these things have never come under our observation. Besides, we are beginning to be somewhat suspicious, that they are about to set up their principles, as the standard by which the reformation principles are to be measured, instead of admitting the reformation principles to be the standard by which theirs are to be tried. They pretend to find a great many absurdities or inconsistencies, with "some persons" admitting their people to serve on juries. Inconsistent with what? With our reformation principles? Before they shew the inconsistency, let them shew, first, that our reformers held such a principle.

Before they publish their warning, we would advise them to pass another act, prohibiting their people from serving as arbitrators at justices courts; lest some meddling people should be so bold as to recriminate, pointing out all the inconsistencies in the latter, that can be found in the former, either in principle or practice.

The Reformed Presbytery hold it to be very inconsistent and absurd, for such as hold a government to be immoral, that they should choose, or admit their people to choose its officers. Now they themselves maintain, that their case and situation under this, or any other immoral government where they dwell, or live, is the same with that of the Jews, in Ezra's and Nehemiah's time, who said they were servants. Now this supposes that they have a master, or masters; and these masters must be either immutably the same, or they may have a change of masters. In this country they are allowed a change of masters. They also admit, that it is lawful and right for a servant, if he is allowed a choice, to choose his master. They maintain, that it is a great sin for any man to hold his fellow-creatures as slaves or servants: and they also maintain, that it is no sin for a servant or slave to choose his master. The master is guilty, but the slave is innocent, in this matter.—They consider themselves as servants, under the government of the United States. This supposes they must have masters. These masters are not permanent. They are allowed a change of masters; and they are allowed, at least some of them, to choose their masters. Yet, after all, they charge with sin, every one of their people, and every one in like circumstances, who chooses his master, in the present government. Are these things consistent? Are they true?

The Reformed Presbytery published their Testimony, in America, in the year 1807, containing thirty-two chapters. The doctrines exhibited in this Testimony are, in our opinion, for the most part sound. But there are some things in two or three of its chapters, which we shall at present notice, as, in our opinion, exceptionable and unsound, and not the doctrine of our reformers in the church of Scotland.

The 13th chapter of their Testimony treats of faith. Although they knew very well, that there were some denominations of professd Christians who maintained, that some degree of assurance belongs to the very

nature and essence of justifying faith, and some other denominations deny that there is; yet the Reformed Presbytery have carefully avoided to tell plainly and candidly, and left us to gather by inference only, what their sentiments, in this matter, are. We think we can gather by inference, connected with other consideerations, that they deny that there is any assurance in the nature of faith; and that they maintain, that the assurance which arises from the sensible experience of the grace of God in the heart, is the only assurance which the believer can obtain. It appears plain, that with them there is no other: they acknowledge no other. Some of their ministers, and some of their people, know that it was denied that there was any assurance in the nature of justifying faith. They know that some of their ministers, whom we had access to converse with, denied it, and argued strenuously against it for a time. They know too, that some of them, at least, professed afterwards, that they were convinced that they were wrong, and consequently, professed they believed that there is an assurance in the nature of faith. But yet in their Testimony they neither pointedly nor candidly say, that there is, or there is not: only they have left us to infer, that they believe there is no assurance in the nature of faith. The chapter of our Confession which they professed to treat of in this 13th chapter of their Testimony, is entitled, as this in the Testimony is, "Of Faith;" but the doctrine actually treated of in this chapter of their Testimony, is the doctrine of a quite different chapter of the Confession, whose title is, "Of the Assurance of Grace and Salvation." They admit, indeed, that appropriation belongs to the nature of faith. But when it is considered that they have admitted appropriation, and even certainty, to belong to the nature of faith, as it is well known they did; but still denied that assurance did; then we suppose that it must be also admitted, that they have other ideas under the terms appropriation and certainty, than, at least, those who hold assurance to be of the very nature and essence of faith. Therefore, this is nothing in their favour. However, any one who will read the Old Scots Confession, Craig's Catechism, ordered by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to be taught the people in general, and the Summula Catechismi, which was ordered to be taught in schools, and other documents, will easily perceive, that their doctrine, on this head, is contrary to that of our reformers.

The 14th chapter of their testimony treats of justification. In the 3d article under that head they speak as if they believed, that in justification the believer's sins are all pardoned, and that he is received to the full favour of God: but in the 5th article under the same head, they speak as if by having their sins all pardoned, and their being received into full favour, they meant no more than a title to these and other blessings: their words are these: 5. "The Redeemer has purchased a perfect right to the justification of every individual for whom he became surety; possessing this right, he unites the sinner to himself through faith, in order to have him justified; the elect sinner embracing the Saviour by faith, has then, and not till then, in his own possession a full and perfect *title* to the pardon of all his sins, to *be* received into the favour of God,

to be delivered from the law as a covenant, and to be sanctified and glorified." We had thought, that it was not barely a title to the pardon of all our sins, the favour of God, and deliverance from the law as a covenant, that the believer received in the very act of justification, as if these blessings were in whole or in part to be afterwards obtained, as sanctification and glorification are, but these blessings completely; i. e. at the very instant that any one is justified, at the same instant are his sins wholly pardoned, his person wholly accepted, and he is wholly delivered from the law as a covenant; so that they are not, no one of them is, to be gradually effected afterwards as sanctification is, nor wholly as glorification is. That the Reformed Presbytery maintains that these blessings are not obtained, and that the justified person is not put in entire possession of them in the very act, and at the very instant of justification, appears, first, from the language they use, viz. "to be received into favour," &c. "to be delivered," &c. and secondly from their classing them, in this matter, with sanctification and glorification. In our opinion, their doctrine on this head is neither sound, nor agreeable to our standards.

## CHAP. XI.

### *Of the Reformed Dissenting Presbytery.*

We have given, in this narrative, the last place to the Reformed Dissenting Presbytery; not because the doctrines it maintains are of a later origin, than those of other denominations of Presbyterians; for taking them all together, they are of a much more ancient origin than those of any other Presbyterian denomination whatsoever, being the doctrines of the Bible, and of our ancient reformers in the church of Scotland, in her purest times of reformation, without relinquishing or opposing any of them; upon which account, the narrative of this Presbytery might have claimed the precedency of any of the others, whether Assembly, Synod or Presbytery, which we have previously noticed: but because this Presbytery, in its present form and designation, is of a later origin than any of the others mentioned in this narrative.

The Reformed Dissenting Presbytery cannot boast of a great number of ministers who have espoused their cause, and have lent their aid in supporting it. It labours under great disadvantages, in that respect indeed: it can count but two ministers. This would be the more discouraging, without doubt, did we not recollect, that sometimes the church of Scotland has been reduced to one faithful minister, and sometimes to none; and that the Lord, at his own times, still raised up others, to bear up the reformation standard, and witness for his despised truths and cause. If the criterion of truth was, the greatest num-

ber of votes. the Presbytery would be compelled to acknowledge that it had but little claim to it. The Presbytery may very well spare its pains in telling the critical world, that it cannot boast of men of great abilities espousing its cause. The critical reviewers of this narrative, and of the connected testimony, will perhaps do that office gratis. If the Lord employed none, as instruments, in support of his cause, in bearing up his standard and in bearing faithful testimony for his truths, but men of great and extraordinary abilities, then might the Presbytery sit down hopeless and disconsolate: but when, on the contrary, our Lord informs us, that the wise, the noble and the mighty are not always chosen; but often the foolish, the weak, and the despised things of the world; this gives it some ground of encouragement to proceed, and some gleam of hope that it may succeed, by the direction and blessing of the great master of assemblies, though, at present, it can see but little hope, of "help of man at all." But surely, "God will not quit and forsake his own inheritance." We have good ground to hope, that "the needy shall not always be forgotten."

Some may be curious to know what gave rise to this new denomination; what principles it maintains; and why it stands disconnected with every other denomination, and especially Presbyterians; why it can join with none of them. To every candid inquirer, to every man desirous to know the truth, to every one who has need to be established in the present truth, to every one who has need to be convinced of his backsliding courses, or is in danger of being seduced into such courses, the Presbytery conceives itself bound to give all the satisfaction relative to these matters, that can consist with the prescribed limits of this narrative. That the reader may more clearly comprehend what gave rise to the Reformed Dissenting Presbytery, and why it stands disconnected from every other denomination, and especially Presbyterian, we conceive it necessary, to give in the first place, a general detail of the principles, which the Presbytery maintain and adhere to, referring him to the testimony connected with this narrative, for a more particular detail of these principles.

The Reformed Dissenting Presbytery profess a firm adherence to, and belief of the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as being the holy word of God, given by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and as being not only a perfect, complete, infallible and sufficient rule, but the only rule of all religious faith and practice; to the exclusion of the light of nature, human reason and conscience, whether enlightened or unenlightened, or any other thing that can be named, as being, any, or all of them put together, any proper rule at all in matters of religion.

It also professes a firm belief of, and adherence to, the principles and doctrines of the covenanted reformation attained to and professed by the church of Scotland, especially between the years 1638 and 1650. More particularly, the Presbytery professes its belief of, and adherence to, the Confession of Faith "agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines sitting at Westminster, with the assistance of commissioners from the church of Scotland," as the said Confession was agreed unto, and ap-

proven by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, at Edinburg, Aug. 27, 1647, ses. 23, and ratified by the Parliament of Scotland, Charl. I. Parl. 2, sess. 2, act 16, at Edinburgh, February 7, 1649. The Larger and Shorter Catechisms, both agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines sitting at Westminster, with the assistance of Commissioners from the Kirk of Scotland, and both received and approven by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, at Edinburgh, the Larger, July 2, and the Shorter, July 28, 1648, and both approven and ratified by the Scottish Parliament, at Edinburgh, on the 7th of February 1649, Charl. I. Parl. 2, sess. 2, act 16. The Directories for the public worship, and secret, and private or family worship of God, agreed to and approven by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland; the Directory for public worship as approven by foresaid Assembly, at Edinburgh, February 3, 1645, sess. 10; and the Directory for secret and family worship as approven by foresaid Assembly, at Edinburgh, August 24, 1647. The Directory for public worship, was ratified by act of Parliament, Charl. I. Parl. 3, ses. 5, Feb. 6, 1645. We except such parts of the Directory, as have a reference to any peculiar circumstances of the Church in Britain and Ireland. The Form of Presbyterial Church Government, and of Ordination of Ministers, agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, with the assistance of Commissioners from the Church of Scotland, as the same were agreed to and approven by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, by an act of theirs, passed at Edinburgh, on the 10th of February 1645, sess. 16. All these were parts of the covenanted principles and doctrines, and of the covenanted uniformity in religion, between the Churches of Christ in the kingdoms of England, Ireland, and Scotland. Thus our forefathers, by the National Covenant, and especially by the Solemn League and Covenant, engaged themselves and their posterity to receive and abide by the truths of God's word, and to walk agreeable thereto. It is true, indeed, we are bound, originally and principally, to receive and abide by the true religion of Jesus Christ, by the authority of God requiring and commanding us to do so: but we are also bound by the superadded tie of our forefathers' solemn covenant engagements. We do not believe, indeed, that by the National nnd Solemn League and Covenant, we are bound to any thing immoral, nor to any thing in itself impossible to innocent man, or which God has made no provision, nor given any promise for enabling them who put their trust in him, as reconciled in Christ Jesus, to perform; or which is no way our duty in our present circumstances, though in other circumstances it might be our duty: thus, for instance, we believe that we who live in America, are not bound, by the forementioned Covenants, to do any of those things which are peculiar to the circumstances of the people inhabiting the British isles, either when the Covenants were first entered into, or since. But our predecessors, who first entered into these Covenants, were, and their posterity either were, now are, or hereafter will be, as they have formerly, now have, or shall hereafter come into existence, bound to every moral duty contemplated by these Covenants, not only by the authority of God com-

manding them, but by the superadded tie of the Covenants themselves. The Presbytery also professes an adherence to all the faithful testimonies of the Reformed Church of Scotland for the truths of God's word, and against the errors broached, or abounding in their times, from the beginning of the reformation there, to the year 1688; and particularly to the testimonies of our faithful martyrs under the two tyrannical and usurping brothers, Charles 2d, and James, Duke of York. From this short, but comprehensive detail of the Presbytery's principles, and a comparative view of them with the principles and conduct of every other denomination of Presbyterians, as represented in the preceding part of this narrative, it will not be difficult to perceive the obvious reply to another point, of which, we suppose, many may be desirous to be informed, viz. why this Presbytery stands disconnected from, and cannot join with any other denomination of Presbyterians. The Presbytery considers itself, and every other denomination of Presbyterians, in this country, who have, either themselves, or their forefathers, emigrated to America, from Britain or Ireland, as bound to adhere to the covenanted doctrines and principles, in every part of them; except such circumstantial matters as are peculiar to Britain and Ireland: but some of these denominations pay no regard to these obligations at all, and others of them who profess some regard, and some of them a very high regard to them, yet make no great matter of departing from these covenant obligations and doctrines; and not only so, but make their opposite and contradictory notions, to their covenant engagements, terms of communion, both ministerial and christian.

We shall now relate what gave the ground for erecting this Presbytery.

The Reformed Dissenting Presbytery consists only of two ministers, with ruling elders; the ministers are Messrs. Robert Warwick, and Alexander M'Coy. Mr. Warwick was ordained to the holy ministry by the Burgher Associate Presbytery of Derry, in Ireland. He emigrated into America in the year 1792. Soon after his arrival into the United States, as is usual for Burgher Seceders, he joined the Associate Reformed Synod. Nor was it long till he was settled in the united congregations of Laurel-Hill, Dunlap's-Creek, and George's-Creek, Fayette county, Pennsylvania.

After Alexander M'Coy had gone through the course of classical learning usually read, in that part of Ireland where he was bred, previous to going to college, his father resolved on emigrating to America with his whole family. He arrived, accordingly, with his whole family, at Newcastle, Pennsylvania, about the beginning of October, 1774; and lived but about eight days after. Alexander was then, in some measure, compelled to give over his studies for a time; and at length gave up thoughts of prosecuting them any farther. Before the union between the Reformed and Associate Presbyteries, he was in christian communion with the Reformed Presbytery. When the union took place, he had his fears, that all things were not right: he had considerable difficulties to know what to do in his present situation; our minis-

ers, all that was in America, as he conceived, had joined the union; he had none to preach the gospel to him, that he considered it his duty to hear, unless this united body; and he had his own scruples, whether it was his duty to hear them or not; and still more about joining in full communion with them. When their constitution was published, he found that they had left those chapters of the Confession of Faith, which treated of the magistrate's power relative to religious matters, to an after consideration; this was an occasion of increasing his apprehensions, that matters were not likely to be favourable to Reformation principles in that body. These apprehensions were heightened by the consideration, that from some things he had seen, of the writings of the Seceders, he had concluded, that they were all of toleration principles; and consequently hostile to the doctrine of the Confession of Faith on this subject, as contained and represented in the chapters reserved for after consideration; and he was not mistaken with regard to those of them who were in America; but he since found that he was under a mistake relative to some of them, in Britain and Ireland: for he has been credibly informed, that there has a division taken place, both in the Burgher and Anti-burgher Synods, on this very head: some few in both Synods adhering tenaciously to the doctrine of our excellent Confession; while the rest of them had fled into the Sectarian camp, in this matter. However, after weighing the matter for a considerable time, as well as his own weakness would admit, and through the reasonings of some others, and his own concern about being out of the privileges of the church, he came to the following conclusion: that, as these chapters of the Confession were left for after consideration, they were yet unimpaired; and therefore, whatever alterations might hereafter take place, they were yet unaltered, and as far as he had seen, no sinful terms of communion made. Therefore he resolved to join them, and continue with them as long as they made no sinful terms of communion that might affect himself: and upon this principle he acted while he remained with that body of professed Christians. He is not now disposed to vindicate the principle upon which he then acted. He has since seen, by means of Mr. Wilson's Defence, &c. that the principle upon which he acted was wrong. Mr. Wilson's book he had never the opportunity of seeing, till some considerable time after the separation, betwixt the Associate Reformed Synod and him, took place. He did not then see, that upon the principle upon which he then acted, the most orthodox professors might join in Christian, and even in ministerial communion, with the most heterodox and heretical denomination of professed Christians, provided they did not make their heretical opinions, terms of communion: and also, whereunto the church had attained, though she walks not according to this rule, nor minds the same things; though she departs from the orthodox testimony which she once attained unto and held; or in other words, the words of the scriptures, though she *causes divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which* she had once *learned*, no one should *mark* her conduct, nor *avoid* her, unless she made her backslidings, terms of communion. The principle, he confesses, was too loose and indeterminate.

The Associate Reformed Synod, as he understood, had, at their very first commencement, professed their design to proceed to the work of solemn, publick covenanting, and to the duty of testimony-bearing, for truth, and against the many abounding errors, in America. Hence the people expected that they would proceed to both, with all convenient speed; and when the synod seemed, to them, somewhat tardy in these things, they solicited it, by petition, to proceed to these duties. The testimony which the people desired, and expected, was a judicial, stated one. But perhaps the synod had not defined what form of a testimony they designed; and left the people, therefore, to guess. The people were guessing the synod would emit a stated testimony; but they happened, poor people, to guess wrong: for as it is likely the synod never intended, so it could never be prevailed upon, to publish a judicial stated testimony against the errors and heresies which were prevailing in the time and place wherein they lived. Hence in the year 1787, there was an Overture published, by order of synod, entitled, "A draught of an Overture, for the purpose of illustrating and defending the doctrines of the Westminster Confession of Faith." This is sometimes called the Large Overture, sometimes Annan's Overture. It is in this Overture that the synod, for the first time, as far as he knows, gave their people to know, what for a testimony they might expect from them. He, and many others, were alarmed and vexed, when they came to peruse this Overture; and when they considered that it came from a body of men, who were, all of them, professed Presbyterian Covenanters, all of them professed Calvinists, all of them professed, strenuous adherents and supporters of judicial, stated testimony-bearing against the errors abounding in the time and place where they lived. In the strictures on confessions of faith, at the beginning of that Overture, after saying, page 13, that "the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms are the public standards of orthodoxy in the Reformed Church of Scotland;" they add, "the Associate Reformed Synod have declared, and now do declare, that said Confession and Catechisms are their public standards. That is, they adhere to the sacred scriptures as their sense is given and explained in said Confession and Catechisms." Here they profess an unlimited adherence to the Westminster Confession and Catechisms; not a word here of any thing that displeased them; not a word of *alterations* or *modifications* of any one doctrine in the Confession or Catechisms. Now who can read these words without astonishment? especially when one reads this Overture, and compares it with the after conduct of that synod, relative to the very Confession and Catechisms which they profess such an unlimited adherence unto. Let any man read the Overture itself; let him read particularly the 10th, 20th, and 23d chapters of that Overture, and compare them with the 10th, 20th, and 23d chapters of the Confession of Faith, of which they are pretended to be an illustration and a defence; and let him say what portion of credit is due to such professions and professors. We have here, first, a profession of unreserved adherence to the Westminster

Confession and Catechisms; then comes the illustration, which, in the chapters just now mentioned, openly and designedly contradicts the doctrine pretended to be illustrated; and yet there is not the least intimation of that design; all is calculated to deceive, calculated to induce people to believe that they were adhering to the whole doctrines of the Confession without reserve, while they were meditating an hostile attack upon some of these doctrines, which they professed to believe and adhere to; which attack they actually commenced in this famous illustrating Overture; and, with regard to some of them, never ceased till they had them exterminated out of their creed; which they did by after acts and deeds. But we have taken notice of this Overture, in a preceding chapter of this narrative. Only, here we may observe, that they slily bring to view, what kind of testimony only they meant to exhibit, instead of the stated judicial testimony which was desired and expected by the people. In the 13th page of their Overture, they say, "the Bible is their testimony. The Confession of Faith ascertains the true light in which they view that testimony." Perhaps they meant some Confession of Faith which they had an idea of, in their heads, but which none ever yet had seen or heard of: certainly they could not, with sincerity, mean the Westminster Confession. They say, "they are afraid of publishing too many papers called testimonies." So it would appear, for they were afraid to publish one; and so it would not appear, for they have published several papers called testimonies. Ah! But what affrighted them was that one big, bulky paper, called a stated judicial testimony. But what frighted them at such papers? why we are gravely told, for one reason, "because these may tend to turn away our attention from the holy scriptures, and fix it on human compositions." That is, we suppose, these great, big, bulky, judicial, stated testimonies, which are agreeable to the scriptures, and give the true sense of the scriptures, will turn, or tend to turn away the attention from the scriptures; a very likely story, truly. But perhaps it is the weight of them lying on the attention, that tends to give such papers this dangerous bias; for they are not like these little, light, occasional acts of synod, which when they begin to be troublesome, by such a bad tendency, the attention can hurl them to the far side of the house, at one fling. But what about their own big, supra-bulky paper, which they call their confession, their constitution, and their testimony? What if it falls on the attention with all its enormous weight? will not the attention, if their own doctrine be true, be irrecoverably fixed to human compositions? Ah! But that is but one paper, and the danger does not arise from one, however big, but from too many papers called testimonies. And how many is reckoned too many? Is two, too many? is three? is four? Then the synod has fallen into the dangerous predicament, which they pretended they feared so much; for who has more in number, than themselves? Another reason they give against a church having too many papers called testimonies, (but any one may easily see, that it is against the church having one paper, called a judicial testimony against all abounding errors, that these reasons are advanced) is, that "they are convinced that in this

manner all the trumpery of the church of Rome was gradually introduced." That is, by too many papers called testimonies. The people were asking for but one paper called a testimony, and here we are told, that too many are dangerous. Is one too many? yes, one of such kind as the people desired, was quite too many for the synod. Did ever the people desire or require more than one judicial testimony, of the synod? Was ever the trumpery of the the church of Rome introduced by one paper called a testimony? But more; could ever the trumpery of the church of Rome be introduced by ten thousand papers, which were called, and were really, testimonies for truth and against error? Was it any other sort of a paper, than a testimony for truth and against all error, which the people desired? And now to evade a compliance with the people's just and reasonable desire, they are told, that the synod is convinced that in this manner, namely, by papers called testimonies, all the trumpery of the church of Rome was introduced: whereas it is impossible, that any man ever could be convinced, that any such event could take place, from testimonies for truth and against error; it was rather for want of faithful testimonies for truth and against error, that all the trumpery of the church of Rome was introduced. Now, however, the synod gives the people to understand, that all the stated testimony they are to expect from them, is the Confession of Faith, with a hint about occasional testimonies.

Alexander M'Coy, then only a private member of the church, some time after the publication of the Overture, being in York county, and understanding that Mr. Dobbin had some of them for sale, he went there to purchase one of them. He took the liberty of informing Mr. Dobbin, that he had heard that there were some unsound doctrines in that Overture. Mr. Dobbin did not deny the charge; but he said, as near as he can remember the words, that the broad-axe would have to come over it. However, neither broad nor narrow axe ever came over it. In the mean time, what Mr. Dobbin said seemed to satisfy him a little. The next account he heard of the Overture was, that the synod had not passed it into an act; but had recommended it to the people as a good book. With the former he was pleased; but with their recommending it to the people, as a good book, without ever saying a word to guard them against the errors it contained, he was displeased.

In the year 1790, the synod passed an act for amending their constitution. He having occasion to attend Mr. Henderson's sacrament, in the Forks of Yough; while there, he heard that Matthew Jamison had some of them for sale. He went, on Monday morning, before sermon begun, and bought one. Having a short time yet before sermon, he opened the act, and began to read a little in it. He soon found that they had been considering the reserved chapters of the Confession. He soon perceived, that the doctrine of the Overture for illustrating, &c. the doctrines of the Confession of Faith, which we noticed above, respecting the magistrate's power in matters of religion, which doctrine of that Overture, he considered as opposite and contradictory to the doctrine of the Westminster Confession on that head, was now the very doctrine

embraced by the synod. He was very much displeased and vexed, and so much offended at the synod and their act, that he resolved that he would not have such an act in his possession, and that the first that wanted should have it. Accordingly he put it in his pocket till he went home, and soon finding some one, he cannot recollect who, now, that was desirous of one of them, he gave it immediately to him; and so thought he had done with it.

At Moon-run, now in the bounds of Mr. Riddle's congregation, there was, some time perhaps before the year 1790, a little society established for prayer and conference. Of this society Alexander M'Coy was a member. Several of his brethren, members of the society, strongly solicited him to resume his studies, with an eye to the ministry; and generously offered him such aid as his circumstances might require, and competent for them to give. As he had no thoughts of prosecuting his studies, before the solicitations of the society, so their solicitations were for some time resisted, from the consideration of his own situation, and their present circumstances. However, at length he was prevailed upon; and in the year 1792 he went to Dickinson College, Carlisle. After he left College, he proceeded to the study of divinity under Mr. Jamison, then a member of the second Associate Reformed Presbytery of Pennsylvania. In the years 1794 and 1795, he had the ordinary pieces of trial for license assigned to him. After giving in the last piece of trial for the aforesaid purpose, the presbytery, composed, on that occasion, of the Rev. Messrs. Henderson, Riddle and Warwick, met at Mr. Warwick's house, near Redstone creek, for the purpose of proceeding to license him. But now a serious obstacle is presented to him. The presbytery now, to his surprise, inform him, that the synod's act of the year 1790, which we have before noticed, was made a term of communion. He had been so much offended with the act, and gave it so hastily away, and for any thing he can remember, never noticed that, by the very act itself, it was made a term of communion, nor had so much as seen it from the day he gave it away till that day, he had really not the least apprehension that this act was, by the very act itself, made a term of communion. He therefore apprehended, that the synod had passed some other act, by which they had made the act of 1790 a term of ministerial communion: and as nothing passed in the presbytery, nor afterwards, to undeceive him, he still remained under the same impressions, till, after the separation of the synod and him, Mr. Riddle came down to read a letter sent by the synod to his congregation on that occasion; when, having the act with him, Mr. Riddle shewed it to him in the act itself. When, however, the presbytery informed him that it was a term of communion, he told them plainly that it should not be so to him; and told them his objections against it were, that the doctrine of that act relative to the power of the civil magistrate about matters of religion, was contrary to the doctrine of our Confession of Faith, and anti-scriptural, or to that effect. Upon this, an altercation took place between the presbytery and him upon that subject; and he soon perceived, that that they were willing to enforce a term of communion on

him, which they themselves had never given themselves the trouble to consider, whether it was right or wrong. Although their reasons for toleration were exceeding weak, flimsy, and impertinent; yet they seemed for some time determined to make the act a term of communion to him; and he, on the other hand, was absolutely determined they never should. They required him to make up his mind in a given time; and he informed them plainly, that he would receive that act no way unless he should be allowed to put what sense he pleased upon it. After consulting among themselves, whether this could be admitted, they concluded that he should be allowed to receive it as he required; and he was accordingly licensed to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, in April 1795, by the second Associate Reformed Presbytery of Pennsylvania; members present, the Rev. Messrs. Matthew Henderson, John Riddle, and Robert Warwick.

The synod was perhaps at this very time, secretly, at least to Mr. M'Coy, plotting to alter and modify the Westminster Confession and Catechisms to their own taste; for next year, viz. 1796, their Overture for the Government, Worship, and Discipline of the Associate Reformed Church, was published. They designed to cast off the old Directory, and to put one of their own framing in its place, and to bind it up with their new Confession. Thus they were preparing matters for what they afterwards effected. We think that it was in the year 1797, that they passed their act, in which they declare their determination, never to publish a stated judicial testimony. We are not certain about the date. In the year 1798, the Associate Reformed Synod sat, we think at New-York, in May. They then passed an act for reprinting the Confession of Faith and Catechisms, with such alterations and modifications as agreed with their fancy. Every part of that book called the Westminster Confession of Faith, was to be left out of their new Confession, and something of their own put in their place, except the 33 chapters of what is, strictly speaking, the Confession of Faith, and the Catechisms Larger and Shorter, which they altered and modified as their fancy dictated, and the Covenants, National and Solemn League, which they cast away root and branch. And to complete the dreadful scene, and to involve as many others as they can, in the same course of defection, and breach of vows, baptismal, sacramental, or ordination vows, with themselves, they determine that none shall have communion with them, but such as will, regardless of all their former solemn engagements, renounce them, by assenting and consenting to all their alterations and modifications, and exterminations. And that none may plead ignorance, they front their new Confession with an act to that purpose.

We mentioned before, that Mr. M'Coy had resolved that he would continue with the synod, if they made no sinful terms of communion that would affect himself. Now that period had arrived. He could not refuse but it was so. He could not plead ignorance, as he could before about the act in the year 1790. He could not, with a good conscience, relinquish the truth, abandon his principles, and break his so-

lemn vows, for sake of a deceitful peace. He could not now, when the synod had made their backslidings, terms of communion, remain any longer connected with it, without playing the hypocrite, without pretending he was of their principles, when he was conscious he was not. He could not, consistent with faithfulness, suffer his mouth to be stopped from preaching any of the truths of the Bible; which it would effectually have been, if he had agreed to this unhappy term of backsliding communion; for he could not open his mouth in opposition to this act, and in favour of those parts of the Bible which are condemned by it, but at the risque of bringing himself under church censure. As there was no way left for him to avoid all these, and other evils, but to decline their communion and authority; this he did, near the latter end of May 1799; the declinature bearing, "for reasons satisfactory to his own mind."

Some have thought and said, that he did not act regularly: he was too rapid and hasty: he should have petitioned, remonstrated and protested, before he declined: this is the way others have done. Ans. The cases of these others must be brought parallel to his, before the objection can bear on his case. It ought to be shewn, that after the church had passed an act which she herself declared should be a term of communion, that then those who rejected that act as a sinful term of communion, enacted too by the supreme judicatory, continued in communion with the church, and petitioned, remonstrated, or protested, barely. Perhaps those who make this objection, if they did not make it out of ignorance, were angry that he did not proceed agreeable to the objection, that he might be entrapped some way, and brought under the censures of the church: and perhaps, too, he knew as well how to evade the snare as they could tell him. It must be allowed that this synod has acted something out of their usual manner, at least since that time, since they did not conjure up some pretended fault against him, and then pretend to censure him, in order to destroy his usefulness. It appears, however, that they are determined that they will suffer none to leave them hereafter, but they will pretend some evil they have done, call them to their bar, and pass censures against them; nay, sometimes when it answers an end, censure them without ever calling them at all, or so much as acquainting them that they have any charge against them, and then pretending to call and summon them for trial. The latter was their conduct towards Mr. Warwick. And when we consider their conduct in Mr. Warwick's case, it gives too much ground to suspect, that the former was their conduct to Messrs. M'Millan and Dixon, in Carolina; who, after they had both entered their declinature, were ordered to be cited to the bar of the second Presbytery of the Carolinas and Georgia, and the process then to be referred to the Synod of the Carolinas for their decision. See Extracts from the Minutes of the Associate Reformed Synod, held at New-York in October 1802, pag. 28, 29.

It was not Mr. M'Coy only, who was vexed and offended with the conduct of the Synod; nor merely the people, who had any concern for reformation principles; but every individual member of the presbytery, in this side of the mountains, were professedly so, when he, or at the

time he became a member of it, and for long afterwards. But though the Synod got rather worse, instead of better, yet the most of them fell in with its views and conduct, after the Synod's procedure, though some of themselves complained of the manner in which the Synod proceeded with Mr. Jamison, as being arbitrary and tyrannical. Before Mr. Jamison's trial, and in the time of it, they were wholly, to a man, against the Synod: but when Mr. Jamison was condemned, though during the trial they were condemning the Synod's conduct towards him, as to the manner of it, then they every man, as would appear, fell fully into the whirlpool of the Synod's defection, Mr. Warwick and Mr. M'Coy excepted.

We have before observed, that the year before that Synod at which Mr. M'Coy entered his declinature, he had no opportunity of seeing Mr. Warwick, he having gone down to Kentucky and Miami to supply vacancies there; and that, having a call from the Miamies, he moved down there in the spring of the year 1799. It was reported, however, that he intended to attend the Synod in May, that same spring; that after he had moved and settled his family at Miami, he would immediately return up the river, in order to proceed to Synod. It was also reported, that he was much opposed to the Synod's alterations and modifications of the Confession of Faith; and that if they proceeded in their design, he meant to decline their communion and authority. Mr. M'Coy could not tell what credit was due to these reports, as he had not seen Mr. Warwick; nor did Mr. Warwick ever write to him, on any subject whatsoever, from the time he went to the Miami, in the spring of the year 1799, till after he entered his declinature of the authority of the Presbytery and Synod. He then came and informed him what he had done. Mr. Warwick had requested, by some persons coming from the Miami, that Mr. M'Coy should write to him, and give him a statement of what passed at Synod; which request he complied with; and he gave him simply a statement of facts, without any arguments to persuade him either one way or the other. After Mr. Warwick had heard what the Synod had done relative to the Confession of Faith, he signified to the Presbytery to which he now belonged, his intention of withdrawing from the communion of Synod, as we have before related; and, finally, he entered his declinature of the authority of both Presbytery and Synod, as the Synod themselves relate, in the Extracts of their Minutes of Synod, held at New-York, 1806, in November, in the year 1800. And now the spleen, rage, and tyranny of the Associate Reformed Synod, made its appearance in the most remarkable and unprecedented manner known to us. The circumstances of their conduct in the cases of Messrs. M'Millan and Dixon, are not fully known to us. One thing they relate themselves, as we have before noticed; that these ministers had sent their declinature to Synod: and another thing they themselves also relate; that, notwithstanding they had declined their authority, they ordered a Presbytery to call them to account at their bar; and thereafter referring the process, for decision, to the Synod of the Carolinas, at their first meeting. The quantum of tyranny in these cases, we have not sufficient information to ascertain:

but when we view their procedure with Mr. Warwick, it cannot but give ground of suspicion, that it was much.

The Associate Reformed Synod, in the Extracts from their Minutes of Synod, held at New-York in 1806, tell us themselves, (for it does not appear that any others knew any thing of it,) that there were reports, that Mr. Warwick had misrepresented the principles, and traduced the character of said Synod. N. B. These are the general charges, and the only charges, which the Synod pretend to have against Mr. Warwick. And N. B. also, they do not produce one instance, wherein Mr. Warwick had either misrepresented the principles, or traduced the Synod. When they pretended that these things were so very criminal, as to deserve, first, suspension, and then deposition; they should not have barely said he was guilty, but given the world instances wherein he was guilty. Aye, aye; but stay; perhaps if they had done that, several people would have known, that there was no misrepresentation nor traduction in the case. In this they were so wise, for once, (though it is but worldly wisdom,) as not to commit themselves. Well, this misrepresenting and traducing report, the Synod pretends, coming to their ears, they, in the year 1800, they do not tell us what time of the year; there were, perhaps, their own reasons for this too; but we conceive, that if there was any thing of it, it was in May that year; for then only, we think, the Synod met: they say, in the year 1800 the Synod directed the Presbytery of Kentucky to take cognizance of the conduct of the Rev. Robert Warwick; Extracts, page 18. The cognizance to be taken, according to themselves, Extracts, &c. page 21, was only an inquiry into Mr. Warwick's conduct: for, as was reasonable to expect, they had no certainty about the matter; therefore they direct an inquiry, &c. Well, according to the Synod, the Presbytery is directed to inquire into Mr. Warwick's conduct, in the year 1800. And they take care to tell you neither the month nor the day of the month, when this direction was given to the Kentucky Presbytery; and we said before, and we apprehend it to be evident to any considering person, that it appears they had their own reasons for this manner of dating; especially when it is considered, that in the year 1806, when these Extracts of the minutes of Synod were written, yea, and long before, the Synod knew, that five or six months after they pretend the direction was given, the Presbytery of Kentucky knew nothing about any such direction. If we rightly recollect, the Synod which met in May 1799, adjourned to meet in May 1800. The Synod inform you, that Mr. Warwick declined the authority of Synod and Presbytery, in one place they say on the 1st of November, in another on the 11th of November, 1800. The difference between these two dates, must at least be between five and six months. All this time Mr. Warwick remained in connection with that Presbytery, by the Presbytery's request, till he might see their new Confession; but by agreement, and on condition, that the Presbytery would consider themselves as acting under the old Confession and standards: which request he complied with, and which agreement he stood fully up to, till the Presbytery refused to stand to the agreement

any longer; and then he entered his declinature, and, as the Synod themselves say, gave his reasons for so doing; which reasons, the Synod have not ventured to disapprove in one instance. This, as the Synod says, took place in November, 1800. The Presbytery received his declinature, and transmitted it to Synod. The Presbytery do not so much as pretend that they have any thing against Mr. Warwick. They do not pretend that they know any thing of a direction to inquire into Mr. Warwick's conduct: their receiving his declinature is a full and incontestible proof of these things. Not to say any thing of the anxiety which that Presbytery manifested, that Mr. Warwick should remain with them, when he made it known that he would leave them, on account of the Synod's alterations and modifications of our standards; any one of but an ordinary discernment, will easily see, that when the Presbytery saw, by Mr. Warwick's declinature, that he was determined to leave them, if they had known any thing to his character, worthy of censure, they would never receive a declinature from him; and if they had known any thing of a synodical direction to them, to inquire into Mr. Warwick's conduct, they could not receive his declinature, till, at least, this inquiry was made. But Mr. Warwick presented a declinature to that very Presbytery, which the Synod calls the Presbytery of Kentucky, in November, 1800. The Presbytery did not pretend, that they knew any thing against Mr. Warwick's moral or religious conduct; nor any thing of a synodical direction to them, to inquire into his conduct, now five or six months after the direction is pretended to be given: therefore it is a firm and incontestible conclusion, that the Presbytery knew nothing of any of these things. Besides, had the Presbytery of Kentucky known any thing against Mr. Warwick, either in word or deed, which they conceived worthy of any censure, they were themselves every way competent to take cognizance of it; and it was their place, in the first instance, to do so, and not the Synod's place; though if they choosed, they might refer it to Synod.

The Synod say, Extracts, &c. page 21, "And whereas the said Robert Warwick, avoiding the said inquiry, did, on the 11th of November, 1800, decline the authority of the Synod," &c. That is, he declined the authority of the Synod, in order, or for the purpose of avoiding this inquiry. Well now, what a sagacious, sharp-sighted fellow this Robert Warwick must have been, who could tell at such a distance, the secret actings of the Synod; and therefore, he could take steps to avoid the very things that the Presbytery, much at the same distance from the Synod when it acted, as Mr. Warwick was, was entirely ignorant of, though directed by Synod to inquire into his conduct. What a pretty consistent story!

As the Presbytery knew nothing of the Synod's direction, when Mr. Warwick had entered his declinature; so the Synod do not inform us that it ever did hear any thing of it till the next Synod, in 1801. One thing is certain, viz. that the Presbytery never acted on it; they made no inquiry. But according to the Extracts, &c. they simply reported at the Synod, in 1801, that Mr. Warwick had declined the authority

both of the Presbytery and Synod, by a written declinature, and for reasons therein stated; Extracts, &c. page 18. But no doubt, the Presbytery also reported, that they knew nothing of the Synod's order to inquire, &c. when Mr. Warwick declined the authority of both Presbytery and Synod.

Perhaps the true state of the case is, that (if ever there was any such thing, as any talk in Synod about directing the Presbytery to inquire any thing concerning Mr. Warwick) the Synod had heard that Mr. Warwick would leave them, and they concluded to make such an order, and keep it in secret reserve. If Mr. Warwick staid with them there should be no more of it, nobody should know any thing of it; but if he left them, then they would hold up their secret direction as a bug-bear to frighten people, and as much as possible destroy his usefulness. Some may think that this is hard judging; but let any one consider what follows, and then let him say if such a thing would be too hard for the Synod to do.

We already stated, that the Synod in the extracts of their minutes of their proceedings, in 1806, page 18, inform us that in 1801, the Presbytery of Kentucky, of which Mr. Warwick was a member, reported, that Mr. Warwick had, in November, 1800, by a written declinature, and for reasons therein stated, declined the authority both of the Presbytery and Synod; and we have stated, that it is, to us, without doubt, that the Presbytery, or at least, the member of Presbytery who carried the Presbytery's report, reported also, that the Presbytery had no knowledge of any order of Synod to inquire into Mr. Warwick's conduct, when he declined the authority both of the Presbytery and Synod; and we may add, that there is little doubt, but the member of Presbytery, who carried its report to Synod, in 1801, informed them, that the Presbytery had never instituted any charge, of any kind, against Mr. Warwick, although, as we before said, it was their province, in the first instance, to do so, had there been any ground for doing so, and they were of competent power to institute any charge against him, had they known of any misconduct, either by word or deed; and we may observe, had there been ground for any complaint, the Presbytery must have known it, for Mr. Warwick was a member of that Presbytery for more than a year and a half before he declined. Now all these facts lying plain before the Synod, would it not be reasonably expected, that they would see and be convinced, that they could proceed no farther; especially when they must know very well, that secret orders were no legal orders, neither to the Presbytery nor the party pretended to be accused. No law can be binding until it is published, so that those who are intended to be affected by it, and subjects of it, may have a fair opportunity of knowing it. They must have known too, that no government can have just authority, if it does not take cognizance of faults pretended to be committed while a person was a subject of that government, to take any cognizance of such faults, after the person ceases to be a subject of it. No government has power over any but its own subjects. The Synod, we presume, never denied, in principle, though they have gone far

to deny it in practice, that its subjects had a right to cease to be its subjects, when proper reasons were given for so doing; and when no charge of misconduct, cognizable by its laws, was ever legally instituted, neither before nor at the time when they gave publick and fair intimation, with reasons for their present conduct, which reasons were not disapproved, nor any charge pretended, as founded on these reasons, that they declined its authority, and ceased any longer to be its subjects. These things considered, we say, that the Synod, it might be fairly presumed, would be convinced, that they could not, legally, proceed one step farther. But do they stop here? No, no; instead of acting under suitable impressions of the propriety of dropping every consideration, of proceeding farther in this matter, it was now, namely, upon the Presbytery's report, that Mr. Warwick had declined the authority of both Presbytery and Synod, that their rage and tyranny began to exceed all bounds. Why, what do they? Why without ever informing him, in any way, that they have any complaint, of any kind, against him; without ever citing him to appear before Presbytery, or Synod, to answer any charges which they might pretend they had against him; without paying any regard to any legal form or order, they proceed to pass a very high and grievous censure upon him; they, as far as their illegal and tyrannical deed can go, suspended him from the exercise of his ministry; and then ordered the Presbytery of Kentucky to intimate their sentence to his congregation; in order that, by this step, they might disaffect the minds of his people, who could not be supposed to be acquainted, all of them, with the rules of church discipline, and thus break his congregation, and destroy his usefulness among that people, and if possible any others: and after they first censured him to the height of suspension from the exercise of his office, then they ordered him to be cited to appear at the bar of Synod at its next meeting. Thus, in order that they might shew their spleen, and screw up their tyranny to the highest degree, they disregard all rules of church discipline, and reverse all established orders of the Presbyterian church government.

Mr. Walter Stewart, of Pardovan, in his Collections, concerning the worship, discipline, and government of the church of Scotland, book iv. tit. 3. sect. 19. says, "It is repugnant to the laws of God and man, to condemn any that is absent or unheard, unless his absence proceed from his own fraud or stubbornness; therefore, in order to a due hearing, citations must be given to parties concerned, especially if they be called before Presbyteries, and other superior courts of the church." Mr. Stewart also says, Form of Process in the Church of Scotland, in relation to scandals and censures, chap. 2. page 245. "In proceeding in all causes, where there is any person or parties concerned, the judicature is to see that, before they proceed, these persons or parties be duly sisted before them by a legal and timous citation in writing, bearing its cause." And he says, same page, that before a person can be called or accounted contumacious, he must be cited three different times. And, chap. 7. page 256. he says, "If there shall be ground found to enter in a process against a minister, the *Presbytery* should first consider the libel, then

order him to be cited, and to get a full copy, with a list of the witnesses names to be led for proving thereof; and a formal citation in writ is to be made either personally, or at his dwelling house, bearing a competent time allowed to give in answer to the libel, and his just defence, and objections against witnesses." Here then are the just and salutary provisons of our church, against all undue, illegal and tyrannical procedure. This famous (perhaps it should have been written with an *in*, in composition) Synod, in the case under consideration, paid no manner of regard to these mild, just and wholesome laws; they burst through every legal and just barrier, without shame or remorse, in order to accomplish their own spleenful designs; they first censure with a high censure, and then (something like the Associate Reformed Synod) they cite to appear for trial. Was it to save appearances, O immaculate Synod? Ah! but it has done it beautifully! Well but in their wisdom, having proceeded so far, it would have reflected considerable disgrace upon their superior intellects, to have recanted what they had so wisely done; therefore they proceed citing,—who? a man who had declined their authority; a man who was, at the time when he is censured, and then cited to appear for trial, neither in ministerial nor christian communion with them, but had relinquised both by a regular declinature. Did they think that he would recognize their authority, after regularly declining it? Then indeed he would have been censurable in some measure, for his inconsistency; for submitting to the authority of such a Synod, after he had witnessed and felt so much of their tyrannical procedure. However, the Synod proceeded on to cite him from time to time, and he paying no regard to their citations, as might be expected he would not, they at last, to complete the whole scene, and fill up the measure of their iniquity, proceeded to depose him, in the year 1806. Thus they shewed their teeth fully, but could not bite much.

The reasons, then, why Messrs. Warwick and M'Coy declined the communion and authority of the Associate Reformed Synod, are such, we humbly conceive, as have been held and sustained as good and valid reasons for separating from any church, which acts, or has acted as it has done; we say, these reasons have been held good and valid, by our greatest and most enlightened reforming divines.

Mr. Shields, in his Hind let loose, head 1. page (nobis) 163, says, that "it is granted by all that write against separatists, that separation from a church is lawful, when the case so falleth out, that union cannot be kept up with her without sin." And Mr. Currie, in his Essay on Separation, grants that "the imposing the least sinful term of communion upon us, is sufficient ground of separation." Now this the Synod has done, by making their new Confession a term of communion; for thereby every one, that joins with them, is forbidden upon pain of censure, to acknowledge the doctrine of the old Confession and Catechisms, which they have rejected, and also are forbidden under pain of church censure to acknowlege the authority and binding obligation of the many scriptures which the Westminster Assembly adduced to prove their doctrine; and they prohibit every one from joining with them, who main-

tain the doctrine of the old Confeſſion, or Weſtminſter Confeſſion, and Catechiſms, which they have rejected—and alſo maintain the binding obligation of the ſcriptures quoted by the Weſtminſter Aſſembly to prove their doctrine. See their act in the very front of their new Confeſſion.

The famous author of Rectius Inſtruendum, the Rev. Mr. Foreſter, "allows, every ſeparation is not ſchiſm, even from the church which hath eſſentials, yea, and more than eſſentials, if it be from thoſe (though never ſo many) who are drawing back from whatever piece of duty and integrity is attained—for this is ſtill to be held faſt, according to many ſcripture commands." Next he ſays, "if we ſeparate in that which a national church hath commanded us, as her members, to diſown, by her ſtanding acts and authority, while thoſe from whom we ſeparate, own that corruption." Every perſon may eaſily ſee, how the Synod aforeſaid hath drawn back from various pieces of duty and integrity, attained by the Church of Scotland in her pureſt reforming times, and how it is adhering to the corruption forbidden by the ſtanding acts and authority of the once famous national Church of Scotland. Any one may eaſily ſee this, by comparing their book called their Confeſſion, with that book called the Weſtminſter Confeſſion of Faith—they may ſee how many things, how many doctrines and ſcriptures they have utterly rejected.

There is, ſays Mr Foreſter, "a command of withdrawing from perſons and ſocieties, even in worſhip—the precepts, Rom. xvi. 17. 2 Cor. vi. 7 Prov. xix. 27. Acts ii. 40. will clearly import this by conſequence. Surely (ſays he) the miniſters and profeſſors adhering to the reformation, muſt be the true Church of Scotland, though the leſſer number. Theſe ſoldiers who keep the General's orders, are the true army, not the deſerters of the ſame." The Aſſociate Reformed Synod, no doubt, and perhaps others, reckon us ſchiſmaticks and ſeparatiſts. But will they admit of the chief of our honeſt reforming divines, as arbitrators, to decide between us, who are the ſchiſmaticks and ſeparatiſts, in deed and in truth? Let them look to the preceding quotations from Mr. Foreſter's Rectius Inſtruendum; and let them attend to what another great light of our reformation has to ſay againſt them, and in our favour. It is Mr. Rutherford, in his Due Right of Preſbyteries, page 258. "When (ſays he) the greateſt part of a church makes defection from the truth, the leſſer part remaining ſound, the greateſt part is the church of ſeparatiſts. Though the manyeſt and greateſt part, in the actual exerciſe of diſcipline be the church—yet in the caſe of right diſcipline, the beſt, though feweſt, is the church." "So that," ſays Mr. Shields, Hind let looſe, page 162, "it is the major part, which hath made defection, that are to be accounted ſeparatiſts, and not ſuch who ſtand to their principles, though they cannot comply or join with the corrupt majority." We think, that it is without all doubt, that had the Aſſociate Reformed Synod lived and acted in the days of theſe great men, as they have done in ours—had they altered and modified the Confeſſion and Catechiſms then, as they have done now, theſe famous reformers and lights of the church, if they could have done no more, would have acted the ſame part that we have done. This is clear from their principles and their practice.

The above-mentioned reaſons why we declined the communion and authority of the Aſſociate Reformed Synod, are alſo reaſons of our non-union with other Preſbyterian denominations; i. e. they are reaſons one way or another.

Corruption of doctrine has been allowed to be a ſufficient reaſon for ſeparation from a church, and for non-union alſo. The Aſſociate Reformed Synod, and others, have corrupted the doctrine of our ſtandards. In oppoſition to them, they maintain the doctrine of toleration. The Aſſociate Reformed Synod have recommended, as a good book, the Overture for illuſtrating, &c the Weſtminſter Confeſſion; but in the 10th chapter of that Overture, the illuſtration contradicts the text—and the Arminian doctrine, that man is not wholly paſſive in regeneration, is taught Now, as the Synod has recommended this Overture ſeveral times, in their publick prints, and never gave the leaſt hint that there was any error in it, it muſt be reaſonably concluded that they have adopted that error—and eſpecially when one of their number declared before all the members of Synod, that he would defend the doctrine of the Overture on that head—and none of all the members, except we who were remonſtrating againſt that doctrine, pretended to find the leaſt fault with him for ſo ſaying.

Tyranny in the government and diſcipline of the church, has been accounted, by all our reforming divines, a ſufficient reaſon for ſeparation from a church. It is well

known, that ſome of the members of the Aſſociate Reformed Synod, who occaſionally attended their meetings, complained, at leaſt privately, and were vexed at the uncontrolled, arbitrary, and tyrannical proceedings of ſome others of the members. It was ſaid that their procedure with Mr. Jamiſon, on his trial before them, was very arbitrary, and of a tyrannical complexion. They had made a very tyrannical law, which we believe is ſtill in force, that no member of Synod ſhould ſpeak any thing publickly, againſt any of the Synod's acts and procedure, however bad—they might only ſpeak againſt them in Synod. This law Mr. Jamiſon was very apt to tranſgreſs; and he pretty often ſpoke againſt the arbitrary conduct of ſome of the members of Synod. It was thought, therefore, that perſonal reſentment ran pretty high at his trial. And perhaps his ſentence was not altogether free of tyranny, as they depoſed and excommunicated him at once. But the moſt prominent features of their tyranny, known to us, were exhibited in their procedure with Mr. Warwick, which we have juſt before repreſented in this chapter. Whatever unfavourable repreſentations they may have given, or may hereafter give, of Mr. Warwick's conduct in leaving them, the true ſtate of the caſe is the following. Mr Warwick, as we mentioned before, it was reported, had reſolved to attend the Synod held at Green-Caſtle, in 1799, with the deſign to decline the authority of that Synod, provided he ſhould find matters to go as he expected they would. His circumſtances, however, after he moved his family to the Miami, would not admit of an immediate return, to Synod. When this fell through, he did nothing raſhly—he remained as before, waiting the reſult of the Synod's procedure, and an account of it, before he would proceed to a rupture with it. Mr. M'Coy gave him an account how matters went at Synod, in 1799, in the fall of that year. He remembers of no Preſbytery that met, as ſuch, till the March following, when he attended, and informed them that he could not take a ſeat with them, on account of the Synod's procedure relative to the Confeſſion of Faith and ſtandards—to which he conſidered himſelf bound by his ordination vows. The Preſbytery, or rather the members of the Committee of Preſbytery, ſolicited him to remain with them till, at leaſt, they ſhould ſee the new Confeſſion—and alſo propoſed, that ſince they had neither ſeen the new Confeſſion, nor had any official knowledge of it, they might all hold communion with each other, till, at leaſt, the new Confeſſion ſhould be ſeen, upon the foundation of the old Confeſſion and ſtandards, juſt as they ſtood, without any alterations or modifications. To this propoſition Mr. Warwick conſented, and by it he abode, till the members of Preſbytery refuſed to abide by it any longer, and ſaid they did not conſider themſelves bound by the old Confeſſion, nor never did. When Mr. Warwick heard ſuch double dealing, he concluded that there was no ground left for him to heſitate—he immediately entered his declinature. This, as has been before ſaid, was in November, in the year 1800. This declinature the Preſbytery received, which the Synod, in their Extracts, &c. acknowledge, without ever once pretending that they had any charges, or knew of any, or of any directions to inquire into Mr. Warwick's conduct, though five or ſix months had paſſed, after the direction of Synod is pretended to have been given. This can be proven by a competent number of living witneſſes.

When Mr. Warwick had thus declined the authority of Preſbytery and Synod, he thought proper to come in perſon, and relate what had taken place, to Mr. M'Coy, and to conſult whether their principles might not be ſo concordant, as that they might join together in miniſterial and Chriſtian communion. Upon examination, it was found they could do ſo, cordially. This being the caſe, they next conſulted what would be the moſt proper line of conduct for them to purſue, for the general good and edification of the Church of Chriſt, as far as their influence might extend; to bear a faithful teſtimony for the truths of God's word; and to give judicial conſideration to their proceedings: and they agreed that this could be done no way ſo well as in a Preſbyterial capacity. They agreed, therefore, although but two, endeavouring to lean on the promiſe of Chriſt, that where two or three are gathered together, &c. he would be with them to bleſs them, to conſtitute themſelves into a Preſbytery. Having met, therefore, in the town, Waſhington, in Pennſylvania, for the purpoſe aforeſaid, they did, by ſolemn prayer, conſtitute themſelves into a Preſbytery, on the 29th of January, 1801, under the denomination of THE REFORMED DISSENTING PRESBYTERY.

END OF THE NARRATIVE.

AN

# ACT, DECLARATION,

AND

# TESTIMONY,

OF THE

## *REFORMED DISSENTING PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,*

IN NORTH-AMERICA.

FOR THE REFORMED DISSENTING PRESBYTERY,

*PRINTED BY ALEXANDER ARMSTRONG.*

WHEELING, SEPTEMBER, 1809.

*Three-ridge Meeting-house, 30th May*, 1808.

THE Presbytery resumed the consideration of a Draught of a Testimony, upon a motion made, to read it paragraph by paragraph. It was read accordingly; and several amendments were made. The Moderator then put the question, approve or disapprove of this Draught, as now amended? The members answered unanimously, approve.—Wherefore, the Presbytery did, at the aforesaid time and place, and hereby do, approve and ratify said Draught, as now amended, as the Testimony of the Reformed Dissenting Church in the United States of North-America, for the truths of God's word, and against the contrary errors abounding in the United States aforesaid. It is to be considered as the term of ministerial and christian communion with the Presbytery.

ROBERT WARWICK, *Moderator.*

MATTHEW JAMISON, *Clerk, pro tempore.*

BE IT KNOWN, ALSO, That the Confession of Faith, agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, as the same was approven by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, August 27, 1647; the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, approven by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Larger, July 2, and the Shorter July 28, 1648; the Covenants, National and Solemn League, and the Directory for the publick worship of God, approven by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, February 3, 1645, except so much of the Covenants and Directory as have a local and peculiar reference to Britain; and the Form of Presbyterial Church Government, as received by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, February 10, 1645; are to be taken in connection, and considered as parts of this our Testimony.

# TESTIMONY

OF THE

# REFORMED DISSENTING PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

IN NORTH-AMERICA.

## CHAP. I.—*Of the Divinity and Necessity of the Scriptures.*

*We believe,*

1. THAT the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and they only, are the word of God, written by men inspired by God, and bear in themselves evident marks of their divine original; such as their majesty, purity, power and harmony; the manifold predictions of things to come, made in them, and their distinct, remarkable and exact accomplishment; the great number and variety of miracles wrought for their confirmation, some of them in judgment, many of them in mercy; their scope and tendency, which are to give all glory to God, and to humble sinners; the ample and perfect discovery they make of the way and means of man's redemption and salvation, and the many mysteries respecting it revea' d in them, abundantly evince, as the Apostle says, that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God:" and that they are to be received, not as the word of men, but as they are in deed and in truth, the word of God. 2 Tim. iii, 16. 1 Thess. ii, 13. 2 Pet. i, 21.

2. That the authority and ground upon which the Scriptures ought to be received and believed, are not the testimony and authority of any man, or church, or council, for, though the authority of the church of Christ, or a council of reverend and godly men, or of the civil magistrate, ought to stimulate to the study of the Scriptures, and a careful attendance to the things therein revealed, both with regard to doctrines and precepts; yet neither the one nor the other, neither any nor all of them put together, are the authority, ground and reason upon which we ought to receive and believe the Scriptures with a divine faith. Nor are the marks of divinity, before mentioned, evidently legible on the face of the Scriptures, which are evident even to reason itself, and which are sufficient to stop the mouths of gainsayers, the ground of a divine faith;

but the authority and testimony of God himself speaking in the Scriptures, made evident, by the light of the Spirit of God, to our understanding. John xvi, 13. 1 Cor. ii, 10, 11, 12, 14, compared with 1 Thess. ii, 13.

3. That although the light of nature, and the works of creation and providence, make it evident that there is a God of infinite power, wisdom, holiness and goodness, so that those who are without a divine revelation, are left inexcusable, because they do not live up to that light which they have; for the law of nature, as to some notices of it, is written in their heart, by which some of the duties which God requires of all men may be known; yet the light of nature is utterly insufficient to teach us the saving knowledge of God, in any degree. It never did since the fall of man, nor never can teach men now, how they might glorify God, and come to the enjoyment of him. The light of nature cannot teach how he ought to be worshipped. It cannot even teach us wherein man's happiness lies. It neither does nor can give a sufficient rule of duty. It does not even offer sufficient motives to obedience. It cannot inform us of the origin of sin, and how it came into the world. It cannot, sin being in the world, and all having become guilty before God, inform whether, or how, any man can be pardoned and accepted with God. It cannot shew us how our inclinations to sin may be overcome, and its power subdued. Now all this is plain from the single consideration, that no man, since the fall of Adam, can be produced, who had such a knowledge by the light of nature; and yet the knowledge of these things is absolutely necessary to the salvation of any man who has the exercise of reason. Rom. i, 19, 20, 21, 22, &c. ii, 14, 15. 1 Cor. i, 21. ii, 13, 14. *Therefore, we believe,*

4. That a revelation from that God against whom we have sinned, is absolutely necessary with regard to those things just before mentioned, and many other things not there named; since it is utterly impossible for any of mankind to have any knowledge of them without such a revelation. Every thing necessary for men to know, believe and do, in order to glorify God and enjoy him, must be revealed to us now since the fall, or we could have no proper and adequate knowledge of it: but all this is done in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; which we declare we receive, not only as a perfect, sufficient, supreme rule, but as the only rule of faith and obedience, to the exclusion of all other rules, in matters of religion, whether it be reason, or conscience, or the light of nature, or the authority of men, or any other thing that can be mentioned. 2 Tim. iii, 15, 16, 17. Gal. i, 6, 7, 8, 9. Isaiah viii, 20.

5. That the canon of the Scripture is long since closed, to which nothing is to be added by new revelations of the Spirit, nor traditions of men. Prov. xxx, 5, 6. Rev. xxii, 18, 19.

6. That the infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself. And though men may judge in controversies of religion, in their own proper sphere and place, in such a way, and for such ends and purposes, as the Scriptures warrant them; yet the supreme judge of all controversies in religion, and by which decrees of councils and

doctrines of men are to be tried and determined, is no other than the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scriptures. 2 Pet. iii, 16. i, 19, 20, 21. Acts xxviii, 23, 24, 25. Isa. viii, 20.

*We therefore testify,*

1. Against such as maintain, that a revelation from God to men cannot be given.

2. Against such as deny the necessity of a revelation from God, and maintain that the light of nature and reason is sufficient to instruct us with regard to all those things that are necessary for glorifying God and enjoying him.

3. Against such as deny that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are a divine revelation.

4. Against such who, though they profess to believe that the Scriptures are a perfect, supreme, infallible rule, yet deny that they are the only rule.

5. Against such as maintain, that conscience is such a rule, and of such great authority, that if we are conscientious we are right, even when we profess the greatest imaginable errors and blasphemies, even to the denying of the God that made us, we are more in our duty, to maintain and propagate such opinions, and to persuade all men to embrace them, than even to suppress our opinions.

6. Against such as maintain, that the Old Testament is not the word of Christ, nor of divine authority, and that it is now mostly obsolete, and of no more use than any other old history.

7. Against such as maintain, that the Scripture is in any case erroneous.

8. Against such as maintain, that any man, or church, or council, can be an infallible judge of religious controversies, or an infallible interpreter of the Scripture; as well as against such as deny that any man should judge at all in matters of religion, either in an ecclesiastical or civil manner, so as to award church censures or civil punishment, for any errors or heresies whatsoever, while such a person is conscientious that he is professing and propagating the truth.

## CHAP. II.—*Of God, and of the Holy Trinity.*

*We believe,*

1. That there is but one only living and true God, who is a most pure Spirit, invisible, without body or bodily parts or passions, of whom no corporal nor carnal representation can or ought to be made, neither inwardly in our minds, nor outwardly by any image. Deut. vi, 4. 1 Cor. viii, 4. Jer. x, 10. 1 Thess. i, 9. Deut. iv, 15, 16. John iv, 24. Luke xxiv, 39.

2. That this one true and ever living God is infinite, eternal and unchangeable in all his perfections; as, in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth; who created all things by his power, and rules, governs and directs all things, by his providence, to their

proper and appointed ends; who is a most merciful and gracious God, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin; and yet such an hater of sin, that he will by no means clear the guilty. Job xi, 7, 8, 9. 1 Tim. i, 17, Mal. iii, 6. Jer. xxiii, 23, 24. Isa. vi, 3. Exod. iii, 14.

3. That this infinitely great and only true God is in and unto himself all-sufficient, having no need of any of his creatures to make him more blessed and happy, this being impossible, he being infinitely blessed and happy in himself: nor does he derive any glory from any of them, but manifests his glory in, by, upon and unto them. He hath sovereign dominion over his creatures, to do by, for, or upon them, whatsoever is pleasing in his sight. His knowledge is infinite, infallible and independent on his creatures; so that nothing is or can be contingent unto him, or any way uncertain. To God is due, from all intelligent creatures, all that obedience and worship which he is pleased to demand of them. Acts xvii, 24, 25. Job xxii, 2, 3. Rom. xi, 36. Dan. iv, 35. Rev. v, 12, 13.

4. That though we believe there is but one God, yet we believe that in the one undivided essence or Godhead, there are three distinct persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. 1 John v, 7. Matt. iii, 16, 17. xxviii, 19. John i, 14.

5. That these three persons, as they are one in essence, so they are equal in power and glory. The Father is God, and the Son and Holy Ghost are also God, of the same essence and equal in power and glory with the Father: for the same names, attributes, works and worship are ascribed to the Son and Holy Ghost, as are ascribed to the Father. And if divine attributes, works and worship can be ascribed to none but God, but the true God, without blasphemy; then it is blasphemy to deny, that the persons to whom they are properly ascribed are God, the only true God, in opposition to all idols and pretended inferior deities. These glorious persons of the Godhead are distinguished by their personal properties. It is proper for the Father to beget the Son, and the Son to be begotten of the Father, and for the Holy Ghost to proceed from the Father and the Son from all eternity. Matt. xxviii, 19. 2 Cor. xiii, 14. Heb. i, 6, 8. John i, 14, 18. xv, 26. Gal. iv, 6.

*We therefore testify,*

1. Against all Atheists, who deny that there is any God; and all who not only say it with their mouths, but say it in their practice.

2. Against all such as deny that there are three persons in the Godhead, all of the same essence, equal in power and glory; and therefore deny the divinity of Christ and of the Holy Spirit. We testify against all such, as blaspheming Atheists, whatever they pretend. We testify against all such as maintain, that our Lord Jesus is no more than a mere creature, either created before all worlds, or who had no existence till conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary: Against all such as maintain, that his human soul was made before all worlds, and the covenant of grace made with it.

## CHAP. III.—*Of Predestination.*

*We believe,*

1. That God hath from all eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass, especially concerning angels and men; but in such a way as God is neither the author of sin, nor is the liberty, nor (what men call) the contingency of second causes destroyed, but rather established; nor is there any violence done to the will of the creature. Eph. i, 11. Rom. xi, 33. ix, 15, 18. Heb. vi, 17. Jam. i, 13, 17. Acts ii, 23. iv, 27, 28. Psal. xxxiii, 11. Prov. xvi, 33.

2. That though God, from all eternity, fore-knew all things whatsoever, which might or could come to pass in any case, or upon any supposable condition; yet he did not decree any thing to come to pass because he fore-knew it would come to pass; but on the contrary, God fore-knew all things which have, shall, or can come to pass, because he has fore-ordained that they shall so come to pass, together with all the causes, means, or conditions, whether by permission or actual influence, necessary to bring them to pass. Acts xv, 18. 1 Sam. xxiii, 11, 12. Rom. ix, 11, 13, 16, 18.

3. That, especially with regard to angels and men, God has predestinated some of them to everlasting life and glory, for the manifestation of his own grace; but the rest he hath fore-ordained to eternal punishment, on account of their sins, for the glory of his justice. 1 Tim. v, 21. Mat. xxv, 41. Rom. ix, 22, 23. Prov. xvi, 4. But as our chief concern is with men, we believe,

4. That God from all eternity hath, of his own free grace, according to the immutable counsel of his own will, chosen, in Christ, a certain number of men, out of the common mass of mankind, to special and spiritual blessings here, and to the complete enjoyment of himself and uninterrupted happiness hereafter, to the praise of the glory of his grace. Eph. i, 4, 5, 6.

5. That those of mankind whom God has chosen to eternal life, are some of mankind, not all. This the very nature of choosing supposes. If all were taken, then there would be no choice: hence said to be "a remnant according to the election of grace." Rom. xi, 1—6.

6. That the number chosen, is a certain, definite one, which cannot be increased nor diminished. "The Lord knoweth them that are his;" and in comparison of the rest of mankind, they are but few. 2 Tim. ii, 19. John xiii, 18. Mat. xx, 16. xxii, 14.

7. When the choice was made, all were considered in the same common state and condition; all were on a level: those who were chosen were no better than those who were left, as considered in themselves. "Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump, to make one vessel to honour and another to dishonour?" Rom. ix, 19, 20, 21.

8. That those are not whole nations nor churches, but particular persons. "Jacob have I loved:" "Salute Rufus, chosen in the Lord;" "According as he hath chosen us in him." Rom. ix, 11, 12, 13. xvi, 13. Eph. i, 4.

9. Election is entirely of grace. There neither was nor is any thing in the object chosen, which was the moving cause of this choice. Nothing out of himself can be a motive to God. All motives to God's acts and proceedings are entirely within himself. And so it is with regard to election. His own free grace and love were his motives to it; for which reason it is called the election of grace. And being according to the sovereign and unchangeable will of God, it stands firm and immovable: it is the purpose of God according to election, not of works, but of him that calleth. Rom. xi, 5. ix, 11.

10. That God hath chosen none of mankind upon their foreseen faith, repentance, or good works, or because he foresaw that some would be better than others; nor did he delay his choice till he should see who would believe, &c. and then choose them because they were such; but he chose them before the foundation of the world; before they had any existence; before they had done good or evil; and not because they were holy, but in order to make them such. It is only as many as were ordained to eternal life who believe. Eph. i, 4. Rom. ix, 11. Acts xiii, 48.

11. That the blessings to which they are chosen, are grace here and glory hereafter, union to Christ, regeneration, justification, adoption, sanctification and complete glorification. The means and the end are both alike ordained, and both alike sure, since both stand upon the immutability of his counsel and will. 2 Thess. ii, 13. Rom. viii, 28, 29, 30. Heb. vi, 17, 18.

12. The supreme and ultimate end which God had in view in choosing any, was his own glory, the glory of his own attributes, such as his wisdom, power, holiness, justice, and of his rich and free grace. Eph. i, 5, 6, 11.

13. That as God has chosen some men to eternal life and the means thereof, so he determined to pass by the rest, and to punish them for their sins. The Scriptures never represent God as punishing any man, but for sin; nor does it represent him as decreeing to punish any, but on account of sin; but then the Scriptures represent some as ordained of old to this condemnation, as the rest, who are blinded, in opposition to such as were chosen, as not written in the Lamb's book of life, &c. John vi, 64, 65. x, 26. 1 John ii, 19. Mat. xi, 25, 26. Jude 4. 1 Pet. ii, 8.

14. That this doctrine ought to be preached by the ministers of the Gospel. This doctrine tends to bring down the haughtiness of man, and to lay his loftiness low; and to exalt the highest God. It tends to stain the pride of man's glory, and to shew him that he is indebted to God for every good and perfect gift. It tends to stregthen a believer's hopes, and invigorate his endeavours to please and honour God. It tends to encourage him under affliction, and to excite him to come continually to God, through Christ, for the supply of all his wants. In a word, it tends to make him quiet and calm under the various vicissitudes of Providence, as knowing that all things shall work together for good. Acts xx, 26, 27. 2 Pet. i, 10. Rom. xi, 5, 6. viii, 33, 34.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against all such as deny, that God has eternally and infallibly decreed any thing, especially concerning angels and men.

2 Against all such as deny that God has, from eternity, chosen any to eternal life and the means thereof. Against such as deny that election is eternal, particular, and of God's rich and free grace, and infallible in the event; but maintain that it is conditional, and depends upon men's faith, repentance and good works, either done, or to be done.

3 Against such as maintain, that the Scripture representation of election only respects the choice of a nation, or a number of persons under the notion of a visible church, to the participation of visible privileges.

4 Against all such as maintain that it would be injustice in God, to choose, infallibly, any of mankind to eternal life and the means thereof, and at the same time pass by, and reject others no worse by nature than those who were chosen; and to determine to withhold his grace from them who were not chosen, and to punish them for their sins.

5 Against such as maintain, that it is unsafe and unnecessary to preach the doctrines of election and reprobation, because they may be abused by weak and corrupt men.

6 Against all such as maintain, that though election should be granted, yet some of the elect may be lost, and some of the no elected saved.

## CHAP. IV.—*Of Creation.*

*We believe,*

1 That the three-one God, for the manifestation of his own glorious perfections, hath communicated a finite created existence to all other beings, and has formed them with natures wisely adapted to the various ends of their creation. Jer. x, 12. Psalm xxxiii, 5, 6. Col. i, 16.

2 That when God had made all other creatures, he created man, endowed him with a reasonable, intelligent, and immortal soul, stamped his own image, consisting of knowledge, righteousness and holiness, upon his soul, and wrote his laws upon his heart, requiring of him personal, perfect and perpetual obedience; but subjected him to inconceivable punishment for the least breach of his law; having given him complete ability to keep it, but left him to the freedom of his own will which was mutable, to improve the ability given, to God's glory and his own happiness, or to abuse it, to God's dishonour and his own ruin. Gen. i, 27. ii, 7. i, 26. Rom. ii 14, 15. Eccl. vii, 29. Gen. ii, 17, iii, 6.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against all such as deny, that the world and all things which began to exist, and are finite, were created by the power, and for the pleasure of one first cause, which is God.

2 Against all such as deny, that God created man with an immaterial and immortal soul; and maintain that the soul of man is material, and consequently mortal.

3 Against such as deny, that man had sufficient ability given him, as he came out of the hands of his Creator, to keep God's law.

4 Against such as maintain, that man was not subjected to eternal punishment for every, nor for any of his sins.

## CHAP. V.—*Of Providence.*

*We believe,*

1 That as God by his almighty power created all things out of nothing, from the highest seraph to the lowest insect and atom, and endowed them with natures adapted to the ends of their creation; so does he constantly and invariably preserve and uphold them by his divine Providence, and unremittingly overrules and directs them, and all their motions or actions, for the manifestation of his own glory. Heb. i, 3. Dan. iv, 34, 35. Acts xvii, 25, 26, 28. Mat. x, 29, 30, 31.

2 That though men often talk of chance, contingency, casualty, accident, and the like, yet strictly speaking, there are no such things, only in the apprehension of men: for as the number of creatures which God made, or shall make hereafter, is certain and definite, there can be neither more nor fewer, not one; so are the thoughts, words and actions of men, or other reasonable creatures, and all the various motions of other beings, animate or inanimate, certain and invariably determined. Eph. i, 11. Psalm xxxiii, 10, 11. Acts ii, 23. Prov. xix, 21.

3 That as God has immutably fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass; so by his Providence he actually brings them to pass, most commonly by means of second causes, which perhaps may be another name for what is called the fixed laws of nature. 2 Thess. ii, 13. Acts xxvii, 31. Isaiah lv, 10, 11. But,

4 That God works not only by means, but without, above and contrary to means. Sometimes the laws of nature cease, for a time, from their operations; as causing iron to swim, and fire to cease to burn. Rom. iv, 19, 20, 21. 2 Kings vi, 6. Dan. iii, 27.

5 That the Providence of God extends to the first fall, and all other sins of angels and men; and that not by a bare permission, but such as hath joined with it a most wise and powerful bounding, and otherwise ordering and governing them in a manifold dispensation to his own holy ends: yet so as the sinfulness of these actions proceedeth only from the creatures, and not from God, who is neither the author nor approver of their sins, but hates and abhors them. Rom. xi, 32, 33, 34. 1 Chron. xxi, 1. 1 Kings xxii, 22, 23. 2 Sam. xvi, 10. Gen. l, 20.

6 That God in his holy Providence, for his own holy ends, suffers his own dear children to fall into temptations, and leaves them for a time to the corruption of their own hearts, to correct them for their former sins, to shew them the hidden strength of corruption within them, and their own deceitfulness, that they may be humbled, and to stimulate them to a more close and constant dependence on himself for support, and to make them more watchful over their hearts and ways for the

time to come, &c. 2 Chron, xxxii, 25, 26, 31. 2 Sam. xxiv, 1. 2 Cor. xii, 7, 8, 9.

7 That with regard to the rest of mankind, whom God, as a just judge, punisheth for their sins in their own persons; from these, God not only withholdeth his grace, whereby their understandings might have been opened and their hearts ameliorated; but even withdraweth those gifts of which they were possessed; and they are often, in his Providence, in the presence of those objects which their corruption makes occasions of sin; and besides, gives them up to the influence of their own lusts, the world's allurements, and the power and temptations of Satan; whereby it comes to pass, that they harden themselves under the very means which God useth to soften others. Rom. i, 24, 26, 28. xi, 7, 8. Deut. xxix, 4. ii, 30. Psalm lxxxi, 11, 12.

8 That as the Providence of God is extended to all his creatures in general, so it is especially exercised about the church of Christ in this world, making all things work together for its good. 1 Tim. iv, 10. Rom. viii, 28. Isaiah xliii, 3, 4, 5, 14.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against all such as deny the Providence of God, either general over all things, or particular and special with regard to his church and people.

2 Against such as substitute such unmeaning names as chance, contingency, fortune, and the like, in the room of an all-directing and ordering Providence.

3 Against such as maintain that God, when he created the universe, stamped it with such fixed and invariable laws, that when once it was set on motion by its Creator, it required no farther providential care or direction from him.

4 Against such as maintain, that when God created the worlds, he endowed them with such qualities and properties, as have necessarily produced all events and circumstances which have, or at any time shall take place in them, without the immediate agency of God who created them.

## CHAP. VI.—*Of the Covenant made with Man in innocency: His fall, and the consequent evils.*

*We believe,*

1 That God having made man in an upright estate, and stamped his image upon his soul, as before said, he condescended to enter into a covenant with him, promising him life as the reward of his obedience to his law, now written upon his heart, together with the positive precept which prohibited him to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, (obedience to which law, moral and positive, was the condition of this covenant) but threatening death, natural, spiritual and eternal, as the righteous and unavoidable punishment of any breach of his law, moral or positive. By the positive precept God made trial of Adam's

obedience. The threatening of death was the penalty of this covenant. Eccl. vii, 29. Gen. ii, 16, 17. compared with Hos. vi, 7. like Adam, margin.

2 That, of this covenant, Adam was constituted the publick head and representative of all mankind, which should descend from him by ordinary generation; so that if he had perfectly obeyed the law, moral and positive, during the time of his trial, not only himself, but also his posterity would have been confirmed in holiness, and entitled to the promised reward: but if he failed in his obedience, he should incur the threatened penalty, both upon himself and his natural offspring. Rom. v, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. 1 Cor. xv, 21, 22.

3 That although our first parents were created with sufficient ability to yield the required obedience, yet, being left to the freedom of their own will; they were seduced by the subtil temptations of the old serpent, the devil, to eat of the forbidden tree. By yielding to, and complying with this temptation, the covenant of works was completely broken.—This breach of the covenant God was pleased to permit, having purposed it as an occasion for manifesting the glory of his mercy and grace. Gen. iii, 13. 2 Cor. xi, 3. Rom. xi, 32.

4 Our first parents having broken the covenant made with them, they were immediately deprived of the image of God, lost all spiritual communion with him, and became spiritually dead, and liable to natural and eternal death: and the covenant being made with Adam as the representative of all his posterity descending from him by ordinary generation, this first sin of his was imputed to all his natural offspring. Hence they are conceived in sin, created without original righteousness, and come into the world with all the powers and faculties of their nature corrupted, utterly disabled, opposed, and inimical to every thing spiritually good, and inclined and disposed to all evil; under the curse of the law and sentence of condemnation; liable to all the miseries of this present life, to death with its most envenomed sting, and the most dreadful punishments, in soul and body, in hell's fire forever. Gen. iii, 6, 7, 8. Eccl. vii, 29. Gen. vi, 5. Rom. iii, 23, 19. viii, 7. Gal. iii, 10.

5 That it is from the imputation of Adam's sin, that we are deprived of original righteousness; and from the want of original righteousness proceeds the corruption of our nature. The imputation of Adam's first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of our nature, is what we call original sin: and from this proceeds all actual sin, in thought, word or deed. This depravation of nature remains in part, even in those who are really regenerated, and is, with all its motions, truly and properly sin; though it be, for Christ's sake, pardoned, and in some degree mortified. Rom. iii, 10, 11, 12. James i, 14, 15. Eph. ii. 2, 3. 1 John i, 8, 10. James iii, 2. Eccl. vii, 20.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against all such as deny, that there was any covenant of works made with Adam.

2 Against all such as deny, that Adam was constituted a representa-

tive of all, or of any of his natural posterity, so that they should stand or fall with him.

3 Against all such as deny, that there is any such thing as original sin; that Adam's sin is imputed to his posterity; and maintain that, at the utmost, we are only destitute of original righteousness.

4 Against all such as maintain, that man's nature, as he comes into the world, is not so corrupted as to render him utterly incapable to do any thing spiritually good, and acceptable to God.

5 Against such as deny that all, or any of mankind, are under the curse of the law and sentence of condemnation, by the imputation of Adam's first sin.

6 Against such as deny, that the threatened penalty made any part of the covenant of works.

## CHAP. VII.—*Of the Covenant of Grace.*

*We believe,*

1 That as Adam sinned, and thereby brake the covenant of works, and involved himself and all his natural posterity in misery and wretchedness, out of which both he and they were utterly incapable, in the least degree, to extricate themselves: and God foreseeing this fall and ruin, and having determined to deliver some of fallen mankind from sin and misery, and to bring them into a state of salvation, did, moved thereto by nothing but his own free and unmerited love, enter into covenant with his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, as the representative and surety of such only as were designed and appointed to salvation. This covenant is commonly called a covenant of grace. Rom. viii, 7. John iii, 16. Psalm lxxxix, 3. Isa. xlii, 6. xlix, 8.

2 That the covenant of redemption and the covenant of grace are not two distinct and different covenants, but one and the same covenant under different considerations. With regard to our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom it was made, it may be with propriety called a covenant of redemption; but with regard to the elect, in whose favour it was made, and as all its blessings come freely to them, it may also with propriety be called a covenant of grace. Eph. i, 7. Heb. vii, 28. ix, 15. Eph. ii, 8, 9.

3 That in the covenant of grace our Lord Jesus did not represent all mankind, but only a certain number of them, whom God chose in Christ from eternity. These chosen ones only bear his name and image; they only are called his seed, his children, his sheep; and they only are made participators of its purchased and promised blessings. Isa. liii, 10. Heb. ii, 14. John x, 15, 26, 27, 28.

4 That the condition of the covenant of grace is not to be performed by the covenantees, or the elect, in whose favour it was made. Therefore, neither faith, nor repentance, nor new obedience, neither any of these, nor all of them put together, is the condition of the covenant of grace. That alone can be its condition, which gives us a meritorious right to its blessings: but this neither any one, nor all the forementioned

qualifications can do, neither in whole nor in part: therefore they can not be its conditions. Faith, and repentance, and new obedience, are not conditions, sine qua non, of the covenant of grace; for they are not conditions of it at all, in any sense. These may be conditions or qualifications, sine qua non, of some of the covenantees, as they have no ground nor warrant to conclude, that they have any actual, saving right, title, or interest in the covenant, while they are destitute of these: we say, some of the covenantees; for it is only such of them as are come to the use and exercise of reason, of whom these qualifications are required: but elect infants, while such, have not the exercise of reason; and yet the condition of the covenant is fulfilled for them; even that condition, sine qua non, or without which neither infants nor adults can ever have any advantage by it, nor interest in it. Rom. iii, 20. Titus iii; 5, 6, 7. Rom. iii, 24, 25. Eph. ii, 8, 9.

5 That the covenant of grace was made with our Lord Jesus Christ, as the party contractor, on the part or behalf of the elect, who were not capable of being parties contractors themselves; and the fulfilling of the condition of it was required of him alone. He alone was capable of fulfilling its condition, and he alone did actually fulfil it. The condition required was, that he should fulfil all righteousness; which righteousness consisted in the holiness of his human nature, his perfect, sinless obedience to the law as a covenant, and his bearing the wrath and curse of God. This is the only proper condition of the covenant of grace; for the elect, having this righteousness imputed to them, have a perfect freedom from all penal evils, and a title to eternal life; which includes all the blessings of the covenant. The elect of God, not being parties contractors in this covenant, but only covenantees or representees, as they were not capable, so neither was it required of them, to fulfil the condition of the covenant: and as their faith and repentance could neither fulfil the law, nor satisfy the justice of God; so they do not belong to the conditionary, but to the promissory part of the covenant. Dan. ix, 24. Isaiah liii, 10. Hebrews ix, 14, 15, 25, 26.

6 That the Old Testament Church and the New Testament Church were not under two distinct and different covenants of grace; but under one and the same covenant differently administered. The Old Testament saints were justified by the same righteousness, regenerated by the same Spirit, and saved by the same Saviour, as the saints are under the New Testament; though under the New Testament there is a greater abundance of light, and of the gifts and influences of the Holy Spirit, than under the Old. There never was, nor ever will be, any other name by which men formerly were, now are, or ever will be saved, but the name of Jesus. 1 Cor. x, 1—4. Hebrews xi, 13. Gal. iii, 7, 8, 9, 14.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against all such as deny that there is any covenant of grace.

2 Against such as maintain, that the elect are parties contractors in the covenant of grace, consequently that it is made with them, and they are required to fulfil its condition.

3 Against such as deny the covenant of grace was made with Christ as the representative of the elect, and of them only.

4 Against such as maintain, that the covenant of grace has an equal respect to all mankind, and is not the privilege of the elect only.

5 Against such as maintain, that the covenant of redemption and the covenant of grace are two distinct covenants.

6 Against such as maintain, that the covenant of grace under the Old and New Testaments, differed essentially, and not in administration only.

7 Against such as maintain, that faith, and repentance, and new obedience, or any other duty or qualification wrought in us, or done by us, is the condition of the covenant of grace.

8 Against all such as deny the righteousness wrought out and brought in by our Lord Jesus Christ, to be the only condition of the covenant of grace.

## CHAP. VIII.—*Of Christ as Mediator.*

*We believe,*

1 That as Adam and all his natural posterity have sinned against God; so there is enmity between God and man; a legal enmity on God's part, and a real enmity on man's part; which enmity must be removed if any of the human race should be saved. This could not be done but by a suitable Mediator. None but God could know, appoint, or accept of such a Mediator. God having determined to save some of fallen men, did choose and appoint such a Mediator as was capable to make a full reconciliation between God and man; as could remove the legal enmity on God's part, and the real enmity on man's. Rom. v, 10. Gal. iii, 20.

2 That the person chosen, appointed and ordained of God to be the Mediator, was Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, equal in power and glory, and all divine perfections, with God the Father and God the Holy Ghost. The person chosen is the true God, God over all, blessed forever. Amen. Isaiah xlii, 1. 1 Peter i, 19, 20. 1 Tim. ii, 5. Phil. ii, 6. Romans ix, 5.

3 That in order to qualify and fit our Lord Jesus for the full execution of his Mediatorial office, the Father prepared, the Holy Ghost formed, and he assumed a human nature into personal union with his divine nature; which human nature consisted of a true body and a reasonable soul: so that two whole, perfect and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition or confusion; which person is very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and man. Hebrews x, 5. John i, 1, 14. Hebrews ii, 14, 16, 17.

4 That our Lord Jesus Christ did not assume the human nature from eternity; for it did not subsist, nor had any existence from eternity, in any of its constituent parts, neither in body nor soul. Christ's human nature had no existence before it was conceived by the Virgin Mary, by the power of the Holy Ghost—It was in the fulness of time that he was made of a woman. Luke i, 35. Gal. iv, 4, 5.

5 That the person of Christ, by assuming the human nature, underwent no mutation, or a real, but a relative change—His glory was neither increased nor diminished by that assumption—There was a change, indeed, but it was wholly in the nature assumed, not in the person assuming. Christ's mediatorial person, is the person of the Son of God. He could not have been our Mediator, nor executed the mediatorial office, were he not God: his being God was so essential to the very execution of his mediatory offices, that they could never have been executed unless he had been God. But if these things are so, then Christ, as Mediator, is God; and if so, then he is the object of divine worship as he is Mediator: for if God be the object of divine worship, and Christ, as he is Mediator, be God; then Christ, as Mediator, is the object of divine worship. John i, 14. Heb. i, 3. Romans ix, 5. Luke xxiv, 52. Hebrews i, 6. Rev. v, 9—12.

6 That Christ, as Mediator, is the redeemer, surety, head and representative, prophet, priest and king of his church: as Mediator, he has all power in heaven and earth given to him; angels, authorities, and powers are made subject to him, and he is set far above them all: he is not only king of saints, but governor among the nations; made Lord and Christ, Lord of all: and as Mediator, is appointed judge of quick and dead. These things are evident from many passages of scripture. Mat. xxviii, 18. Eph. i, 21, 22. Phil. ii, 9, 10, 11. Acts x, 36. John v, 22.

7 That although it is essential to the Mediatory office of Christ, that he be God; because he could not execute that office unless he was God: yet it is not essential to his Godhead that he should be a Mediator; for, abstracting from the consideration of his Mediatory office, he is God; therefore it is not by office that he is God, and the Son of God; or in other words, it is not his Mediatory office which constitutes him God, or the Son of God; nor is he the Son of God by creation, nor by adoption; but he is the true self-existent and eternal God, and is the natural, necessary, and eternal Son of God. John v, 20. Phil. ii, 6. John i, 14. iii, 16. Heb. i, 8.

8 That our Lord Christ being appointed to this office by the Father, did voluntarily undertake it; and in order to his completely executing it, had all necessary furniture promised and given him for that purpose; being anointed with the Holy Ghost above measure. As our Lord Jesus is vested with the Mediatory office, so will he remain vested with it for ever. Acts x, 38. Psalm xl, 7, 8. Col. i, 19. ii, 3. John iii, 34. Heb. i, 8. vii, 21.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against all such as deny, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God by natural, necessary, and eternal generation; and therefore not the same in essence, nor equal in power and glory, with the Father.

2 Against all such as maintain, that he is God only by office and appointment; and the Son of God by creation, or by office, or by adoption only.

3 Against all such as deny, that Christ our Mediator is God and man in one person.

4 Against such as maintain, that Christ as Mediator is not God; and therefore is not the object of worship.

5 Against such as maintain, that the Mediatory kingdom of Christ extends no farther than the church.

6 Against such as maintain, that it was possible for Christ, during the time of his humiliation, to commit sin.

7 Against such as maintain, that the divine and human natures, in Christ, are blended and confounded with each other, so that the human nature is deified, &c.

8 Against such as maintain, that an imaginary idea of Christ as man, is helpful to the faith of him as God-man.

## CHAP. IX.—*Of Christ's Satisfaction, and its extent.*

*We believe,*

1 That as all mankind were represented by Adam in the covenant of works, so when he sinned and brake it; his first sin was charged to them all, who proceeded from him by ordinary generation; and sin being imputed, the penalty was incurred, and the threatened curse takes such effect upon every one of them, as soon as they exist, that they can never, while in their natural state, yield any acceptable obedience to the law of God; and therefore, could never procure life for themselves. Besides, as they are all charged with sin, satisfaction must be given to the justice of God, which it was impossible for them to give. The justice, holiness and faithfulness of God absolutely required that the law should be obeyed, and justice satisfied, if any of mankind should obtain the promised life, and escape the threatened punishment. Rom. v, 18, 19. viii, 7. Gal. iii, 10. Rom. iii, 20. Heb. ix, 22.

2 That as none could perform the obedience, nor endure the penalty, so as to satisfy justice for themselves, nor any mere creature do it for them; and as God designed to magnify and glorify his mercy and grace in the redemption and salvation of some of the fallen race of Adam, he laid their help upon one that is mighty, one chosen out of the people, from whom he should get that obedience and satisfaction which law and justice required, even his own eternal and only begotten Son. Rom. viii, 7, 8. Psalm xlix, 7. lxxxix, 19. Gal. iii, 13.

3 That our Lord Jesus Christ did willingly undertake to give the obedience and satisfaction so indispensably required, and actually and exactly gave it. He gave the required obedience, to found and secure their title to life, and the satisfaction demanded, to deliver and secure them from the threatened penalty. Psalm xl, 7, 8. Mat. iii, 15. Phil. ii, 8. Rom. v, 18, 19. Eph. i, 7.

4 That the law which our Lord Jesus was made under, and gave obedience unto, was not the ceremonial law only, but the moral law more especially. Though the Jews were under the ceremonial law, yet the

Gentiles were not: but the law which our Lord Jesus was made under, was, and must be such an one as had an equal reference to Jews and Gentiles, because he came to save both Jews and Gentiles. Now no law had an equal obligation on Jews and Gentiles, but that which they were equally under: but this could be the moral law only. Hence, though our Lord was made under the ceremonial law, because the Jews were under it; yet he was more especially made under the moral law, because both Jews and Gentiles were equally under it. And he was made under the law for his people, not as a rule of life but as a covenant only. Compare Gal. iii, 10, with 13. Rom. iii, 31. x, 4. Gal. iv, 4, 5.

5 That the obedience to the law, and satisfaction to justice, which our Lord Jesus Christ gave, was not for all mankind, but for a certain, definite number of them only, which can neither be increased nor diminished. He made satisfaction not only for some, but for all the sins of this definite number; but neither for all, nor for any of the sins of any others. Those for whom our Mediator made satisfaction, are in scripture called his elect, his sheep, such as were ordained to eternal life; and they are such as he intercedes for with the Father: but all mankind are not his chosen, his sheep; nor ordained to eternal life; nor does he intercede for all mankind. John x, 10, 11, 15, compared with 26—29. Acts xx, 28. John xvii, 9, 10. Eph. i, 4. Acts xiii, 48.

6 By the obedience and satisfaction which Christ gave to law and justice, he purchased for the elect all things necessary for their happiness in time and eternity. And believers have the common benefits of life, as a fruit of Christ's purchase. It is not only the sanctified use of these things for which they have to pray, and which is promised them, but the things themselves; and when we pray for them, we must not approach to God as an absolute God; and as these things are promised, and are not always present with believers, they may trust in God's promise, not only for the sanctified use of them, but for the things themselves which are promised. 1 Cor. iii, 22. Rom. viii, 28. 1 Tim. viii, 28. Isaiah xxxiii, 16. Mat. vi. 11. 1 Tim. iv, 3, 4, 5.

7 That the satisfaction which Christ gave to law and justice, was not only and barely for the good of the elect, but in their name, room and place: and when it is imputed to them and received by faith, it is accounted theirs, to all intents and purposes, as if they had done and suffered all in their own persons. Eph. v, 1, 2. 2 Cor. v, 21. 1 Pet. iii, 18. Rom. iii, 22. Heb. x, 14. Rom. viii, 1, 33, 34.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against all such as maintain, that Christ died for all mankind, and not for the elect only.

2 Against all such as maintain, that Christ died, not to purchase certain salvation for any, but to purchase a possibility of salvation for all mankind, upon conditions to be performed by themselves, by a kind of common grace, which Christ purchased for, and bestowed upon all mankind, which they who have and they who have not the gospel, may

improve to their own salvation; or that he died for all mankind, not with a design to save them all, nor to make salvation possible for all, but to lay a foundation for offering Christ and salvation to all with sincerity.

3 Against all such as maintain, that by the death of Christ mankind are freed from the rigor of the law as given to Adam; and that they are placed under a new and milder law, requiring easier and milder conditions—this new law is the gospel, and the milder conditions, faith, repentance and sincere though imperfect obedience.

4 Against such as maintain, that Christ did not obey the law for any, but only suffered and died for the purposes mentioned in the preceding paragraphs.

5 Against all such as maintain, that Christ did not make satisfaction for any by his death and sufferings; but only obeyed and suffered, to leave us an example, and for our good; but not in the room and place of any, so as to be imputed to them to found a title to life, and freedom from eternal death.

6 Against such as deny, that temporal benefits to believers are the fruits of Christ's satisfaction.

## CHAP. X.—*Of the Gospel Offer.*

*We believe,*

1 That it is impossible to have any knowledge of Jesus Christ, of pardon of sin and salvation by him, without a revelation of them from God. The revelation of the way and means of salvation by Jesus Christ, is called the gospel; which imports good, or glad tidings. Rom. x, 14—17. i, 16, 17. Luke ii, 10, 11.

2 That the gospel, or these good tidings of Christ a Saviour, and life and salvation by him, is presented to every sinner, wheresoever the gospel comes and is preached, with the call, invitation and command of God to receive them, whatever has been their former state or conduct. Mark xvi, 15, 16. Isaiah lv, 1. Mat. xi, 28. 1 John iii, 23.

3 That in the gospel, wherever it comes, Christ with all his saving benefits are given to every hearer of the gospel. By giving here, we do not mean giving in possession, but only giving in right to possess. In this manner the gospel offer is represented in various passages of scripture. John iii, 27, 16. 1 John v, 11.

4 That the unlimited offer of the gospel to every one who hears it, is not founded on Christ's dying for all mankind, since he did not die for all men; nor upon eternal election, for all the hearers of the gospel are not elected: but upon the command and commission which Christ gave to his ambassadors, to preach the gospel to every creature, and the sufficiency of his satisfaction, to save every one that believes in him. John x, 26. Mat. xxii, 14. Mark xvi, 15. Heb. vii, 25. Acts ii, 22, 23, 38, 39, 40.

4 That though preaching the gospel does not consist in promising salvation to all who hear it, or in affirming that Christ has redeemed each of them; yet it consists in presenting Christ, pardon of sin, and

salvation to each of them, and in informing them, and asserting, that Christ with all his benefits is given them in right to possess; which giving is the proper ground upon which any one can receive Christ with all his unspeakable mercies that are offered with him. 1 John v, 11. John iii, 27.

6 That though none but such as are convinced of sin, will come to Christ, none but such as see their need of a Saviour, will ever be persuaded to apply him to themselves, or with propriety to apply to him for their own salvation: yet the offer of the gospel is not to be limited to such as are convinced of sin; nor are the ministers of the gospel to suspend the offer of the gospel from men, until they are humbled, penitent, hungering and thirsting after salvation, as if none had a right to have the gospel offered to them but those who are such; for as this is contrary to the scripture, so none could be guilty of unbelief but such as those mentioned; besides none can be evangelically penitent, humbled, &c. but such as have actually come to Christ. Now all qualifications, that can be named, which a man may have before he comes to Christ, are nothing but sinful ones; which surely can give us no better right to Christ than other sins. Mark xvi, 15, 16. Heb. xi, 6. Rom. viii, 7, 8.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against all such as maintain, that the unlimited offer of the gospel is founded upon the universal purchase which Christ made for all men.

2 Against all such as maintain, that there is an obscure offer of the gospel, among the heathens, where they are entirely destitute of a divine revelation, by the light of nature.

3 Against such as deny, that there is any offer of Christ, pardon of sin, or of salvation by him, made to any in the gospel.

4 Against such as maintain, that the gospel should be preached to none but sensible sinners, and such as are penitent, and humbly hungering for salvation.

5 Against such as maintain, that sorrowing for sin, hungering after Christ, &c. are necessary preparatives upon which the sinner's right to come to Christ is founded; and while destitute of these preparatory qualifications his right is suspended. This is contrary to our Lord's orders to his ambassadors, to go and preach the gospel to every creature.

6 Against such as deny, that Christ is given to the hearers of the gospel in any sense until they receive him; that Christ and salvation is given to every hearer of the gospel in right to possess; and that this gift of Christ and all his purchase, in the gospel, is the ground of faith.

## CHAP. XI.—*Of the Freedom of the Will.*

*We believe,*

1 That God hath endowed the soul of man with a faculty or power of choosing or refusing, approving or disapproving, &c. which is called the WILL. The will of man is endowed with a natural liberty, so that

it cannot be forced to choose or refuse, &c. by any natural necessity. Deut. xxx, 19. Mat. xvii, 12. James i, 14.

2 That when God created man in a state of innocency, he made him with a freedom of will, and with sufficient ability to choose that which was good only; but God did not make the will of man immutably determined to good only; for he was capable of being biassed, and determined to that which is evil. Eccl. vii, 29. Gen. i, 26. ii, 16. iii, 6.

3 That when our first parents had broken covenant with God, they representing all their posterity, both they and their posterity lost all power to will, or to do any thing spiritually good; so that though the will retains its natural freedom, yet it is free to choose evil only: the understanding being, by the fall, rendered wholly spiritually blind, there is no beauty nor comeliness in any thing spiritually good, that can be discerned by the mind of man, until his eyes, the eyes of his understanding, be opened—Hence the will cannot choose, but refuse what is spiritually good, till it be renewed. Rom. v, 12. viii, 7. iii, 10, 12, 23. Eph. iv, 18, 19. i, 18.

4 That when God converts a sinner, he illuminates the understanding and renews the will, by which it is enabled to choose the good and refuse the evil: yet by reason of remaining corruption, the will cannot choose the one and refuse the other perfectly; but according to the old nature, it often chooses the evil and refuses the good, and according to the new nature, it chooses the good and refuses the evil. Phil. ii, 13. Eph. i, 18. See Rom. vii, 15, 18, 19, 21, 23. Gal. v, 17.

5 That the will does not exert itself, and produce its acts by a self-determining power, but is determined to act by suitable motives. Phil. ii, 13. Deut. xxx, 19.

6 That the will cannot act while in equilibrio, or in a state of indifference: for to suppose it does infers a contradiction; it supposes that the will acts when it has no inclination to act. Before the will chooses or refuses any thing, it must be inclined some way, or by some thing, to choose or refuse that thing. Rev. iii, 15, 16.

7 That though the acts of will are not necessary by a natural necessity, yet they are necessary in all cases, whether respecting sin or duty, with a moral necessity, or a necessity of connexion or consequence. Rom. viii, 7, 8. John vi, 44, 65. Heb. ii, 14. The sum of all is:

8 Unregenerate men and devils have a freedom of will, to that which is evil only. Regenerate men have a freedom of will to that which is spiritually good, according to their new nature, and to evil only, according to their old nature. The holy angels and the spirits of just men made perfect, and they only of all the creatures of God, have their wills unalterably determined, not in their own nature, but by the good pleasure and grace of God, to that which is good only. The will of God alone, is naturally, necessarily, and unchangeably determined to that which is good. [The proofs for this article may be gathered from the preceding articles.]

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against all such as maintain, that all men have a freedom of will to that which is spiritually good, even while unregenerate.

2 Against all such as maintain, that man's will is possessed of a self-determining power, by which it can turn itself either to good or evil at any time.

3 Against all such as maintain, that when the will acts, it is in a state of indifference, and in equal balance with regard to good and evil, sin and duty.

4 Against such as maintain, that the volitions or acts of the will are contingent and uncertain, and that the volitions of intelligent creatures are not necessary with a moral necessity, or a necessity of consequence.

5 Against all such as maintain, that all men, even in a state of irregeneracy, have a freedom of will and ability to convert themselves, and to prepare themselves to conversion; and that maintain that man, in an unregenerate state, can will and do any thing that is good in a spiritual point of view.

## CHAP. XII.—*Of Effectual Calling, or Regeneration.*

*We believe,*

1 That all God's elect are, before their conversion, dead in trespasses and sins, ignorant of God, and of themselves, and of the nature and necessity of salvation by Jesus Christ, and are enemies to God; and they are utterly unable to convert themselves, or to prepare themselves thereunto. Eph. ii, 1. iv, 18. Col. i, 21. John vi, 44. Heb. ii, 14.

2 That regeneration is not effected by moral suasion, or by moral causes or means only; but by the powerful, irresistible, efficacious and supernatural influences and operations of the Holy Spirit of God. Rom. viii, 2. Eph. ii, 1—5. 2 Tim. i, 9.

3 That although God hath appointed means, such as the reading and preaching of the word, and therein and thereby uses commands, exhortations and persuasions with men, to turn from sin to God; yet neither these means of themselves, nor the sinner in the most diligent use of them, can effect his own regeneration—It is the Spirit of God regenerating the man, that only can enable him to use the means which God hath appointed, to any good purpose for turning to God. Hebrews ii, 14. Titus iii, 4, 5. Ezekiel xxxvi, 26, 27.

4 That regeneration is not the creating of any new faculties in the soul, nor the repairing and mending the old ones; but the creating and implanting of principles entirely new in the same soul; such as light instead of darkness, faith instead of unbelief, love instead of enmity, and the like, whereby the soul is renewed and changed, as to its habits and principles of action. 2 Cor. v, 17. Eph. ii, 10, 8. Romans v, 5.

5 That in regeneration, properly speaking, and as distinguished from conversion and sanctification properly taken, there is the exercise of no grace, as of faith, repentance, and the like; but the habits and princi-

ples of all grace are implanted in the soul. Faith and repentance, or any other grace, in exercise, are the effects of regeneration. Ezekiel xxxvi, 26, 27.

6 That though the soul of man be an active being, before, in the time of, and after regeneration; yet it is not active, but wholly passive in regeneration: or in other words, it hath no active hand in regeneration itself, but is altogether a passive recipient therein. The soul of man has no more activity in its own regeneration, than a child has in its own generation and formation in the womb, or a dead man could have in his own vivification. We can neither do, nor actively receive any thing, before we are made spiritually alive. Rom. viii, 7. 1 Cor. ii, 14. Eph. ii, 5.

7 That regeneration is a work of the Spirit of God, in which the sinner is convinced of his sin and misery, his mind is enlightened in the knowledge of Christ, and his will is renewed; and thereby he is persuaded and enabled to embrace Jesus Christ as offered to him in the gospel: which embracing or believing in Christ, is the effect and evidence of our regeneration. John vi, 63. Acts xxvi, 18. Eph. i, 17, 18. Ezek. xi, 19. Phil. ii, 13.

8 That all those whom God hath chosen from eternity, and predestinated to eternal life, and none but these, are, in time, regenerated, or born again. Many, and it appears, by far the greatest number of the elect, that ever come to the use and exercise of reason, are not regenerated till they are capable of being convinced of sin, and of having their minds enlightened in the knowledge of Christ. Rom. viii, 30. xi, 7. Eph. i, 11.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against all such as deny the absolute necessity of regeneration.

2 Against such as maintain, that every man has sufficient power and grace given him to regenerate himself.

3 Against such as maintain, that all the work of the Holy Spirit necessary to regenerate any person, is only to represent divine truths to the understanding, and to bring them to remembrance, and thereby raising some ideas in the brain, and making some impressions on it; but deny that any supernatural habits are implanted, or supernatural aid is necessary to regenerate a sinner.

4 Against such as maintain, that regeneration is effected by merely moral means and moral suasion.

5 Against such as maintain, that we can prepare ourselves for regeneration, and that it is very necessary we should do so.

6 Against such as deny, that the operations of the Holy Spirit in regeneration are efficacious and irresistible; and maintain that men can frustrate the operations of the Spirit, so as to prevent the regeneration even of such as he is determined to regenerate.

7 Against such as maintain, that man is not wholly passive in regeneration, and consequently that men are active in their own regeneration.

8 Against such as maintain, that all the elect are regenerated from the womb.

## CHAP. XIII.—*Of Justification.*

*We believe,*

1 That all those who were from eternity predestinated to eternal life, are, in time, united to Jesus Christ, as their head and husband, and they, and they only are justified. Rom. viii, 29, 30. xi, 7.

2 That the author of justification is God only. "It is God that justifieth." Rom. viii, 33.

3 That justification does not change our nature, but our state with regard to the law. Rom. iv, 5.

4 That in justification we are neither made nor pronounced holy, but sustained and declared righteous in law. Rom. v, 19. 2 Cor. v, 21.

5 That justification is not opposed to unholiness and ungodliness in scripture, but to condemnation—And as condemnation puts no wickedness nor criminality into the person condemned; so neither does justification put any righteousness or godliness into the person justified. Deut. xxv, 1. Rom. viii, 33, 34.

6 That we are not sanctified in any degree before we are justified. The sinner can neither repent evangelically, nor love God, nor do any good work whatsoever, before he is justified: for before he is justified he is under the law, and so under the curse, and under the strength and dominion of sin. Rom. iv, 5. Gal. iii, 10. 1 Cor. xv, 56.

7 That we are justified upon the ground of a law-magnifying and justice-satisfying righteousness; which cannot be our own, or wrought by us; for our own righteousness is as filthy rags, and "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified." It is therefore upon the ground of that righteousness wrought out and brought in by our Lord Jesus Christ, and upon it alone, that we are justified. Rom. iii, 22. viii, 3, 4. 2 Cor. v, 21. Rom. iii, 20, 24, 25.

8 That in order to our being justified by the righteousness of Christ, it is imputed to us; and we receive and appropriate Christ and his righteousness, and justification by it, to our own souls by faith alone. Rom. iv, 6. v, 19. 2 Cor. v, 21. Rom. iii, 22.

9 That when we are justified, all our sins, past, present, and to come, are pardoned, and our persons accepted: we have a complete title to eternal life, and freedom from eternal death, upon the account of the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and upon no other ground whatsoever. Acts xiii, 38, 39. Rom. iii, 24—28. viii, 33, 34. Phil. iii, 9.

10 That it is by the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, that we are delivered from the law as a covenant. Rom. vii, 4, 5, 6. For, Gal. iii, 10, 13.

11 That the righteousness of Christ is not only the meritorious and purchasing cause of justification, as it is of all other benefits and blessings of the covenant of grace, but the very matter and ground of it, on account of which we are accounted righteous before God. Rom. iii, 22, 24, 25. Phil. iii, 8, 9.

12 That justification is an act, and perfect and compiete at once. Rom. viii, 1, 33, 34. v, 1.

13 That though God from eternity decreed to justify the elect; yet they are not justified actually from eternity, but in time; for they are represented as actually under the law in time, and as delivered from the law in time; but this they could not be, if they were justified from eternity. They are delivered from the law by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them; because that righteousness answers all the demands of the law, and being reckoned theirs in law, they are as perfectly delivered from the law as a covenant, as Adam would have been had he kept it during the time of his probation. Gal. iii, 10. Rom. vii, 4, 5, 6.

14 That justification is immediately succeeded by sanctification as its proper fruit and evidence; for the sinner becomes thereby "dead to the law, that he may bring forth fruit unto God," and is, in justification, "delivered from the law, that he may serve God in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." Rom. vi, 14. vii, 4, 6.

15 That those who are justified can never be condemned. It cannot consist with the distributive justice of God, to condemn to eternal wrath, those in whose room and place Christ fulfilled the law and satisfied the justice of God. Rom. viii, 1. iii, 26.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against such as deny, that justification is upon the ground and foot of Christ's righteousness alone.

2 Against such as deny, that justification is perfect at once; but maintain a first and second justification, and that it can be increased by our good works.

3 Against such as maintain, that though we may be justified by the righteousness of Christ; yet we have a title to heaven by our good works.

4 Against such as maintain, that justification, like the other blessings of the covenant, is only purchased by the righteousness of Christ, and that it is not the very matter of our justification, and the alone ground of it.

5 Against such as maintain, that it is only a title to pardon, the favour of God and deliverance from the law, and not these blessings themselves, that we obtain, in the very sentence, and in the very instant of justification; but only a title to them, such as we obtain, by the righteousness of Christ, to the other blessings of the covenant, such as sanctification and glorification.

6 Against such as maintain, that their own faith, and not the object of their faith, the righteousness of Christ, is their justifying righteousness before God.

7 Against such as maintain, that justification by the righteousness of Christ, and justification by the free grace of God, are inconsistent.

8 Against such as maintain, that we are justified, either wholly or in

part, by our own good works; or that even the grace of God wrought in men's hearts, is, in any respect, the ground and matter of our justification before God.

9 Against such as maintain, that sanctification, in any degree of it, precedes, or must be in exercise in men's hearts, before they are justified; that it is necessary that men be in the exercise of evangelical humility, repentance and love to God, previous to our being justified: but without faith it is impossible to please God, and such as are under the law are under the curse.

10 Against such as deny, that sanctification is the immediate fruit and evidence of justification.

11 Against such as maintain, that those who are justified may fall again into condemnation; and against such as maintain, that it would be consistent with God's distributive justice, to damn those for whom Christ died.

12 Against such as maintain, that the elect are justified, or which is materially the same thing, dead to and delivered from the law from eternity: there being no ground, from scripture, to conclude that any that are capable of it, are justified before they actually believe in Christ.

## CHAP. XIV.—*Of Faith.*

*We believe,*

1 That true saving faith is wrought in the heart of a sinner, sensible of his sin and misery, and of his absolute need of salvation, by the word and spirit of God. 2 Cor. iv, 13. Eph. i, 17, 18, 19. Rom. x, 17.

2 That the whole word of God is to be believed with a divine faith; but the immediate object of what is called justifying faith, is the gospel only; as Jesus Christ, and remission of sins, and eternal life and salvation, are proposed and presented to sinners, to be believed, in the gospel only, and not at all in the law, as properly distinguished from the gospel. 1 Thess. ii, 13. Mark i, 15. xvi, 15. Luke ii, 10, 11.

3 That not any thing done by the sinner, nor wrought in him previous to his believing; neither his humility, repentance, love to God, nor any other grace or exercise of mind that can be named, is or can be that upon which the faith we speak of is founded. Nothing acceptable to God, nothing but that which is sinful can precede faith, according to the scriptures; but that which is not acceptable to God, that which can bear no other denomination but that of sin, can never be the ground of faith divine. Rom. xiv, 23. Heb. xi, 6. Rom. viii, 7, 8.

4 That all kinds of faith are founded upon testimony. A human faith is founded on human testimony, and a divine faith is founded on a divine testimony. Believing that any record, narrative, gift, grant, or offer, is the record, narrative, &c. or the testimony of such or such a person, is not all that is necessary to the believing of his testimony; but it is necessary to believe the things contained in the record, narrative and testimony. Now if there be things in that testimony which relate to all persons to whom it comes; if in that testimony there are grants,

made, offers given, gifts presented, promises and records of great favours and benefits held out to every one to whom the testimony is presented, and to every one of them in particular; then we cannot be said to believe this his testimony, unless we believe that such gifts, grants, offers, promises and records, have been and are made to us in particular, every one for himself. Isaiah viii, 16, 20. 1 John v, 9, 10, 11.

5 That a particular part of the testimony and record of God, which he hath addressed to sinners wheresoever the gospel is preached, is, that he hath given unto them eternal life, pardon of sin, and a complete salvation, not, indeed, in possession, but in right to possess; to which testimony and record he requires their assent and belief. John iii, 16, 27. 1 John v, 10, 11.

6 That the great impediment in the way of the sinner's faith in Christ, is his not crediting or not being persuaded, that the offer of Christ, and pardon of sin, eternal life and salvation by and with him, is presented, offered and given to himself in particular, on the ground of the gospel testimony, to be believed, by him, for his own benefit, without any predisposing qualifications to found his faith on. 1 John v, 10, 11. Mark xvi, 15, 16. Acts xiii, 38, 39, 26.

7 That as where there is no degree of assurance of the truth of the fore-mentioned testimony of pardon of sin, eternal life and salvation, to the sinner himself in particular, to whom the testimony is addressed, as it is to every one in particular where the gospel is preached; there, there can be no faith, but a total unbelief: for every degree of hesitation, staggering, doubting, wavering, fearing, with regard to the truth of God's testimony, respecting their own pardon, eternal life and salvation by Christ, thus offered, given, promised and recorded in God's testimony, to be believed and received, is unbelief, and no way belongs to the nature of faith, though they may be, and often are, in the same soul where faith is. Our assurance will be proportioned to our faith; if our faith be weak, or strong, our assurance will be weak, or strong, in proportion. Mat. viii, 26. xiv, 31. Rom. iv, 20. James i, 6.

8 That faith, therefore, includes not only an assent to the truth of God's word in general, an approbation of the gospel scheme of salvation, and an hearty acquiescence in it; an appropriation of Christ to ourselves in particular, and a certainty; all which some grant to belong to the very nature of faith, and particularly grant that appropriation and certainty belong to the very essence of faith, who yet deny that there is any assurance in its nature and essence; which is most absurd and unreasonable. Therefore we maintain, that every act of saving faith has some degree of assurance† belonging to its very essence; and it is a contradiction in terms to deny it, and to talk of faith without assurance,

† *The term*, assurance, *is stumbling to many weak, private christians, which, to them, appears to convey the idea, that, where there is assurance there can be no doubting in the same soul; and therefore, would rather express the act of faith by the terms* resting, trusting, relying, *and the*

and especially to allow appropriation and certainty to belong to the nature of faith, and yet deny assurance to be essential to its nature; and we maintain that assurance, founded on God's testimony, that he shall be saved, is inseparably connected with true faith in every believer's heart. 1 Thess. i, 5. Heb. x, 22. 1 John iii, 19.

9 That though it is dangerous for sinners to persuade themselves, that they are savingly interested in the promises of the gospel, without solid grounds for their assurance; yet the gospel offer, God's record of giving to sinners eternal life in Christ, and his commands and invitations to believe in him for pardon of sin and everlasting life, with an assurance that he will cast none off who come to him, afford a solid ground for believing, not only that Christ and salvation are given, offered, &c. to sinners in general, but to himself in particular, and a more solid ground of assurance that he shall have eternal life and salvation, than any experience of ours. That must be granted to be the most solid ground of assurance of the promised blessings, which will abide when any other is gone; but the word of God will continue when all other grounds of assurance, such as the experience and sensible manifestations of grace, are gone. It is dangerous, therefore, to teach that God's word is not a solid ground for assuring ourselves of his promised mercy. Psalm cxix, 49, 50, 92. Isaiah l, 10.

10 That though faith may be known by its fruits, and therefore we should examine ourselves whether we be in the faith or not; yet the strength of faith is better known by its firm reliance on God's word, when its fruits cannot be discovered, and when it can find nothing to grip to but God's faithfulness, like Abraham, who against hope believed in hope, than by its fruits. And though the pious and faithful may be, and often are, possessed with doubts and fears respecting themselves, yet their doubts and fears of God's giving them Christ, pardon of sin and eternal life, in the gift and offer of them in his word, and their doubts and fears that they have no warrant nor right to assure themselves of God's mercy, but what arises from their own experiences, &c. is none of their piety and faithfulness, but their sin of unbelief. Moreover, though the careless, presumptive and enthusiastic may be, upon the ground of their own righteousness, enthusiastic impulses, or the general mercy of God, full of assurances of their being the favourites of heaven; yet it is neither presumption nor enthusiasm, but true and genuine faith, even the faith of God's elect, to be persuaded and assured upon the ground of God's word, and his offer of pardon, life and salvation in Christ, therein exhibited, that we shall have these blessings. 2 Cor. xiii, 5. But see Rom. iv, 17—21. 1 John v, 10, 11. Acts xv, 11.

11 That faith is not founded on the intention of God to save the elect, nor upon election; nor is the first act of faith a belief that we were elected from eternity; but, as we before said, faith is founded on God's

*like. We would, therefore, recommend it to sessions, to deal tenderly with such; and not rashly exclude them from the communion of the church, while they see the difficulty is about the meaning of a word.*

record, &c. and the first act of faith is the believing God's record, and a receiving his gift and offer of Christ and salvation as held forth in the gospel, that to the sinner in particular, now believing, is preached the forgiveness of sins. Rom. x, 17. 1 John v, 10, 11. Acts xiii, 38.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against all such as deny, that pardon of sin, and eternal life and salvation, are, together with Christ, presented, given and made over, in the gospel, to sinners in general, wherever the gospel is preached; and deny that this is the ground of faith.

2 Against such as maintain, that the ground of justifying faith is something done by, or wrought in the heart of the sinner.

3 Against such as deny assurance to belong to the nature and essence of justifying faith, and maintain that assurance is separable from faith in the believer's heart.

4 Against such as absurdly and inconsistently admit of appropriation and certainty as belonging to the nature of faith, and yet deny that assurance belongs to its essence.

5 Against such as maintain it to be dangerous for a sinner to persuade and assure himself of pardon and mercy, upon the ground of God's word, without the knowledge of our pardon, &c. by marks of grace in the heart.

6 Against such as maintain, that the strength of faith is better known by its fruits, than by the firmness of its confidence in God's word when none of its fruits can be discovered; contrary to the scriptures and the experience of the saints therein.

7 Against such as maintain, that it is presumptuous and enthusiastic, to persuade and assure ourselves of pardon of sin and acceptance with God, upon the ground of his gift and offer of these to us in his word, without sensible manifestations of grace in our hearts.

8 Against such as maintain the general and doubtsome faith of the Papists, and say with them, that the faith of special mercy is a consequent of justification; wherefore the faith of special mercy is not justifying faith; and that the confidence by which any one trusts that his sins are forgiven, depends on a good conscience; and therefore presupposes justification does not bring it about; and that it is exceeding rash for men to believe that their sins are forgiven them, as if they were warranted to do so by the word.

9 Against such as maintain, that the first act of faith is to believe that we were elected from eternity.

## CHAP. XV.—*Of Repentance.*

*We believe,*

1 That God commands all men, every where, to repent of their sins. Acts xvii, 30.

2 That there is a kind of repentance which is commonly called legal repentance, which men may have while in a state of nature; and while

such they can have no other sort of repentance. Fear of punishment, and not hatred of sin, as sin, is the principal motive to it; self-love and self-preservation, and not the love and glory of God, are the chief ends in view. This kind of repentance may, and in some degree, always does go before justification, and is preceded by a faith of the law; but cannot please God, nor is it any mark of a gracious state. 2 Cor. vii, 10. Mark i, 15. But see Heb. xi, 6.

3 Evangelical repentance is a grace of the Holy Spirit, wrought in the heart of a believer; whereby from a sight and sense of his sins, as dishonouring and offensive to God, and from an apprehension of God's mercy in Christ Jesus, he turns from it unto God, being grieved for it, and loathing and hating it for its odiousness and contrariety to God's holy nature and law, sincerely purposing and endeavouring to live a life of new obedience. 2 Tim. ii, 25. Zech. xii, 10. Acts xi, 18. Jer. xxxi, 18, 19. Joel ii, 12, 13. 2 Cor. vii, 11.

4 That this evangelical repentance cannot exist in the soul, until the person is justified before God, and is a consequent of faith in Christ Jesus: for if we can do no good thing while we are under the curse, so without faith we cannot please God; but evangelical repentance is a good work, and is pleasing to God; wherefore it is a consequent and not an antecedent to justification and faith. We grant, however, that evangelical repentance always goes before fatherly pardon. Rom. viii, 7, 8. Gal. iii, 10. Heb. xi, 6.

5 That evangelical repentance is absolutely necessary in all subjects capable of it; and without it, no person has a right to conclude, as is plain from the scripture, that he is in a gracious state, but is yet in his sins. Luke xiii, 3, 5. Acts xvii, 30.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against such as maintain, that a man may be so free from sin in this life, as to need no repentance.

2 Against such as maintain, that an unpardoned sinner can repent evangelically.

3 Against such as maintain, that evangelical repentance is absolutely previously necessary to judicial pardon and justification.

4 Against such as maintain, that repentance is any atonement for sin.

5 Against such as deny, that evangelical repentance is a necessary consequence of the removal of the curse in justification, and so of faith in Christ.

## CHAP. XVI.—*Of the Assurance of Grace and Salvation.*

*We believe,*

1 That though unbelievers and hypocrites may be elated with the false hopes and deceptious assurances of their being high in the favour of God; which hopes of the hypocrite perish; yet true believers may arrive at a well founded and infallible assurance, that they are in a state

of grace and salvation, and that they shall finally obtain the full and complete enjoyment of God. Job viii, 13. Deut. xxix, 19. John viii, 41. 1 John iii, 14, 18, 19, 21, 24. v, 13.

2 That this assurance of grace and salvation, which the believer may obtain, and which many have obtained, is not the same as the assurance which belongs to the essence of faith. Hence we maintain with our Confession of Faith, that the assurance of our being in a state of grace and salvation "doth not so belong to the essence of faith, but that a believer may wait long and conflict with many difficulties before he obtain it; yet being enabled by the Spirit to know the things that are freely given him of God, he may, without extraordinary revelation, in the right use of ordinary means attain thereunto." The assurance which we maintain to belong to the essence of faith, which we have spoken of before, and the assurance of grace, &c. of which we speak in this chapter, ought carefully to be distinguished, for they differ in several respects:—1, They differ in their acts. In the assurance of faith we receive Christ as ours in the promise; but by sensible assurance we know by sense and experience, that he is ours in present possession. 2, They differ in their object. The object of the assurance of faith is altogether without the believer, and is Jesus Christ and his righteousness revealed in the promises of the gospel; but the object of sensible assurance is partly without and partly within the believer, and is both the promises of God and his own sensible experience of grace. 3, They differ in their order. The assurance of faith is first, and the assurance of sense follows. No man can have the assurance of sense, but such as, in some degree, have the assurance of faith first, no more than a man can have grace in exercise before he has faith. 4, They differ in their consequences. The consequence of the assurance of faith is a deliverance from the guilt of sin, whether they be sensible of their own act, or rather, the genuineness of their own act, or not; but the consequence of the assurance of sense is, not only the sensible removal of guilt, but comfort and consolation arising from the sensible experiences of the grace of God in the heart, whereby the truth and reality of the assurance of faith is made manifest, and that the guilt of sin is removed. 1 John v, 13. Isaiah l, 10. Mark ix, 24. Heb. vi, 11, 12. Eph. iii, 17, 18.

3 That as true believers may wait long before they obtain the assurance of their present being in a state of grace, and that they shall be saved; so after they have obtained it, they may have it weakened and intermitted through manifold temptations and desertions; yet they are never left destitute of such a presence of the Spirit of God as keeps them from sinking into utter despair. Wherefore, a person may be in a state of grace, and yet not be sensible and assured that he is presently in a state of grace. See Psalm lxxvii, 3—11. xxxi, 22. Job xiii, 15. Jonah ii, 4.

4 That as an infallible assurance of our being in a state of grace, is attainable in the ordinary use of the means of God's appointment, without extraordinary revelation; so it is the duty of every believer to obtain it; and the person who never seeks after it by self-examination,

prayer, and other means of God's appointment, gives but a sorry evidence of his being a true believer, 1 Cor. ii, 12. 1 John iv, 13. 2 Cor. xiii, 5. 2 Peter i, 10.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against such as deny, that there is any infallible assurance attainable by a believer in this life, that he is in a state of grace, and shall undoubtedly come to the full enjoyment of God.

2 Against such as maintain, that there is no difference between the assurance that is in justifying faith, and that which is obtained by reflection, or sensible assurance.

3 Against such as maintain, that no person can be in a state of grace but they must know it, or, which is to the same purpose, be sensibly assured of it.

4 Against such as deny, that it is any man's duty to seek for the assurance of their being in a state of salvation.

5 Against such as profess themselves to be believers, and yet never examine themselves whether they be in the faith, nor use any means and endeavours to know the state of their souls, in order to obtain an assurance of their salvation.

## CHAP. XVII.—*Of a Believer's Deliverance from the Law.*

*We believe,*

1 That all men, while in an unregenerate state, are under the law as a covenant of works, demanding perfect, personal obedience of them, under the penalty of God's wrath and curse. Gal. iii, 10. Rom. vii, 5.

2 That all true believers are delivered from the law. Rom. vi, 14.

3 That the law from which the believer is delivered, is the same from which every believer, at any time or period of the church, was delivered; and the law which every unbeliever, while such, at all times was, or is under. Rom. iii, 19, 20.

4 That it could not be the ceremonial nor judicial laws only, from which the believer, when such, is delivered; for believers under the Old Testament were not delivered from these laws, but were under them, and bound to give obedience to them; though believers and unbelievers, under the New Testament, are delivered from coming under the ceremonial law wholly, and from coming under the judicial law as far as it was peculiar to the Jews. Again, that it cannot be these laws only, from which believers are said to be delivered, is plain from this, that every believer, in every period of the church, was never under these laws; none but the Jews, under the old dispensation, were; the Gentiles never were. Now none could be delivered from a law they never were under. Rom. vi, 14. Gal. iii, 10.

5 That the law from which believers are delivered, is a law common to both Jews and Gentiles; but no other law was common to both, but the moral law. Rom. vii, 4, 5, 6.

6 That as it can be no other but the moral law from which believers are delivered; yet they are not delivered from it as a rule of life, but only as a covenant; for no man ever was, is now, or ever will be, delivered from the law as a rule. 1 Cor. ix, 21.

7 That every believer is perfectly delivered from the law as a covenant of works, so that he can neither be justified nor condemned by the law in that point of view; for he is not under it as such, nor does he owe it any obedience as a covenant. Every attempt to obey it as a covenant, is an offence against God; for it is a making of Christ's death in vain. Rom. iii, 20. viii, 1, 33, 34. Gal. ii, 21.

8 That the great mean by which the believer is delivered from the law as a covenant, is by the righteousness of Christ imputed to him: for as that righteousness answered all the demands of the law, both with regard to obedience and satisfaction; so when it is imputed to any person, then that person is delivered from the law, both in respect of obedience and satisfaction, and therefore has no more to do with it as a covenant. Rom. vii, 4. 2 Cor. v. 21. Gal. iii, 13. Rom viii, 3, 4

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against all such as deny, that man, while in an unregenerate state, is under the law as a covenant of works; but that mankind are, since the fall, or at least now, under the New Testament dispensation, under a new and milder law, which requires no more but sincere, though imperfect obedience.

2 Against all such as maintain, that the law from which the Apostle says believers are delivered, is no other but the ceremonial law.

3 Against such as deny, that believers are delivered from the law as a covenant; and maintain that the believer may be either justified or condemned by the law as a covenant.

4 Against such as maintain, that a believer is still bound to give obedience to the law as a covenant of works.

5 Against such as deny, that the believer is delivered from the law as a covenant, by the righteousness of Christ imputed to him.

6 Against such as maintain, that a believer, or any others, either are or can be delivered from the moral law as a rule of life. Therefore, we testify against all the wilful despisers and violaters of God's holy law.

## CHAP. XVIII.—*Of Good Works.*

*We believe,*

1 That our Lord Jesus Christ "gave himself for his people, to redeem them from all iniquity, and to purchase to himself a peculiar people, that should be zealous of good works." Tit. ii, 14, 15.

2 That good works are only such as are required and commanded by God, in his word, and not such as are, without his authority, devised and commanded by men only. No authority of men, however learned, holy or great, nor any pretences of zeal, good intention, nor any other thing imaginable, can constitute that a duty which God never comman-

ded, neither expressly nor by necessary consequence. Micha vi, 8. Mat. xxviii, 19, 20. xv, 9. 1 Sam. xv, 21, 22, 23.

3 That good works are only such as are performed from good principles, viz. the grace of God, and particularly faith; from good motives, viz. the authority and love of God; and to a good end, viz. the glory of God; agreeable to a good rule, viz. the word of God. Hence, a man in a bad state, an unregenerated man, can perform no good work, neither to prepare himself for regeneration, nor as a condition of his justification, nor for any other purpose whatsoever. Heb. xi, 6. 2 Cor. v, 14. 1 Cor. x, 31. Rom. viii, 7, 8.

4 That every good work is performed by strength derived from God, and not in our own strength. Believers, who are every one of them participators of the grace of God, need continued supplies of the grace of God, to enable them to perform every good work; yet are they not, because of this, to turn indolent and negligent, as if they were to attempt to perform no good work, until they were sensible of present grace given them; but they ought to be very diligent in stirring up the grace that is in them, and in crying to God for more. John xv, 4, 5, 6. Ezek. xxxvi, 26, 27. Phil. ii, 13. 2 Cor. iii, 5. Heb. vi, 11, 12.

5 That the good works of men, even of the greatest saints that ever lived, cannot be meritorious of any good thing from God; they give us no title to eternal life, nor deliverance from eternal death; yet are they very necessary on various other accounts, such as they are, when performed from the principles, motives and ends before mentioned, fruits and evidences of true faith; by them believers manifest their thankfulness to God, strengthen their assurance, edify their brethren, adorn their profession of the gospel, stop the mouths of adversaries, and glorify God, whose workmanship they are, created unto good works, Psalm xvi, 2. Job xxii, 2, 3. xxxv, 7, 8. Eph. ii, 8, 9. Rom. iii, 27, 28. James ii, 18, 20. &c.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against such as live profanely, and are wilful violaters of God's law.

2 Against such as profess themselves believers, but yet make no conscience of shewing their faith by their works.

3 Against all such as maintain, that their good works are meritorious by any means or cause whatsoever.

4 Against all such as maintain, that good works may be done by an unregenerated man, and that they are means to prepare us for regeneration, and conditions of our justification.

5 Against such as deny, that strength from God is necessary for the performance of every good work.

## CHAP. XIX.—*Of the Imperfection of the Saints in this Life.*

*We believe,*

1 That no man can arrive at perfection in holiness in this life. Isa. lxiv, 6. Gal. v, 17. Rom. vii, 15, 18. Job ix, 20.

2 That believers are, every one of them, justified at the very instant in which they believe. The weakest believer is as perfectly justified as the strongest; for they are not justified on account of their own righteousness, which is imperfect; but upon the account of the righteousness of Christ, imputed to them, which being perfect, their justification must be so also. Rom. viii, 1, 33, 34.

3 That the Saints are never represented in scripture as arriving at a sinless perfection in this life. The scriptures, indeed, speak of a perfection which the Saints either have, or may arrive at; but they never intimate, in one instance, that any of the Saints might, or ever did arrive at a sinless perfection in this life. Every regenerated person has, with regard to the new creature, formed in him a perfection of parts; but not of degrees; and every believer is comparatively perfect, that is, compared with himself or any other person while in an unregenerate state; and with such a comparative perfection, one Saint may be a great deal more perfect than another, and the same Saint may be more perfect, that is, more holy, at one time than another; which are the kinds of perfection the scriptures speak of, when they mention any perfection as belonging to the Saints in this life; but never of a sinless perfection. In regard to such a perfection, the Saints one and all of them say with the Apostle Paul, "not as though I were already perfect," and with others, "there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not;" "and if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." Phil. iii, 12. Eccles. vii, 20. 1 John i, 10. Job ix, 20.

*We therefore testify,*

Against all who maintain, that a sinless perfection is attainable in this life; as such deceive themselves and the truth is not in them; and they go about deceiving others.

## CHAP. XX.—*Of the Perseverance of the Saints.*

*We believe,*

1 That a person who never had the saving grace of God in his heart, may profess, as confidently as any true saint, that he believes the doctrines, precepts and promises of the Bible; and may make as splendid an appearance of saintship outwardly, as any saint whatsoever; and that such a professor and apparent saint may fall away totally and finally, not, indeed, from the true grace of God, which he never had, but the outward profession which he made, of believing the doctrines of grace, and of being a saint, which he never was. Gal. v, 4. 1 Tim. i, 19. 1 John ii, 19.

2 That the real saints of God may fall into very grievous sins, and remain impenitent of these for a time; and also, that they may fall from some degree of grace which they were once possessed of, so that they may not have such a high degree of faith, love, godly sorrow for sin,

and the like, as they once had, in exercise. Mat. xxvi, 70, 72, 74. See 2 Sam. xi, xii.

3 That no person who was ever possessed of the least spark of the true grace of God, can at any time fall away from it totally; that is, from every degree of it; nor finally; that is, so as to be never recovered again to the exercise of it; but every truly gracious person shall infallibly persevere unto the end, and be eternally saved. Phil. i, 6. John x, 28, 29. 1 Pet. i, 5, 9. Rom. viii, 35, 38, 39.

4 That the saints' perseverance in grace does not depend upon the right improvement of free will, nor upon their own best endeavours to persevere, though such endeavours are means which ought to be used; but upon the eternal love of God, and his infinite wisdom, almighty power, his precious promises and well ordered covenant, and his inviolable veracity; and because every person in the Godhead, and every divine perfection, are concerned in their preservation, and engaged to maintain it. 2 Tim. ii, 18, 19. Jer. xxxi, 3. Rom. viii, 33, 34. Luke xxii, 32. Heb. vii, 25.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against all such as deny the certain and infallible perseverance of the saints; and maintain that a person who is endowed with the true grace of God, may, notwithstanding, fall totally and finally away from it, and be condemned to eternal wrath.

2 Against such as maintain, that the saints' perseverance depends wholly upon the right improvement of their own free will, and diligent endeavours to persevere.

## CHAP. XXI.—*Of Christian Liberty, and Liberty of Conscience.*

*We believe,*

1 That the liberty which is purchased for believers, and with which they are so highly privileged and blessed, does not consist in any liberty to break any of God's holy commandments, nor to neglect any of the duties required by him; but in their being freed from the guilt of sin, the condemning wrath of God, the curse of the law; and in their being delivered from this present evil world, bondage of Satan, and dominion of sin; from the evil of afflictions, the sting of death, the power of the grave, and everlasting damnation; as also in their free access to God, and their yielding obedience to him, not through slavish fear, but a child-like love and a willing mind; all which were common to believers under the Old Testament. But under the New Testament, christian liberty is farther enlarged; for believers under the New Testament are not only delivered from the ceremonial law, to which believers under the Old Testament were subjected, but have greater access of boldness to the throne of grace, and fuller communications of the Holy Spirit, than believers under the Old Testament did ordinarily partake

of. Tit. ii, 14. 1Thess. i, 10. Gal. iii, 13. i, 4. Col. i, 13. Acts xxvi, 18. Rom. viii, 1. v, 1.

2 With regard to liberty of conscience, we believe, that now under the New Testament dispensation, it is the same as it was under the Old Testament. It was then limited to whatever God commanded, by his word, to be done, or refrained from; and so it is now under the New Testament. Whatever he commands to be done, or refrained from, we have liberty of conscience to do, or refrain from doing; but we have no more liberty of conscience to break God's laws, worship him according to our vain hearts' inventions, either with regard to matter or manner, or to vent blasphemous opinions or heretical tenets, now, more than they had such a liberty of conscience under the Old Testament. We deny that God ever gave to any people, under any dispensation of the covenant, or in any period of the church's existence, such a liberty of conscience; and we believe it to be little short of blasphemy, to maintain that he ever gave any such liberty of conscience. Gal. v, 13. 1 Pet. ii, 19. John viii, 34. Luke i, 74.

3 We believe, with our excellent Confession of Faith, that God alone is Lord of the conscience. It is the law of God only that can bind the conscience, and not the laws of men which are in any thing contrary to, or beside the law of God. The conscience is free from all such doctrines and traditions of men. But we also believe, that God, who is the alone Lord of conscience, and because he is the Lord of all men's consciences, has a right to restrain, by what means he pleases, the irregularities, rebellion and disobedience of a blinded, erring conscience; and has a right to appoint such punishments as he pleases, to be inflicted in this world by whomsoever he shall appoint for that purpose, when the rebellion of a blinded, erring conscience appears in overt acts. It is not conscience, but the law of God, that is the rule prescribed by the Lord of conscience, by which we are to be ruled, and according to which all our thoughts, words and actions are to be squared; and conscience itself must be ruled and regulated by this rule prescribed by the Lord of conscience. Therefore, if men transgress the rule and law of conscience, prescribed by the Lord of conscience, they may be punished as the Lord of conscience directs and prescribes by his laws; and these laws prescribed by him for the punishment of the transgressors of the law of conscience, should be as conscientiously obeyed as any other of his laws; for they are enjoined by the same authority that any other of his laws are, and because God is Lord of the conscience. To pretend a liberty of conscience to reject, contradict, oppose or neglect this or any other of God's doctrines or commandments, is to pervert and destroy the true nature of liberty of conscience, as much as it is to require an implicit and blind obedience to the doctrines and commandments of men, or in matters of indifference. Therefore, whosoever takes upon him to teach men, that they have a right to profess what they please, and to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences, notwithstanding they profess and worship directly contrary to the Bible, which is the rule of conscience prescribed by the Lord of conscience;

and although contrary and contradictory to this rule, (the Bible) they profess and teach blasphemy, and worship in a manner grossly idolatrous; no human authority having (they say) any commission from God to take cognizance of them as blasphemers, false worshippers, or hereticks; is a teaching rebellion against God, who in his word has ordered blasphemers and idolators to be put to death, and other opinions and practices contrary to his word, to be punished according to the degree of their criminality. Isaiah viii, 20. Mat. xv, 9. Hosea v, 11. Deut. xiii, 6—12. xvii, 2—7. Lev. xxiv, 16, 22. Ezra vi, 8—12. vii, 25, 26, 27. Dan. iii, 29.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against all such as deny, that christian liberty consists in a freedom from the guilt of sin, and from its power and pollution; from the wrath of God and curse of the law, &c.

2 Against such as maintain, that christian liberty consists in a dispensation to indulge themselves in any sin, or a freedom from the obligation to submit and subject themselves to all God's commandments without reserve.

3 Against such as deny, that God is the alone Lord of the conscience.

4 Against such as deny, that God's word and law is the only rule of conscience, by which alone it ought to be directed, and by which alone it can be bound to an implicit compliance and obedience to the Lord of conscience, who is God alone.

5 Against such as maintain, that every man has a right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of his own conscience, free from the cognizance of any human tribunal, notwithstanding that he worships in a way and manner directly contrary to that prescibed by God in his word, and in such a way and manner as God hath ordered the worshipper to be punished by the civil magistrate. And therefore,

6 Against such as deny, that God, who is the alone Lord of the conscience, has given any orders in his word, that any human tribunal should take cognizance of, and punish men, for any opinions or practices, whereof they are conscientious that they are right; and especially with civil pains.

7 Against such as maintain, that if an Atheist, Deist, Arian, or any other such blasphemers and hereticks, are conscientious that their wicked opinions are right, that it is more their duty to maintain their opinions, and even to persuade all men that they are right, than to suppress their opinions.

8 Against all such as maintain, that all sanguinary laws are now abolished under the New Testament dispensation.

## CHAP. XXII.—*Of the Civil Magistrate.*

*We believe,*

1 That civil magistracy is an ordinance of God, the supreme Lord and Ruler of the Universe. Civil magistrates are, by God, appointed

under himself, over the people, for his own glory, which is the supreme, and the publick good, which is the subordinate end of magistracy.—Magistracy being ordained for these great ends, magistrates are not only to have an eye to the good of the commonwealth, simply considered, but in connection with, and subserviency to the advancement of the declarative glory of him, by whom kings reign, and princes decree justice. Rom. xiii, 1. Deut. i, 16, 17. 2 Chron. xix, 5, 6. Deut. xvi, 18. 1 Tim. ii, 2.

2 That magistracy is founded, not in supernatural revelation, nor in grace, but in the law of nature; which we believe to be substantially the same with the moral law,—a plain and full copy of which is given us in the Bible. Exodus xx, 13. Gen. ix, 6. Romans ii, 4.

3 That even the light of nature shews, that the law of nature requires that such as are advanced to magistratical dignity, should be men possessed of such qualifications as are necessary to fit them for the discharge of that high and important trust that is committed to their management—The qualifications which the very light of nature, we should think, points out as necessary, are expressed in the Bible; which are, that they should be just men, men fearing God, and hating covetousness. Unless men are possessed of these qualifications in some good degree, they are morally unfit to be entrusted with, or to discharge the magistratical functions, to the glory of God, or good of men. Exodus xviii, 19, 21. 2 Samuel xxiii, 3.

4 That as it is impossible that any man can have the fear of God in him, who denies the being of a God, or who has ventured to deny a trinity of persons in the Godhead; and as it cannot be reasonably expected, that men who shew so little regard to God as fearlessly to deny his being and perfections, can ever have any true regard to the rights of men; hence the necessity of a religious test in all governments: for if a man discredits the being of a God, of what use is it to require an oath of him? Or if he denies the scripture to be the word of God, of what use is it to swear him on the Bible—a book which he ridicules, as nothing but imposture and priestcraft? Can such an oath be supposed to bind him? Therefore a religious test is necessary, in order to know whether men even believe the existence and divinity of what they swear by. 2 Samuel xxiii, 3. Exodus xviii, 19, 21. Deut. xvii, 14, 15, 18, 19.

5 That agreeable to our Confession of Faith, infidelity or difference in religion doth not make void the magistrate's just and legal authority, (though we believe that it is both absurd and unreasonable for Christians to invest an infidel with the magistratical office;) yet if the constitution of a nation excludes every citizen from all official privilege, or from a seat in any and every department of government, legislative, executive and judicial, unless he swears to support infidels in the profession and propagation of their infidelity, blasphemers in the propagation of their blasphemy, and hereticks in the propagation of their heresy, under pretence of liberty of conscience, or any other pretence whatsoever; or unless they swear to support something or any thing contrary

to the word of God; then such constitution, and such government, is such that no citizen can, without sinning against God, accept any office under them, supreme or subordinate, where such an oath is made essential to his office; nor can such a constitution, taken in its whole compass, be a moral constitution. Psalm ii, 2, 3. xciv, 20.

6 That the magistratical duties are essentially the same in Heathen and Christian governments, where Heathen governments have access, if they choose, to the word of God; though the Heathen magistrate cannot be supposed to be capable of performing his duty, in every respect, because he wants sufficient light to direct him to what are the duties of his station. The duties of the civil magistrate are, to protect the subjects in their persons and property, from all unjust violence; to support and establish the true religion of Jesus Christ in their dominions; to suppress all infidelity, blasphemy, heresy, and idolatry in their realms; to call Synods on emergent occasions; to be present at them, and to require and command that the members of Synod do every thing agreeably to the word of God; but he is not to be present at Synods as a member of them, to argue, debate or vote on any question, which properly belongs to such Synod to move, debate or vote, in their synodical capacity; for the magistrate may not assume to himself the administration of the word and sacraments, nor the power of the keys of the kingdom of Heaven; but, as the deputy of the God of Heaven and Earth, to see to the advancement of his Lord's glory among his subjects, commanding them to perform carefully the duties of their office and station; so that the religion of Jesus Christ may be more firmly established and propagated in the nation at large, in opposition to all false religion, that God's name may be glorified, the commonwealth prosper, and the subjects rendered more happy. Romans xiii, 4, 5, 7. Deut. xiii, 4—12. Lev. xxiv, 16. Deut. xvii, 2—7. 2 Chron. xix, 8. xxix and xxx.

7 That the duty of subjects is, to yield obedience to all the lawful commands of their lawful superiors, and to support them in the execution of their magistratical trust, with their persons, property and prayers. Rom. xiii, 4, 5, 7.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against all such as deny, that civil government is of God's instituting and ordaining; but maintain that it is an invention of man.

2 Against all such as maintain, that a Christian is not bound, under the New Testament, to yield allegiance to civil authority.

3 Against such as maintain, that dominion is founded in grace.

4 Against such as maintain, that the moral law and the law of nature are so materially different, that magistracy cannot be said to be founded equally in the law of nature, and the moral law as revealed in the Bible.

5 Against such as maintain, that the civil magistrate, as such, has nothing to do with the propagation and establishment of the true religion, more than a false religion; nor with the suppression of errors, blasphemy, idolatry and the like, as such; and that all blasphemers, idolaters, hereticks, and errorists of every kind, have as good a right to all

civil priviieges, and to be protected in their blasphemies, heresies and abominable errors and idolatries, as the professors of the religion of Jesus Christ.

6 Against such as maintain, that all men are bound to receive and support, as the odinance of God, all such as are, in the Providence of God, exalted to power in a nation, though tyrants or usurpers; or bound to give their power to the beast, and such like.

7 Against such as deny, that any religious test whatsoever, even the acknowledgment of the being of a God, is essential to the being and constitution of a lawful magistrate.

## CHAP. XXIII.—*Of the Church—Of Christ as Head of the Church—Of the Government of the Church—Of Church Fellowship—Of Religious Worship, and of the Sabbath Day—Of the Sacraments—Of Church Discipline.*

### SECT. 1—*Of the Church.*

*We believe,*

1 That the church of Christ is distinguished into his church visible and invisible. Christ's invisible church consists of all true believers, and of them only. Christ's visible church consists of all those who, in every part of the world, profess the true religion, and their children. Eph. v, 27, 32. i, 10. Mat. xiii, 24—30, 47, 48. Acts ii, 39. Mat. xix, 14.

2 The church of Christ hath been sometimes more, sometimes less pure, according as the doctrine of the gospel is preached, ordinances administered, and worship performed, more or less purely in them. See Rev. i, ii. Rev. xvii, 5.

3 That the marks whereby a true church is distinguished from a false, are, the sound and true preaching of the word of God, wherein God hath revealed himself to us; the right administration of the sacraments of Christ Jesus; and ecclesiastical discipline uprightly administered according to God's word. Gal. i, 6—9. Rom. xvi, 17. 2 Thess. iii, 6, 14. 1 Tim. v, 19, 20, 21.

4 That unto the visible church, Christ hath given the ministry, oracles and ordinances of God, for gathering the elect and perfecting his saints more and more in this life, to the end of the world; and doth by his own presence and Spirit, according to his promise, make them effectual thereunto. Eph. iv, 11, 12, 13. Mat. xxviii, 19, 20.

5 That there is no church so pure, but it is subject to mixture and error; and some have so far degenerated as to become no churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan: but there will be always a church of Christ on earth, to worship him according to his will. Matthew xiii, 24—30, 47, 48. 1 Cor. xiii, 12.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against such as deny, that a church of Christ can so far degenerate, as to become a synagogue of Satan.

2 Against such as maintain, that a church of Christ may arrive at perfection in purity, and even to infallibility in this life.

3 Against such as deny, that the infants of church members are also members of the visible church.

4 Against such as maintain, that it is immaterial to what church we belong, whether pure or impure.

## Sect. 2.—*Of Christ as Head of the Church.*

*We believe,*

1 That Christ Jesus is the alone head of the church. That neither angels nor men; neither popes, kings, nor emperors, nor councils, can claim the headship of the church without blasphemy. The pope of Rome is so far from being the head of the church, that he is that antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself against Christ and all that is called God. Eph. i, 22, 23. Col. i, 18. 2 Thess. ii, 3—9.

2 That as our Lord Jesus is head of his church, so he is head over all things to his church; angels and principalities and powers being made subject unto him, and all things put under his feet, to subserve the great design of glorifying God and perfecting his saints. Eph. i, 20, 21, 22. 1 Peter iii, 22.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against such as deny, that Christ is the alone head of the church.

2 Against such as maintain, that kings, or any other rulers, are head of the church.

3 Against such as maintain, that the pope of Rome is head of the church.

4 Against such as deny, that Christ is head over all persons and things for his church's good.

## Sect. 3.—*Of the Government of the Church.*

*We believe,*

1 That the government of the church, which is of divine right, or which is founded in, and agreeable to scripture, is presbyterial. 1 Tim. iv, 14.

2 That a minister, a pastor, a bishop, and a teaching elder, according to the scriptures, denote one and the same office; and this is the highest office in the church. The scriptures know nothing of bishops, archbishops, &c. superior in power or dignity to a pastor of a congregation. There are other elders of divine right, whose office it is to rule only, in conjunction with the teaching elder; but not to teach. Deacons are also of divine right; whose office it is to serve in distributing the elements at the Lord's table, and to provide for, and duly distribute, provision to ministers and to the poor. Acts xiv, 23. xx, 17, 18, 28. 1 Pet. v, 1. 1 Tim. v, 17. Acts vi, 1, 2, 3, 4.

3 That in Presbyterian church government, which is the only scriptural one, the lowest court is denominated a Session; the next higher

court is denominated a Presbytery; the next higher to that is denominated a Synod; the next higher above a Synod is denominated a General Assembly; and the highest of all is an Oecumenical Council. Mat. xviii, 17, 18. 1 Tim. iv, 14. Acts xv, 2, 4, 6.

4 That to the Apostles and their successors, the ordinary ministers of the gospel, our Lord committed the keys of the kingdom of Heaven, and with them to the ruling elder the key of rule only. Neither the key of doctrine, nor of rule and government, were committed to the people in general; nor is any of the keys committed to the civil magistrate; nor do the scriptures give any countenance to the Episcopal church government, by bishops, archbishops, &c. Mat. xvi, 19. xviii, 18. 1 Cor. xii, 28. 1 Tim. v, 17. Mat. xxviii, 18, 19, 20. Heb. xiii, 7, 17.

5 That the actual members of every congregation have an exclusive right to choose their own pastors and other officers. Acts i, 15—23. vi, 2—5. 1 Cor. xii, 18, 20, 21.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against such as deny Presbyterian church government to be of divine right.

2 Against such as would invest the civil magistrate with the keys of the kingdom of Heaven.

3 Against such as maintain, that the key of government is vested in the community of professors in general.

4 Against such as maintain, that the government of the church by bishops, archbishops, &c. as superior to pastors, has any scripture authority; or that a bishop, archbishop, &c. is a different and superior office to that of a pastor of a single congregation.

5 Against such as maintain, that there is no form of church government of divine right.

6 Against such as deny the divine right of the ruling elder.

## Sect. 4.—*Of Church Fellowship.*

*We believe,*

1 That every gospel hearer is bound to believe the word of God, and in Christ as revealed therein; to make a profession of his faith, and to join in communion with the church of Christ; in which faith, profession, and joining in church fellowship, if he would avoid the great evil of self-deception and hypocrisy, he ought to act with the greatest sincerity. Acts xiii, 26. Mark i, 15. 1 John iii, 23. Acts ii, 38, 41, 47. 2 Tim. iii, 5.

2 That it is not essential to the reception of any one into church fellowship, that the church should be infallibly assured, that such an one's faith and profession is genuine and sincere; it being impossible for the church to ascertain infallibly, or any other way but by external appearance and profession, that any one's faith, or even profession is sincere. To search the heart is the prerogative of Jehovah alone. All the church

can demand of any, desirous to join in her communion, is an apparently candid profession of faith in Christ, and in the doctrines and precepts of his word, and of a resolution to walk agreeably thereto unreservedly. Acts viii, 13—23. Rev. ii, 23. Acts viii, 37. Rom. xvi, 17.

3 That in order to obtain, and preserve unanimity and mutual cooperation among church members, it is necessary that they be of one mind, as far as human frailty will admit, about the genuine meaning of the scriptures; for it cannot be supposed that men can comfortably walk together in any society, unless they be, in some good measure, agreed. It is necessary, therefore, to exhibit in a Confession of Faith, and on proper occasions, in a Testimony for truth and against error, in a summary point of view, the true and genuine sense of the scripture; and the acknowledgment of the belief of these, either one or both, as the necessity of the case may require, by an applicant for communion with the church, as the true sense of the scriptures, and the point of view in which he understands them, ought to be made the term or condition of his membership and communion in the church. Did all men see with one eye, as it were, and think with one heart, in respect to the doctrines and precepts of the word of God; were there no corruption nor blindness in the human heart; were there among the hearers and professors of the gospel and christian religion, no opposition to, nor enmity nor hostility against, nor perversion of the doctrines and precepts of our holy religion; then confessions and testimonies would be unnecessary: the profession of belief in Christ, and of the scripture, would be all the terms of admission into the fellowship of the church necessary. But as constant and woful experience teaches us, that men are far, very far from seeing or thinking alike, in matters of true religion; and that man is by nature corrupt, blind unfriendly and hostile to God's word and way of salvation; hence the necessity of confessions of faith and testimonies for the truths of God's word, and in opposition to all contrary errors, as terms of communion; that the church may be kept pure, enemies to the truth kept out of her communion, and errors and errorists detected, should they at any time creep into the church; and as a mean of purging her of these, when at any time she is infested with them. Amos iii, 3. Rom. vi, 17. 2 Tim. i, 13. Phil. ii, 2. iii, 16. i, 27. Acts ii, 42. Rev. xii, 11. 2 Thess. iii, 6.

4 That nothing should be made a term of communion in the church, which is not perfectly agreeable to the scriptures; much less should any thing be made so, that is contradictory to the scriptures; but all those truths, to the knowledge of which the church hath attained, and which have been any part of the church's testimony, should be held fast, and earnestly contended for, against all opposers and backsliders, however high their pretences, to zeal for the truth, may be. As no pretences of zeal for reformation, can warrant the church to make terms of communion which are not scriptural, or clearly deducible therefrom; so no pretences of moderation can warrant her to decline from the truths of the word, nor from the church's testimony which is agreeable thereto. Isaiah viii, 20. Mat. xxviii, 19, 20. Phil. iii, 16—20. Heb. x, 38, 39.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against all such as exclaim against and reprobate confessions of faith, and stated testimonies for truth and against error, as tests of orthodoxy, and more especially as terms of communion; whether it be under pretence of their being impositions on conscience, or that they cramp freedom of inquiry, or whatever other pretext.

2 Against such as maintain that the bare profession of a belief of the scriptures is all the term of communion the church should make.

3 Against all such as make terms of communion of notions and opinions, which have no scripture warrant, neither express, nor by necessary consequence.

4 Against such as make terms of communion, excluding from church fellowship such as endeavour, in their conduct, to follow the approven examples of the saints recorded in the scriptures.

5 Against all such as, notwithstanding their baptismal and other solemn engagements, to believe, profess and walk according to the scriptures, have declined from the profession they have made, and the vows they have come under; and not only so, but also require, as a term and condition of church communion with them, that every applicant, for such communion, shall approve of their declension from their solemn profession and breach of vows; or which is to the same effect, who reject from sealing ordinances, all such as cannot nor will not reject the obligation and binding authority of some of God's laws, which being once enjoined by his authority, neither they nor any others can shew, that they have been ever repealed by the same authority; and so, as far as they can, make void these laws of God by their tradition; and thus involve themselves and all others, as many as they can get, in apostacy from these laws of God, their own profession and covenant obligations to adhere to them;—and also from a clear and noble testimony of the church, not only in her Confession of Faith, but also in many other earnest contendings for the authority and binding obligation of these laws, now under the New Testament, as much as under the Old.

## SECT. 5.—*Of Religious Worship, and of the Sabbath Day.*

*We believe,*

1 That the very light of nature manifests that there is a God, who ought to be feared, reverenced and worshipped by all his reasonable creatures; but that which he requires, and is due to him, and the manner and means of performing it acceptably, cannot be known by the light of nature, but by divine revelation only: for he may not be worshipped according to the devices and imaginations of men, nor by the suggestions of Satan, nor by any visible representations of him; but as a Spirit, in spirit and in truth. Rev. xxii, 9. Rom. i, 21, 25. Luke iv, 8. Mat. xv, 9. Acts iv, 24.

2 That religious worship is to be given to all the persons of the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, equally, and that through the

merits and mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ only, and not to, nor through any mere creature, men nor angels, as objects or mediums of worship. Mat. xxviii, 19. 2 Cor. xiii, 14. Mat. xv, 9. Isaiah xxix, 13, 14.

3 That as God is to be worshipped internally, by trusting in him, loving, delighting in him, &c. so praying to God, secretly by every individual; in the family by the heads of families, every morning and evening at least; publickly in the assembled congregation; and by Christians meeting together for prayer and conference, is one principal part of God's worship. Praising God publickly and privately, is another principal branch of God's worship: also, the sound preaching and hearing of the word, the administration and receiving the sacraments according to God's word, and the reading of the scriptures publickly and privately, religious oaths and vows, solemn fastings and thanksgivings on such occasions as there is a proper call for them, are all parts of worship which God requires of his creatures, of the human kind, while in this world. Eph. vi, 18. 1 Thess. v, 17. Psalm xcii, 1, 2. Heb. x, 25. Psalm l, 23.

4 That in celebrating God's praises, the psalms, hymns and spiritual songs indited by the Holy Spirit, and none other ought to be used in the worship of God either publickly or privately. 2 Chron. xxix, 30. Compare Col. iii, 16.

5 That God hath appointed one seventh part of our time to be devoted to his service, besides the time required for our daily morning and evening devotions; which seventh part of time is, in scripture, sometimes called the sabbath, the first day of the week, and the Lord's day. From the creation of the world to the resurrection of Christ, the seventh day of the week was to be kept by divine appointment; but ever since, it is the first, and not the seventh day of the week, that is to be kept by divine appointment. Gen. ii, 2, 3. Exod. xx, 8—11. Acts xx, 7. John xx, 1, 19. Rev. i, 10.

6 That the Lord's day is the only day appointed by God to be kept holy, though he allows us to set days apart, on proper occasions, for fasting and thanksgiving. Those days which, by men now under the New Testament are called festival or holy days, have no warrant from the word, and are superstitious. Exod. xx, 8. Mat. ix, 14, 15. xxviii, 20. Col. ii, 20—23. Mat. xv, 7, 8, 9.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against all such as maintain that all forms of worship are indifferent, and all alike acceptable.

2 Against all such as deny, either by principle or practice, that families are bound to worship God morning and evening every day; and against such as do not make conscience of secret prayer.

3 Against such as maintain that the inspired psalms, given to us by God, in the Bible, are not now suitable to be sung in gospel worship; and that uninspired psalms and hymns ought, and are more suitable to be sung now under the gospel dispensation.

4 Against such as assume to preach the gospel without a regular call thereto.

5 Against such as encourage women, or any others not warranted by the word of God, to speak, exhort and teach in the church; and encourage the hearers to confuse and disturb the worship and worshippers, by screaming and crying out in time of worship, and also by such distortions and gesticulations, as oftentimes prevent the minister from preaching, and the people always from hearing with seriousness and composure; which seem to be evident marks of delusion.

6 Against all such as deny, that God has appointed any time to be kept as a holy sabbath to the Lord, now under the New Testament; against such as maintain this either in principle or practice; and also against such as refuse to keep the first day of the week as the Christian Sabbath.

7 Against all such as are observers of days dedicated to saints, commonly called festival and holy days. This is a considerable branch of their superstition.

8 Against such as without absolute necessity follow any labour, travelling, driving waggons or pack-horses on the sabbath day.

## Sect. 6.—*Of the Sacraments.*

*We believe,*

1 That the sacraments under the New Testament are, baptism and the Lord's supper, and these only: there are under the New Testament no other sacraments of divine appointment; therefore all others are spurious, being wholly of human invention. Mat. xxviii, 19. 1 Cor. x, 1—4. xi, 23—29.

2 That these sacraments are to be administered by the ministers of the gospel only; and neither of them is to be administered privately, but publickly before the assembled congregation. Mat. xxviii, 19. iii, 5, 6, 13.

3 That the outward element used in baptism is water only: the outward elements used in the administration of the Lord's supper, are bread and wine only. Any additions to these, are the superstitious inventions of men. Acts x, 47. Mat. iii, 11. 1 Cor. xi, 23, 24, 25. Prov. xxx, 6.

4 That the infants of believers are to be baptized, as being members of the church. Baptism is rightly administered, by washing, pouring, or sprinkling of water upon the person to be baptized. Acts ii, 38, 39. Luke xviii, 15, 16. Acts ii, 41. xvi, 33. Mark vii, 4.

5 That the Lord's supper is to be received after suitable preparation by self-examination and humiliation, which requires some time to be set apart for that purpose, previous to the administration of that ordinance. It is rightly administered, by a minister of the gospel, after preaching the word to the people, taking, and by solemn prayer setting apart the elements, which, as before said, are bread and wine only, and giving them to the communicants, who also are to receive them, and

divide them among themselves, all according to Christ's appointment, 1 Cor. xi, 23—29. Luke xxii, 17—20.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against such as deny, that it is the proper and exclusive province of a gospel minister, to administer the holy sacraments.

2 Against all such as deny that baptism is to be administered to the infants of believing parents; but to adults only.

3 Against such as make dipping or overwhelming in water, essential to the right administration of baptism.

4 Against such as maintain, that none can be saved unless they be baptized, and that infants of believers are as heathens until they be baptized; and such as maintain, that baptism regenerates those who are baptized.

5 Against such as maintain more sacraments, under the New Testament, than baptism and the Lord's supper, and that the elements are transubstantiated into the real body and blood of Christ; that the bread only, and not the cup also, should be given to the laity, and that the cup belongs to the priest only: and also against those who, though they deny transubstantiation, yet maintain consubstantiation, or that the real body and blood of Christ is in, with, and under the bread and wine, though the elements are not changed into the body and blood of Christ,

6 against the principle and practice of those who maintain that it is proper and right to administer any of the sacraments privately.

7 Against such as adulterate the elements in either sacrament, by uninstituted mixtures, or by adding any thing of human invention to any of the sacraments.

## Sect. 7.—*Of Church Discipline.*

*We believe,*

1 That as the visible church is in a state of imperfection, it is impossible to prevent disorders altogether; but as those who still remain in their natural state, often profess themselves to be real believers, and cannot be kept out of the church by all the care of the church officers, at all times, and from the remainders of corruption in the true saints of God, it is not possible but that offences will come. 2 Thess. iii, 6. Mat. xviii, 7.

2 That an offence, or scandal, is not every thing at or with which a person may be displeased. That is properly an offence, or scandal, which, in a person's conduct, is, either in itself or from its circumstances, calculated to provoke others to sin, or may, in any respect, hinder or prevent their spiritual edification or consolation. Rom. xiv, 13. Luke xvii, 1.

3 That our Lord Jesus Christ has instituted discipline in his church, for the purpose of removing scandals, and for preventing their baneful consequences; nor can any church, where it is not impartially applied according to scripture direction, expect, upon good grounds, his presence to be with her. Eph. v, 11. 1 Thess. v, 14. 1 Cor. v, 12.

4 That discipline, properly exercised, is extremely necessary—1 For vindicating the honour of our Lord Jesus, which suffers greatly by the corrupt principles and practices of professors. 2 For maintaining the authority of his ordinances, and chastening disobedience thereto. 3 For averting threatened judgments against those churches who are not zealous in removing scandals. 4 For keeping the church pure, lest the whole should be infected with evil principles or practices. And lastly, for the benefit of those who offend, that they may be humbled and ashamed, and recovered from sin. Mat. xi, 29. 2 Thess. iii, 6. Rev. ii, 14. Rom. xvi, 17. 2 Thess. iii, 14.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against such as profanely deny that church discipline is necessary; and hold it to be tyranny over the consciences of men.

2 Against such as maintain, that discipline ought to be exercised only against immoral practices, not against erroneous principles; and practise accordingly.

## CHAP. XXIV.—*Of Oaths and Vows.*

*We believe,*

1 That an oath, when lawfully taken, is a part of religious worship. In swearing, the swearer appeals to God, as a witness of the truth of what he swears, and for judgment and condemnation if he swears falsely. Deut. vi, 13. 2 Cor. i, 23. Lev. xix, 12.

2 That there is no other thing, name or person, by which we must swear, but by God only, with an uplifted hand; which ought to be done with reverence and holy fear. Hence all irreverent and profane swearing by the name of God, or swearing by any other person or thing, is to be abhorred, being very sinful. Jer. iv, 2. Psalm xxiv, 4. xv, 4.

3 That an oath may be taken when the importance of the case requires it, as well now, under the New Testament, as formerly under the Old; and if, in such a case, an oath be imposed by lawful authority, it of right ought to be taken. 2 Cor. i, 23. Heb. vi, 16.

4 That every person who has a right to be admitted to take an oath, as well as every person who can with propriety be admitted to administer an oath, ought to be such only as understands the nature of an oath, and its importance. Exod. xxii, 9, 10, 11. Jer. iv, 2.

5 That no man can oblige himself by oath in any case, or to any thing, which is not just and good, and which he is not fully persuaded is so; but it is sinful to refuse to swear, in order to decide controversies between man and man, and to preserve the innocent from injury, or to detect villainy; and it is even sometimes right and proper to take an oath voluntarily, or when called to do so by those who have no authority, in order to protect the innocent and detect the guilty: but this could only apply to cases where there is no lawful authority to appeal to for justice. Exod. xx, 7. Heb. vi, 16. Exod. xxii, 9, 10, 11.

6 That an oath is to be taken in the plain and common sense of the words, without equivocation or mental reservation. It cannot bind to any thing sinful; but in any thing not sinful, it binds to performance, even to a person's own hurt, and may not be violated, though made to hereticks or infidels. Jer. iv, 2. Psalm xxiv, 4. xv, 4.

7 That a vow or covenant is of the like nature with a promissory oath, and is to be taken with the same religious care and fear, and to be performed with the like faithfulness. It is to be made to God only, and not to any creature, and must be made voluntarily if we would have it accepted. By such a covenant we bind ourselves more strictly to the performance of necessary duties, or to other things not prohibited in the word of God, so far and so long, and no longer, as they may fitly conduce to God's glory, and our own and others' good. Isaiah xix, 21. Psalm lxxvi, 11. Deut. xxiii, 23. Psalm l, 14. Gen. xxviii, 20, 21, 22. Psalm cxxxii, 2—5.

8 That covenanting is a duty now under the New Testament, as well as under the Old. It may be done by individuals, congregations, or nations. Isaiah xix, 18—25. 2 Cor. viii, 5. Rev. xi, 15.

9 That if an individual covenant for himself, if it be in matters indifferent, he may limit his vow to a certain period; but if it be with regard to the service of God, there ought to be no limitation. If the covenant be made by individuals, or collective bodies, designing and intending their posterity therein, as well as themselves, for their good, then the posterity are bound as well as the original contractors. The voluntary covenant engagement is a superadded obligation, distinct from the divine law. Eccl. v, 4, 5. Jer. xi, 10. Deut. xxiii, 21. Joshua ix, compared with 2 Sam. xxi.

10 That no covenant can bind any person to any thing contrary to God's word, nor to any thing impossible, either to be performed by our own natural ability or in cases where we have no promise from God to enable us to perform it.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against all profane swearers and swearing whatsoever.

2 Against such as deny, that it is a duty to take an oath to end strife, or for any other purpose however good, now under the New Testament.

3 Against such as allow themselves to swear with mental reservations, and not in the plain meaning of the words.

4 Against such as maintain, that it is no matter how men swear, provided they declare the truth; and consequently that it is right to swear by kissing the book.

5 Against such as deny covenanting to be a duty under the New Testament.

6 Against such as deny personal, congregational, and national covenanting to be a duty.

7 Against such as deny, that any covenant can bind any but those who personally entered into it; that any covenant can bind posterity.

## CHAP. XXV.—*Of Religious Fasting and Thanksgiving.*

*We believe,*

1 That religious fasting is an ordinance of God. 2 Chron. xx, 3. Joel i, 14. ii. 12, 15.

2 That it is not an ordinary duty, such as prayer and praise, reading, preaching and hearing the word, and the like are; but it is an occasional duty, to be performed when the proper occasion, in providence, offers. [The proofs seen under the following article.]

3 That according to the scriptures, the proper times and occasions for performing this duty are such as the following:—when any judgments are imminent or actually inflicted; when men are under conviction of sin, and resolving on reformation; when men are under the hidings of God's face, and are either sensible or insensible of it; when a person or community would have special light in matters of great importance; when men individually, or socially, are about to seek for any special mercy; and when a very important duty is to be performed, by them, and they see the necessity of the special presence and blessing of God, in order to their success therein; when men have an uncommon difficulty to encounter, or danger to avoid; and when men, either individually or socially, have some very solemn approach to God in view, which requires special preparation and self-examination. See 2 Chron. xx, 3. Ezra viii. 21. Neh. ix. Esther iv, 16, 17, &c.

4 That as in the participation of the Lord's supper we make a very solemn approach to God, so we need special preparation by self-examination; need special light, not only that we have grace, but that we have it in exercise; and have great difficulties to encounter, such as indwelling sin and unbelief, and great danger to avoid, even of eating and drinking unworthily; fasting seems both proper and necessary before attending on that ordinance. Compared with the proofs of the preceding article—1 Cor. xi, 28.

5 That fasting consists in abstinence from food, except in cases where the constitutions or present circumstances of persons will not, without injury admit, and even then it ought to be used sparingly; and from worldly employments and recreations, and on such occasions men ought to be exercised in solemn confession of sin and deep humiliation on account of it. Jonah iii, 7, 8, 9. Neh. ix.

6 That the scriptures teach us, that it is our duty to set some time apart for solemn thanksgiving, on some particular occasions; such as, when any imminent judgment is averted, or if inflicted, removed; when any signal mercy is vouchsafed, or distinguished favour obtained, either unexpected, or which we have been earnestly seeking by fasting and prayer. It is lawful and right for nations, congregations, families and individuals to appoint times of fasting and thanksgiving; which when appointed in a proper manner, and for proper ends, ought to be religiously observed. Neh. xi, 17. xii, 43. Psalm cxvi, 17.

7 That after the celebration of the Lord's supper, it is proper to set

some time apart for solemn thanksgiving; for therein we have been commemorating the dying love of our Lord Jesus, whereby the greatest judgments were averted from, and the greatest mercies obtained for all true believers. 2 Cor. ix, 15.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against all such as maintain that fasting is not required under the New Testament, but was proper only under the Old Testament.

2 Against all such as maintain that it is superstitious in christians to appoint a congregational fast, every time they examine themselves, in order to a right attendance on the Lord's supper; and also, to appoint and hold a day of thanksgiving immediately after the celebration of that solemn ordinance, is superstition.

## CHAP. XXVI.—*Of the State of Men after Death, of the Resurrection, and of the last Judgment.*

*We believe,*

1 That after death the bodies of men return again to dust, and therefore see corruption. Gen. iii, 19. Acts xiii, 36.

2 That the souls of men being of an immaterial and immortal substance, can neither die or fall asleep with the body. Eccl. xii, 7. Luke xxiii, 43.

3 That when the soul is separated from the body at death, it returns to God who gave it, to receive its sentence of approbation, or condemnation. Eccl. xii, 7. 2 Cor. v, 1. Luke xvi, 22, 23.

4 That the souls of the saints being, upon their separation from the body, made perfect in holiness, they immediately pass into glory, and there wait for the redemption of their body. Heb. xii, 23. 2 Cor. v, 8. Phil. i, 23.

5 That the souls of the ungodly, upon their separation from the body, are immediately cast into Hell; where they are reserved in darkness and torments, to the judgment of the great day. The scriptures know nothing of any other places of happiness or torment, but Heaven and Hell, for separate spirits. Luke xvi, 23. Acts i, 21.

6 That at the last day, there shall be a general resurrection of the just and unjust; then their bodies and souls shall be re-united forever. The self-same bodies which lay down in the dust, and no other, shall then be raised again; but with very different qualities. Such of mankind as are found alive at the last day, shall not die, but undergo a change equivalent. John v, 28, 29. Acts xxiv, 15. See 1 Cor. xv, 35—54.

7 That immediately after the resurrection, the judgment of the great day shall commence. The wicked then shall receive their final doom, and be cast into Hell, both soul and body, even all the nations that forget God. The righteous being accepted in their beloved, shall then receive a sentence of approbation, and be admitted both soul and body, into the joy of their Lord, and to take possession of, and inherit, through

eternity, that kingdom prepared for them before the foundation of the world. Mat. xxv, 41. Psalm ix, 17. But, Mat. xxv, 34—40, 21, 23.

*We therefore testify,*

1 Against all such as maintain that the souls of men are material, and consequently die with their bodies; or that they fall asleep with the body, and are inactive till it rise again.

2 Against such as maintain that the souls of the righteous do not immediately go to Heaven and glory, when they depart from their bodies; nor all the souls of the wicked go immediately to Hell at death; but that there is a third place different from Heaven and Hell, and that the souls of such, as have been guilty only of venial sins, shall be sent to be purified by purgatorial fire, in order to fit them for Heaven.

3 Against all such as deny that there shall be any resurrection of the bodies of the righteous or the wicked.

4 Against such as deny that it shall be the self-same body that shall be raised, under what pretence soever.

5 Against such as maintain that the bodies of beasts on which men feed, being incorporated with the bodies of the saints, may be raised with them and glorified together.

6 Against all such as deny that there will be a general judgment of just and unjust, or any judgment day at all.

7 Against all such as deny the eternity of the punishment of the wicked, and maintain a universal redemption and salvation of all the wicked from Hell; or that the wicked shall be immediately burnt up, as in an instant.

## THE CONCLUSION.

We have exhibited in the preceding Testimony, no other doctrines nor principles, but those which, we humbly conceive, are the doctrines and principles of the Bible, and of our reformers, in the best and purest times of reformation. Let this Testimony be compared with the word of God, and with the Confessions and Testimonies of the churches of the reformation, and especially with those of the church of Scotland, at that period, when, it is acknowledged by all that know any thing of that church, and of reformation, she exceeded all the churches on earth, for the glory snd beauty of her reformation; and we are persuaded, if the comparison be made with candor, and without prejudice, it will be acknowledged that it is agreeable to the word of God, and the purest reformation testimony, which was plainly founded on the word of God.

We have neither presumed to exceed our reformers, in reformation, nor have knowingly dropt any part of their Testimony. Our ambition and desire is to follow the footsteps of the flock, which we believe followed the Great Shepherd of the Sheep, in his doctrine and example. We think, indeed, that it is proper and right to go forward in reformation; but we have thought it sufficient, at present, to testify for the same

things and no other; because so many have made defection from them, on the one hand, and because some who have presumed to go farther in reformation, have stretched themselves beyond, not only the spirit and doctrines of the reformation, but also beyond the limits of the Bible.

Believing then that the principles and doctrines contained in this Testimony, are no other than those of our best reforming times; and to which, all those who have emigrated from Britain and Ireland, and their children, are bound by solemn covenant engagements; we beseech all into whose hands it may come;

1. To consider the matter of this Testimony, and to approve or disapprove as they find it agreeable, or disagreeable to the word of God and our reformation standards. And as we hope, that it will appear to every unprejudiced person, agreeable to the word, and our standards founded thereon:

2. That they would not reject this Testimony, upon the account of the weakness, imperfections, or the unpopularity of its authors, nor for the fewness and obscurity of those that adhere to it; nothing being a sufficient reason to reject and contemn it, if it be the truth, and opposed to error and falsehood.

3. We beseech you that you would not only not reject it, but that you would with all humility of mind receive it. You will do a manifest injury to us and the truth, by declining to join with us in bearing testimony for these truths, here exhibited, and you will also injure others greatly. You will injure truth by refusing to profess it at a time when it is run down. You'll injure us by weakening our hands, or by refusing to strengthen them when there is so great a necessity to encourage us; you will injure others by hardening them in their evil course.—May he, in whose hand the hearts of the children of men are, turn the hearts of his people from every false way, and incline them to embrace the truth in the love of it.

FINIS.

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