Faithful Contendings displayed:

BEING

An hiſtorical relation of the State and Actings of the ſuffering Remnant in the church of *Scotland*, who ſubſiſted in Select Societies, and were united in general correſpondencies during the hotteſt time of the late Perſecution, *viz.* from the year 1681 to 1691.

TOGETHER WITH

An account of the State of the land in general, and of the Society people in particular, in the intervals betwixt each of their general meetings, with ſome pertinent remarks upon theſe hiſtorical occurrences, and many letters to and from the general correſpondent meetings. *&c.*

Collected and kept in record by Mr. MICHAEL SHIELDS, who was clerk unto theſe general Societies, and perſonally preſent at moſt of their meetings.

MAL. iii. 16. *Then they that feared the Lord ſpake often one to another.*

Heb. x. 25. *Not forſaking the aſſembling of yourſelves together as the manner of ſome is, but exhorting one another, and ſo much the more as ye ſee the day approaching.*

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

Ten Conſiderations on the danger of apoſtacy and defection from a covenanted work of reformation. By Mr. *James Guthrie*, ſometime miniſter of the Goſpel at *Stirling*.

AS ALSO,

A collection of very valuable Sermons, preached by theſe faithful and eminent Servants of Jeſus Chriſt, Meſſrs. *John Kid*, *John King*, *John Welch*, *John Blackadder*, *John Dickſon* and *Gabriel Semple*.

Collected and tranſcribed by JOHN HOWIE, and publiſhed at the deſire of ſome of thoſe who deſire to own the ſame teſtimony that ſome of thoſe authors owned and ſealed with their blood.

GLASGOW:

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M, DCC, LXXX.

THE PREFACE TO THE UNDERSTANDING READER.

JUDICIOUS READER,

BY a minute obſervation of the church militant, thou wilt find that ſhe has been often reduced unto this ſad dilemma, SIN or SUFFER. Indeed, there is no allowance for ſin, but there is ſuch an arcana in the lot of the children and people of God, that if they reſolve not to ſin, then ſuffer they muſt.—*All that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus ſhall ſuffer perſecution.*—For no ſooner was the old ſerpent caſt out of heaven, then he excogitated means to ruin the whole human ſpecies; and no ſooner was that malevolent deſign in part accompliſhed *, and that gracious promiſe promulgated in the garden,—*I will put enmity between thee and the woman*, &c. than the conflict betwixt the fleſh and the ſpirit, the righteous and ths wicked, began. And no ſooner was that red dragon mentioned, Rev. xii. caſt out unto the earth, than he *perſecuted the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her ſeed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt.*

BUT then the church and people of God may be called out unto various kinds of ſufferings for a faithful adherence unto this teſtimony; for, not to mention general calamities and deſolating judgments,—ſometimes they may be called forth to bear the moſt invidious reproaches

* Th' infernal ſerpent; he it was whoſe guile
Stirred up with envy and revenge, deceived
The mother of mankind, what time his pride
Had caſt him out from heaven with all his hoſt;
In meditated fraud and malice bent
On man's *deſtruction*, *maugre* what might hap
Of heavier on himſelf, *fearleſs*, returned.
PAR. LOST. Book I. and IV.

proaches and calumnies, that envy can invent or ignorance can entertain: *they shall revile you, und speak all manner of evil of you for my name's sake.*—Sometimes they may be called out to suffer by the loss of their worldly substances, or temporal enjoyments, *And they took joyfully the spoiling of their goods.*—Again, they may be called forth to suffer *bonds and imprisonments;* yea, to endure stripes, and divers kinds of torments for his name's sake, and for the testimony of a good conscience: —*others were tortured, not accepting of deliverance.* But then they are sometimes called out unto the highest degree of suffering in this life; and that is, to lay down their lives for the cause of Christ,—*And I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God.* Nay, sometimes such is the catastrophe, that all these are compounded into one potion, and cast into the cup of their sufferings, and this seems to have been the case with those whose actions and contendings are in the following sheets described.

Here it might be accounted a superfluity in the entry, either to apologize for this publication, or yet to treat of the origin, rise or occasion of the transactions therein mentioned; seeing that for the first, the subject will answer for itself; and for the last, it is anticipated in the introduction, or preliminary discourse to the subject. What craves thy attention further concerning the instruments by which these transactions were carried on,—the subject itself,—and somewhat of the institution, warrant, duty and utility of Christian fellowship in society and correspondent meetings, may be pointed out very shortly in these few particulars following. And

First, As to the instruments, let me premise, that although the suffering of Christ in his mystical members, be a most mournful and gravaminous subject; yet it wants not its own proper use and advantages, unto those who are rightly exercised thereby, while the Lord's goodness is most graciously displayed in the midst of all these sufferings, whether unto themselves or unto others †. And

1. For

† Good when he gives, supremely good;
Nor less when he denies;
Even crosses from his sovereign hand,
Are blessings in disguise.

Harvey.

1. For inſtance, here was a poor, ſuffering (but wreſtling) handful of Chriſt's faithful witneſſes, reduced unto the utmoſt extremity, not only extruded and excluded from all benefit and priviledge of law; but even deprived and bereaved of the goſpel, that moſt valuable priviledge; their worthy paſtors who ſhould have been as high goats *before the flock*, being not only thruſt out and baniſhed from them, but even thoſe few who for their faithfulneſs had *jeoparded their lives in the high places of the field*, were by wicked hands violently graſped from them, and killed:—So that their eyes *could now no more behold their teachers*.—But lo, in this extremity, the Lord mercifully interpoſed by directing them in this critical juncture of affairs, unto an embodyiug of themſelves into a general correſpondence out of their ſelect ſocieties, which became of great and unſpeakable advantage unto them. For thereby they not only came to know one anothers welfare and mind anent the diſpenſations of the time; but were alſo enabled to conſult, agitate and conclude upon ſuch methods and meaſures, as were moſt helpful unto them for the carrying on a teſtimony publicly for the cauſe of Chriſt, and every one of his perſecuted and born down truths in that dark and cloudy day. And

2. It is to be remarked, that altho' they were expoſed unto the utmoſt danger and hardſhips, by a bloody enemy, who was ſtill upon the purſuit in queſt of them; yet (if I miſtake not) they never, except one, ſuffered the leaſt injury in coming to and going from theſe meetings, tho' ſeveral of them were taken and killed otherways.--And what is moſt noticeable of all, is, that it could not have been rationally thought that ſuch a poor waſted remnant could have ſubſiſted or held out ſo long, conſidering the manifold and moſt excruciating hardſhips and ſufferings they were reduced unto, being killed with cold,—killed with hunger,—killed in the fields,—killed upon the ſeas,—killed upon ſcaffolds,—killed under colour of law; and killed without all colour of law;—and yet with the Lord's people of old, *The more they were oppreſſed, the more they grew*; while they continued faithful unto, and ſtedfaſt with him. This little grain of muſtard ſeed planted by his own hand and watered by the blood of ſo many gallant martyrs, *nam ſanguis martyrum ſemen eccleſia eſt*, The blood of the martyrs is the

ſeed

ſeed of the church.—*And he looked, and behold the buſh burned with fire, and the buſh was not conſumed.*

Secondly, For the ſubject itſelf, there is therein contained, 1. A ſhort ſketch of the riſe and ſomewhat of the nature of theſe meetings or general correſpondencies. 2. A ſummary of the principal actings and concluſions of the ſaid meetings. 3. A brief hint of the land's ſufferings in general, and themſelves in particular, during the intervals. 4. There is a ſeries of intereſting letters, both edifying and inſtructing (ſome of whom were before in print) with ſeveral other valuable papers which will, doubtleſs, yield information unto thoſe who deſire to be informed anent the affairs of that time, beſides a variety of remarks interſperſed thro'out the whole of the ſubject.—Onlyas the true ſtate of the teſtimony ſeems to be ſomewhat overlooked at the revolution by the writer of this regiſter;* there is ſomewhat in their conduct at that time that deſerves our further conſideration, ſuch as their guarding the corrupt convention of eſtates;—their raiſing a regimnte, and aſſociating with malignants;—their eſpouſing the intereſt of the prince and princeſs of Orange, without ſcriptural and covenant qualifications; and their uniting with a corrupt and backſlidden miniſtry. But as theſe are touched at a little in the appendix, I ſhall only here in ſhort obſerve,

That altho' the Lord ſtill preſerved ſome, then and in all ages, who deſigned faithfully to contend for the word of Chriſt's patience, yet ſure, it was a pity ſo many Samſons, famous for contending and weathering out ſo many ſtorms of hazard and dangers for their faithfulneſs, ſhould have had their hair ſo eaſily cut by foundering upon theſe rocks of compliance; which may ſerve as a beacon for an example of caution unto future ages, ſhewing that it is as impoſſible for men intending honeſty and faithfulneſs, either to tamper or join, *fœdus inire*,

* If any deſiderate, or want to know any thing concerning Mr. Michael Shields, take the following hint.—He was ſon to James Shields of Haugh head, (in the Merſe) and brother to the well known Mr. Alexander Shields. He had received a competent meaſure of education.—He became a clerk to the general meeting during the moſt part of theſe tranſactions; but fell in with the revolution church, and at laſt went over with his brother amongſt others to the ſettlement at Darien, 1699. Whether he died in the wilds of Caledonia, on the ſea, in Jamaica, or at Charleſtown bar in Carolina, we know not; but he never returned.

inire, with malignants and compliers, and to retain their former integrity; as for the moſt lucid river, when gliding unto the ſalt and fluid ocean, to retain its ſweet taſte and moſt chryſtaline colour ‡.—Indeed, it moſt be granted in their behalf, that they had been long groaning under the cruel yoke of prelacy, oppreſſion, tyranny *and* ſlavery: now by the revolution they were reſtored unto their natural rights and priviledges: Preſbyterian miniſters were reſtored, and ſeveral acts made againſt them in the perſecuting period repealed:—A general aſſembly called: The confeſſion of faith ratified:—and preſbytery eſtabliſhed by act of parliament in Scotland; whereby the nation was in a great meaſure freed from tyranny and ſlavery.—But then upon an impartial enquiry, it will be found after all, that theſe who ſtood their ground in adhering to the whole of a covenanted work of reformation, and contending for the ſame both in church and ſtate, had relevant grounds and reaſons for their conduct in ſo doing.—For

1ſt, No king nor queen at, or ſince the revolution, were or are qualified with ſcriptural and covenant qualifications, nor took the ancient Scots coronation oath; which qualifications were, by ſeveral laudable acts of parliament, made the fundamental qualifications, *ſine qua non*, of admiſſion to that office by the laws of the crown *: But on the contrary, are ſworn to maintain the Engliſh conſtitution and prelatic hierarchy in direct oppoſition unto the ſame ſworn to in the ſolemn league and covenant.

2dly,

‡ From the following ſheets it is evident, That as long as the United Societies were favoured with the advices and doctrines delivered by pious and faithful Mr. James Renwick, whatever fell in their way that was diſagreeable, yet they ſtill kept ſtraight in the main, as to the point of public teſtimony. But noſooner had they got Mr. Shields, or rather Meſſrs. Lining and Boyd, than they fell into one ſtep of compliance after another, of which theſe men were the principal abettors. The obſervation is, That a faithful and orthodox miniſtry, is one of the greateſt privileges, next to Chriſt or the goſpel offer itſelf, that mankind do, or poſſibly can enjoy: On the contrary, a ſet of lazy, heterodox, corrupt and unfaithful miniſters, muſt be one of the worſt of evils that a church or poor people can be poſſibly plagued with. *The leaders of this people cauſe them to err, and they that are led of them are deſtroyed.*

* Vide act 5. Parl. 1640. act 6. 1644. act 15. Parl. 1649.

2*dly*, Although prelacy was then aboliſhed in Scotland, yet it was neither then nor ſince declared to be contrary to the word of God; and though Preſbytery was then eſtabliſhed in Scotland, "as agreeable to the "word of God," yet it was never declared to be of divine inſtitution founded thereupon, but only as it was agreeable unto the inclinations of the people, founded upon the claim of right. Herein there was a retrograde motion of near a hundred years back unto an act of Parl. 1592. whereby the whole of our pureſt reformation was over-paſſed and over-looked. Nor

3*dly*, Has there been any judicial act in church or ſtate at or ſince the Revolution, made in favours of our covenants? nay, not ſo much as a repeal of that wicked and nefandous act of parliament made in the reign of James VII. declaring *the giving, taking or owning of them to infer the pains of high treaſon.* Or

4*thly*, Is there any poſitive act to be found amongſt the archives of the nation, by which that heaven-daring act reſciſſory (annulling all the acts betwixt 1640 and 1649) is repealed? If there is not, the whole legal eſtabliſhment of the true Proteſtant Preſbyterian form of church-government muſt ſtand yet publicly condemned.—

5*thly*, Notwithſtanding of a faint act made at the Revolution declaring the firſt act Parl. 2. Charl. II. aſſerting his *Majeſty's ſupremacy*, &c. *as inconſiſtent with Preſbyterian government, and what ought to be abrogated* ‡: yet by virtue of the Engliſh conſtitution, into which the Scots conſtitution is now twiſted, by the 2*d* and 3*d* Articles of the union, they ſtill retain and continue in the exerciſe of, that uſurped power over the church and heritage of the Lord: witneſs the king's nominating and appointing clergymen unto their eccleſiaſtical charges;—The calling and adjourning church judicatories and even ſometimes *ſine die*;—impoſing oaths upon church men and appointing acts of faſts and thankſgiving under civil penalties; the patronage act;—the toleration bill;—Porteous act;—the Quebec act; the Popiſh bill in England and Ireland, with a concatenation of other encroachments, all flowing from that exotic head. And

Laſtly, Theſe who carried on the bloody perſecution, thoſe who favoured popery, prelacy, *&c.* and thoſe who

‡ *See act 1. Parl. 1. Seſſ 2.* of William and Mary, 1689.

who had made defection thereunto, were neither purged out of church, nor ſtate, at or ſince the revolution: and how could it be otherways, ſeeing theſe men moſtly had engroſſed the public affairs into their hands, that had been made members in the duke of York's parliament, (ſome of whom had their hands reeking in the blood of the ſaints) and who had not only forfeited all right to repreſent, ſit, or vote in any lawful judicatory; but had even forfeited their very lives unto the law of the Lord, (whatever they might pretend from the laws of men) *for whoſoever ſhall ſhed man's blood, by man ſhall his blood be ſhed.*

And for the revolution church, was it not compounded complexly of old public reſolutioners, thoſe who had accepted of that woeful and church renting indulgence, and thoſe who had taken ſeveral ſinful oaths unto the late tyrannical government: and add unto all theſe ſome hundred teſted and non-teſted curates; ſome of whom lived in the peaceable exerciſe of that office until their dying day; and all without any other acknowledgment, than taking the oaths in form to the government, and ſubſcribing the ſhort formula,—And tho' ſeveral petitions were given in then by different parties both to church and ſtate, for a redreſs of theſe grievances; but what anſwer they got or could expect, the following ſheets will, in ſome meaſure, make evident *,

b Now

* To ſhew that the above is no wanton charge, take the following inſtance in lieu of many that could be here produced, were it neceſſary.—And

1. When ſeveral papers were given in to the General Aſſem. 1690. all the anſwer they got from the committee was, That what was complained of ſhould be inſerted in the cauſes of the national faſt: and though theſe cauſes were more full than any ſince that time; yet the teſt and declaration (two of the principal evils complained of) were, at the deſire of the king's commiſſioner and others, expunged from ſaid act or cauſes, becauſe they had taken ſaid teſt and declaration.

2. Though an act was concerted in the committee of overtures, (which was brought in and read in open aſſembly) aſſerting Chriſt's headſhip over the church, yet it was then ſuppreſſed and never heard of ſince that time.

3. One George Meldrum, who had formerly been a curate, was not only received into the church on the foreſaid terms, but choſen moderator to the aſſemblies, 1698, 1703. but alſo made profeſſor of divinity in the college of Edinburgh; and all without any public acknowledgment of repentance for his former way.—Severals who had taken the teſt and declaration, and

perſecuted

Now theſe are only a few ſtrokes in miniature, of that which has been by ſome called the glorious and happy revolution; for it were fruſtraneous to inſiſt upon a portrait of that here which has ſo often and ſo well been delineated and figured out by others.—And if any think that what is here ſaid bears too hard upon the revolution ſettlement, I anſwer that what was good in that eſtabliſhment I have acknowledged, and in what was evil it were to be wiſhed, that, one feature more unto the foregoing draught could not be added, not to mention the bad effects or woeful conſequences daily flowing therefrom: The beholding of which, if the ſeeing of our eyes and the hearing of our ears could rightly affect our hearts, might make us ſigh and cry out with the lamenting prophet of old:—*Many paſtors have deſtroyed my vineyard.—and being deſolate, it mourneth unto me.—There is a conſpiracy of her prophets: They are light and treacherous perſons.—Her prieſts have polluted the ſanctuary, they have done violence to the law.—Her princes are revolters; therefore the law is ſlacked, and judgment doth never go forth.—Therefore wrong judgment proceedeth.* But

Thirdly, Somewhat might now be ſaid concerning Chriſtian fellowſhip and correſpondant meetings in general: but as my judgment on this point may, perhaps, tally with the mind of many of thoſe, for whom this publication is chiefly deſigned, I ſhall therefore refer them to the introduction, and their own informatory vindication on head I. And here I ſhall only obſerve,

1*ſt*, They never reckoned themſelves to be a civil judicatory: for altho' for the better order in ſpeaking, they found it neceſſary to chooſe one to occupy the place (or rather the name) of a præſes; yet they never looked upon theſe tranſactions to be of a civil nature.—Indeed in ſuch a broken ſtate, the very end of theſe meetings

perſecuted the people of God, upon the like terms were admitted ruling elders at the ſame time. And

4. When a member of the General Aſſembly 1723, was ſpeaking in favour of our covenanted work of reformation to ſtrengthen his cauſe, and make his demand appear more juſt and equitable, Mr. James Smith in Crammond, from the moderator's chair, in the face of the General Aſſembl.., confidently declared, "that the church was not now upon that footing," meaning the covenants.——Any who deſire to ſee theſe and many more inſtances of the like nature, may conſult De foe's memoirs, p. 320. *&c. Clarkſon's plain* reaſons, and Hepburn's humble pleadings *for the good old way, per totum.*

meetings obliged them to concert and conclude upon what was neceſſary and advantageous unto themſelves, both as men and Chriſtians, for the propagation and right managing of the public teſtimony they maintained in agreeableneſs to the word of God, law of nature and fundamental laws of the land.—But even in this caſe, where there is a ſtanding miniſtry, it is ſometimes found requiſite and expedient to keep what they call congregational meetings to treat upon *(externum privilegium eccleſiæ.)* The external priviledges of the church, and this cannot be called a civil judicatory.——Nor

2*dly*, Did they ever look upon theſe correſpondencies to be a church judicatory, or purely of an eccleſiaſtical nature, as they never took upon themſelves the exerciſe of church diſcipline, or to purge ſcandal. Nay, it is evident from the following regiſter, that during the whole time an ordained miniſter was never admitted a *conſtitute* member of the ſaid correſpondencies, altho' the preſence of ſuch, (when they had any) was many times found neceſſary and of great advantage for their advice and concurrence in things of an important nature. It is true, that being oft times deſtitute of a church judicatory, yea ſometimes without a miniſter, or goſpel ordinances altogether, they were in providence laid under a neceſſity to treat of things that more properly belonged to that character; ſuch as the appointing of diets of faſting, diſtributing collections, &c. But if we grant this maxim, that in times and caſes extroordinary, *ſomething extraordinary may be done, this may eaſily be accounted for.*——Let it then ſuffice for an anſwer unto thoſe, who have wondered what for a creature, general meetings were, That they were, (at leaſt ought to be) a body or religious ſociety of men and chriſtian men, conſtitute, allenarly, of the members of ſelect praying ſocieties, who had embodied themſelves into chriſtian fellowſhip meetings for prayer, godly conference and other religious duties for the mutal help and edification of one another.—And as this duty, whether as to ſelect ſocieties or correſpondent meetings, is a duty not only ſlighted and neglected by the moſt part, but even objected againſt by many in this degenerate and apoſtate generation, it may be no ways impertinate here to touch a little at its divine warrant or inſtitution, its utility and the neceſſity of ſuch a duty in theſe few particulars following.—*And*

1*ſt*, For its divine warrant or inſtitution, ſays the ſpirit of God by the Apoſtle to the Hebrews:—*Not forſaking the aſſembling of ourſelves together, as the manner of ſome is, but exhorting one another*, &c. Which duty we find warranted by the practices of both old and new Teſtament ſaints. And ſo Ezra ix. 4. *Then there were aſſembled unto me, every one that trembled at the words of the God of Iſrael*, &c. And Mal. iii. 16. *Then they that feared the Lord, ſpake often one to another*, &c. And to what purpoſe went they out and ſat by the river of Babel, Pſal. cxxxvii. but to remember and ſpeak of Zion with other religious converſation?—It is alſo propheſied of as what ſhould abound in the new-Teſtament church. See Jer. xxiii. 25. Zach. viii. 21.—Accordingly we find many ſweet fellowſhip meetings kept by the Lord's people in the new-Teſtament times; ſeverals of whom were kept by our Lord himſelf with his diſciples while on earth both before and after his reſurrection; which for our imitation and example, are recorded in ſcripture †; in imitation of which, *Theſe all continued with one accord in prayer with the women*, Acts i. 14. And to this exerciſe were they gathered into the houſe of Cornelius; and for the ſame purpoſe, and to the ſame work were they gathered unto the river ſide at Philipi, unto whom Paul preached;—And in the houſe of Mary, Acts xii. 12. But what needs more? nay, it became ſo eſſential to religion, that the primitive Chriſtians made the communion of ſaints an article of their creed, and they looked upon them as none of their fraternity, who did not maintain, or take pleaſure in the fellowſhip of Chriſtians.—*I am*, (ſays the royal Pſalmiſt,) *a companion of all that fear and obey thee.*

2*dly*, As it is of divine inſtitution, ſo it is of great uſe and utility unto the people of God. For

1. How many ſins have been prevented and temptations defeated by Chriſtian fellowſhip? Our firſt parent Eve was alone, when aſſaulted. A Peter will ſometimes confeſs Chriſt in company with the apoſtles; who when abſent from them, will ſhamefully deny him. For as houſes or bodies of men are more apt and able to ſtand a ſtorm, when built, or ſtanding together, than alone; ſo members of religious ſocieties have many times proved help

† *See Mat. xvii. 20. xxiv. 3. Mark vi. 31. Luke ix. 8. xxiv. 15. John xx. 19,—21*

helpful for the ſtrengthning and ſupporting of one another. The wiſe man's maxim is, *Two are better than one; for they have a reward for their labour; for if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow :—if one prevail againſt him, two ſhall withſtand him : and a threefold cord is not eaſily broken.* And

2. The Lord has in an eminent manner countenanced this duty :—for what ſweet and comfortable returns of prayer, (tho', alas! theſe are now in a great meaſure gone) have the Lord's people experienced in theſe meetings, both in the primitive times *, and in our reforming times; but eſpecially in the late ſuffering times both before and ſince the revolution? witneſs their own dying teſtimonies, wherein they not only enforce and inculcate this duty upon others, but ſolemnly declare what their own ſouls had experienced thereby †. Nay, they riſqued their worldly ALL to enjoy the ſweetneſs of Chriſtian fellowſhip. And how ſhameful is it for us to be behind them in this duty, while we are not expoſed to any outward hazard or amazement. Says one who had the experience of this,—*Come here, and I will tell you what he hath done for my ſoul.* And

3. The Lord has beſtowed a variety of gifts upon Chriſtians; one is endowed with quick wit and invention, another with ſolidity of judgment; to one is given a great ſtock of utterance, to another a good memory; —one is more open and zealous, another is wary and cautious; one is ſtrong in gifts and graces, another is weak; one is ofttimes dejected and caſt down, another is more facetious and cheerful: and for what purpoſe are all theſe given, but to glorify the giver, and for the edification of one another? *Wherefore*, (ſays the apoſtle to the Theſſalonians) *comfort yourſelves together, and edify one another*:

3*dly*, As this duty is of great uſe, ſo it is highly reaſonable and neceſſary. For

1. It is neceſſary and reaſonable for all lawful civil ſocieties, to uſe habile methods in treating of their own intereſt and concerns; ſo it is highly expedient for the followers

* Vide Euſebius's eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, lib. 3. ch. 30. lib. 5. ch. 5 and Socrates's hiſtory, lib. 1. ch. 15.

† Such as the dying teſtimonies of James Robertſon, John Findlay, John Richmond, John Paton, Robert Millar, Thomas Stoddart, John Nisbet: and ſince the revolution Sir Robert Hamilton, John Wilſon, and ſeveral others.

followers of Chriſt, not only to concert rules and methods for the promoting of the intereſt of that body whereof he is the head ‡; but alſo to have a particular ſympathy and fellow-feeling with one another.—It is a military maxim, whether in dangerous marches, or in a poſture of defence, "to ſtick or ſtand cloſe together." And ſo ought all Chriſt's faithful ſoldiers, if they would manage their ſpiritual affairs with ſucceſs and to purpoſe.—Neither can this duty be reſtricted unto times of perſecution only, as ſome would have it.—It is true, theſe times are very proper ſeaſons for it: but it will be found neceſſary and beneficial at all times, and eſpecially in times of defection and apoſtacy, and in perilous times; and never more acceptable unto God than now, when not only almoſt all kinds of error, infidelity and profanity abounds, and even amongſt profeſſors; but alſo when we

‡ There is a variety of rules, queries, articles and directions preſcribed by different authors in the method for receiving intrants into theſe meetings, which for brevity's ſake I muſt here omit. I ſhall therefore only recite a few of them which ſeem to be very much overlooked, even by thoſe few who pay any attention now unto this duty.

1. "The conſtituent members ſhould be of ſound principles, of a blameleſs converſation, endowed with a competent meaſure of knowledge, and exerciſed about their ſoul's caſe, and the declarative glory of God in the world."

2. "In matters of the public teſtimony, let no member, nor yet any ſingle meeting meddle to do any thing but with the conſent of the general correſpondence."

3. "No member ſhould take on him any public office, or undertake any debateable practice, nor go to law without acquainting the meeting for their advice and conſent."

4. "No member ſhould go to any penny wedding, or frequent debauched company, under the pain of ſecluſion from the meeting."

5. "Every member is to labour to have their converſation every way becoming the goſpel, and becoming ſuch a profeſſion; and ſhould do more than others do, ſeeing they profeſs more. Therefore they ſhould be much taken up in ſecret prayer, reading the ſcriptures, and coming to public ordinances when diſpenſed in God's way." And

Laſtly, "When any member falls under ſcandal, he is to be ſecluded, until he give evident ſigns of his true repentance, and until he both ſatisfy the ſeſſion (if there be any) and the meeting about it."

Any who want to ſee theſe directions, queries and articles at large, may conſult Mr. Walter Smith's rules and directions for fellowſhip meetings, the method to be uſed in receiving members into the reformed ſocieties by Mr. Renwick and the general *meeting (yet in manuſcript)*; and Mr. Hepburn's rules, from *which the above are extracted.*

we are under the awful gloom of approaching judgments, and ſeemingly upon the eve of ſome deſtruction; the Lord's judgments being already *abroad in the earth*, which requires the moſt intenſe diligence in keeping up the credit of religion, when ſo much abandoned and borne down. It behoved to be ſuch a time as this, when theſe mentioned by Malachi, *ſpake often one to another*. And

2. Might I be permitted to uſe this as an argument to enforce this duty? It is the conſtant practice of profane and wicked men, ſuch as ſtage-players, comedians, maſqueraders, frequenters of balls, drunkards, thieves, highwaymen, extortioners, &c. to gather together and join in clubs, to conſult ways and means to gratify their own luſts and ambition, in ſerving the worſt of maſters: and ſhall thoſe who ſerve the beſt of maſters be thus outſtripped in advancing his intereſt and ſervice, and to encourage one another in their way heavenward; altho' they ſhould be accounted fools for this by a wicked generation, or *as a people dwelling alone, and not reckoned amongſt the nations?* And

3. The decay or thriving of religion goes hand in hand with it. Look unto the times of our *Reformation*, and ye will find it ſo §, that when theſe meetings began to decay, than religion became dead and languid.—On the contrary, it has been very juſtly obſerved by ſome, that in any corner of the land where religion began to thrive and flouriſh, theſe meetings began as natively to be erected, as birds of one kind, in chooſing their mates in the ſpring, begin to draw together.—No ſooner was Paul converted, than he eſſayed to join the company of diſciples. *Let us go ſpeedily and pray before the Lord,—and I will go alſo.* And

Laſtly, This exerciſe is highly requiſite as an apparatus to fit and prepare us for eternal communion and fellowſhip with the ſaints above. All perſons ought to be reſolved in what company they take moſt pleaſure in while upon earth. And how ſhall we think to keep company by the cloſeſt communion with thoſe glorified ſaints above, with whom we could not think to keep followſhip with while upon earth.—It is uſual for deſigned travellers unto a far country to chooſe to travel in company;—ſo nothing is more commodious for the traveller to the

§ For this ſee Fox's acts and monuments, Clark's martyrol. Knox's hiſt. and letter, Oct. 1563, and Stevenſon's hiſtory, &c.

the celeſtial country, or Jeruſalem above, than to go in troops as they did of old when going up to the ſolemn feaſts of the Lord at Jeruſalem. *I went with—a multitude that kept holy days.*

After all this, I know there have been and are a number of objections muſtered up againſt theſe meetings but for brevity's ſake, I muſt here confine myſelf unto the three following, which I take to be the moſt formidable and recent at preſent.

Objec. I. *For what purpoſe ſerve theſe meetings, when thoſe who frequent them, are as bad, if not worſe, than many in the neighbourhood?* All I obſerve in anſwer to this, is,—That, no queſtion, but there have been, and will be tares among the wheat, and corn amongſt the chaff, until the end of the world, and the reſtitution of all things. And ofttimes hypocriſy goes under the name of real religion, and many times real religion is branded with the vile epithet of diſſimulation; and commonly when a corrupt member, or one falling into any fault (which, alas! is now a-days become too common) is diſcovered, then nothing is more uſual for the neighbourhood, than to judge the whole web by his ſwatch. But what does this militate againſt the duty itſelf, or the remanent members either? For, by a parity of reaſon, we might conclude that all the eleven apoſtles were traitors, becauſe Judas was one. But even their own confeſſion, implied in the charge, ſhews, that when they are ſo much offended at any thing blame-worthy in a number of ſuch ſocieties, (at leaſt it ſays to me) that they think theſe ought or ſhould be better than themſelves or others; otherwiſe what would be obſervable about them above others?—But *judge not, leſt ye be judged.*

Objec. II. It is further objected, and even by ſome that ſhould preach up the neceſſity of ſuch a duty, *That theſe meetings ſerve for little purpoſe, but to raiſe needleſs queſtions, and gender ſtrife and diviſion.* Unto this I would reply, that

1. It is now a long time, ſince ſin and duty, truth and error have ſtruggled in the moral world, and that both with reſpect to the inward and outward man, wherein ſometimes Iſrael, and ſometimes Amalek prevails.—But it has been an epidemical evil in almoſt every age, that whenever any perſon or ſociety of men, began to make

any

any conſcience, progreſs or degree in teſtifying againſt the ſins and defections of the time wherein they exiſted, that they could be characterized by the generation, (and even by ſome of thoſe who are none of the moſt irreligious) as men of ſtrife, contention or diviſive courſes. This is no new thing: ſays the prophet, when he had been declaring the truth unto an apoſtate generation,—*Woe is me, my mother, that thou haſt born me a man of ſtrife and contention unto the whole earth.* But

2. Let it be ſuppoſed, that there ſhould be any ſuch troubleſome perſons in theſe ſocieties, who raiſe needleſs feuds and diſorders, the fault is in the members, and not in the duty itſelf when rightly managed. This muſt hold good in all other lawful aſſemblies, whether civil or religious, as well as theſe meetings, and grant that there is or has been in theſe meetings (particularly correſpondent and congregational meetings) ſtill ſome perſon or other aſpiring to have the lead in every argument, motion, vote or propoſition; which ſometimes has created no ſmall diſorder: Yet as this oftimes proceeds from pride and ambition, or at beſt from fiery zeal, or to hear themſelves ſpeak or argue for arguments ſake, or rather banter, (which is worſe) theſe muſt rather be accounted a peſt or burden than a bleſſing or benefit unto any well regulated ſociety:—*offence muſt come,* (ſays the great inſtituter of all ordinances) *but woe unto him by whom it cometh.* The

III. And laſt objection that I ſhall obſerve, and it has alſo been made by ſome of thoſe men which muſt needs now occupy the places of teachers: viz. *Theſe meetings are no ways needful or neceſſary, excepting unto theſe called mountain-men, when they want preaching.* Unto this I may anſwer,

1. That indeed this is no improper exerciſe for people, when deſtitute of public ordinances, (of which the following regiſter is a pregnant proof) but does this exempt others who daily enjoy goſpel-ordinances from an obligation to this duty? Surely no. The apoſtle enjoins us *to exhort one another,—to comfort one another,—to edify one another,—to teach and admoniſh one another,—to receive one another,—to be ſubject to one another,—to confeſs their ſins to one another,—to miniſter their gifts to one another,*—and to *ſerve one another in love* *: and how can

* Heb. iii. 13. 1 Theſſ. v. 11. Col. iii. 16. Rom. xv. 7. Eph. v. 21. James v. 16. 1 Pet. iv. 10. Gal. v. 13.

do this without an opportunity for that purpose? and however some explain some of these texts according to their own notion in opposition to this duty; yet sure they can never be wholly restricted either to family worship, or yet public ordinances. And granting that it is the duty of families, why not of a number of families met together, and a number of these societies unto the same exercises of duty? and this makes nothing at all against the sixth and seventh direction in our directory for worship, (as they foolishly would suppose) providing that the one duty do not retard or justle out the other. —And for public church-meetings, where have they the opportunity to administer these gifts unto one another, except they turn Quakers? According to the divine injunction, a woman is not to speak in the church: But here the apostle makes no distinction; nay, we are told in the forecited text, Acts i. 17. *That these all continued with one accord in prayer with the women* ‡. And

Lastly,

‡ Here a question may arise, Whether women may be sustained as constitute members in society meetings? and if so, whether they ought to meet apart or with men in a promiscuous manner?--But as this point has been somewhat controverted, it will be as safe to give in substance the mind of a very judicious writer, designed Timotheus Philadelphus, but said to be Mr. Brown of Wamphray, in a pretty large manuscript, intituled,-- "The divine right of the meetings of the Lord's people, &c." in which he says,

"*Lastly*, You may associate in these meetings with Christian women; for these are Christians as well as men are; and so the common Christian duties which are competent to these meetings, do belong to them; as also they had need to have these duties performed towards them, as well as men; and rather more, seeing they are the weaker vessels, and so temptations and sad dispensations are the more ready to seize upon them. And further, the blessings promised and bestowed on these meetings, and such as constantly frequent them, do belong to both sexes. In a word, all the foregoing arguments brought in for proving the lawfulness of these meetings, it concludes in favour of women's being members and actors in these meetings. In the old Testament, see Esther in the palace of Ahasuerus, Esther iv. As also Job xlii. 11. there was a meeting in which Job's sisters, as well as others, were present; and by the daughters in the Song are meant weak saints, whether men or women in these private meetings.--And these spoken of Mal. iii. 10. must include women as well as men. And if we come to the new Testament we find Mary and Elizabeth at this exercise, Luke i. and for the same purpose see Mark xvi. Luke xxii. 2. John xx. 17. &c. and so in that meeting, Acts i. 14. *These all continued in prayer with the women.* And these in the house of Mary, Acts

xii.

Laſtly, To ſhut up the whole, the Lord has not only put a note of attention and approbation upon this duty, Mal. iii. 16.—*and the Lord hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before him*: but has alſo appended a moſt gracious promiſe of his preſence unto it, Mat. xviii. 19, 20.—*If two of you ſhall agree on earth as touching any thing that they ſhall aſk, it ſhall be done for them.—For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midſt of them.*

AFTER what I have here obſerved, (and elſewhere upon the like occaſion) I ſuppoſe it were needleſs to advance any thing as motives to enhance this publication. Only as different ſubjects ofttimes have different circumſtances, I ſhall juſt hint to the reader,

1. That it is pretty evident, that that handful deſigned by the name of the United Societies have been very much traduced both before and ſince the revolution: before the revolution they were branded as blind zealots, ſchiſmaticks, rejecters of miniſtry and magiſtracy, men of bloody and ſeditious principles, &c. Since the revolution their moſt faithful contendings have been, by ſome hiſtorians and others, repreſented as high flights and extravagances. And although ſomewhat has dropped from divers pens at different times in their behalf, yet ſure a better vindication in their defence cannot be produced, than a publication of theſe very tranſactions for which they were ſo aſperſed; and it would appear, that it was wrote at firſt with a view to this: *for wiſdom*

xii. 12. And thoſe aſſembled at the river ſide of Philippi. And ſometimes they may not only prove helpful, but in theſe meetings, give a leſſon to an old miniſter or profeſſor."

"But here it may be objected, That promiſcuous meetings of men and women for private worſhip and mutual edification are liable to reproach, and apt to be abuſed, &c. To which I anſwer,

"1. That why meetings of men and women for ſuch duties ſhould be termed promiſcuous, more than other meetings of worſhip of both ſexes, for family worſhip, or for public ordinances or civil affairs of life are ſo called or reputed, I know not.—But this I know, that all meetings of men and women for whatever purpoſes, are apt to be, and have been abuſed by Satan and his inſtruments for ſiniſter ends."

Here he goes on in anſwer to this objection with much brilliancy of argument, ſhewing in ſeveral particulars, what prudence ſhould be uſed in women's being members of ſuch ſocieties:—and withal what caution ſhould be uſed to prevent every ground of jealouſy or ſuſpicion, that may occaſion reproach upon ſuch a religious *duty*.

is juſtified of her children.—It is true, every thing is beautiful in its ſeaſon, and perchance ſome may think, that after ſo much time is elapſed, this publication wants this peace of requiſite duty. But grant this, better late than never; the Lord has aſſured us in his word, that he will both plead his own cauſe, and vindicate his witneſſing church and people: But the poſitive time we have not preſcribed; only we are ſure, that it ſhall be either while alive, or after they are gone, *thou wilt maintain the cauſe of the afflicted, and the right of the poor.* A

2. Motive for this publication may be this; that as theſe two cardinal evils which they had to ſtruggle with, *viz.* Popery and Prelacy ſeems to be puſhing their way, and making wide ſtrides unto theſe lands again; when ſuch herds are not only warping off to the antichriſtian camp, but even numbers of witneſs-bearers ſeem to be loſing views of their own profeſſed teſtimony *in this hour and power of darkneſs*, let us then, by a retroſpect view, trace back the footſteps of Chriſt's flock, and *feed our kids beſide the ſhepherds tents.*—Indeed this crooked and inſidious generation is now become weary of (what they call) controverted points of principles: theſe, ſay they, eat out the life of religion. And as the following ſubject bears the title of *Faithful contendings diſplayed*, it may be judged to bear this diſagreeable face of controverſy by ſome, and ſo by them be denied a hearing to anſwer for itſelf.—It is true, ſtrife and diviſion, the two grand parents of needleſs diſpute and groundleſs animoſities, always are and have been bad neighbours to religion. Theſe, like a gangrene, have eaten out the vitals thereof. But how a faithful contending for the cauſe of Chriſt and every one of his deſpiſed truths, (which are now fallen into ſo much diſrepute as to be controverted) can eat out the life of religion, is not ſo eaſy to determine. It muſt rather be feared that theſe gentlemen who would exchange true zeal, truth, and faithfulneſs for what they deſign charity, moderation, and liberty of conſcience, (having almoſt every ſpecies of contending or witneſs bearing) have but little real religion at bottom, for controverſy to corrode upon. It commonly falls out both in reſpect of principle and practical religion, that thoſe unſtable ſouls, to whom old truths become unſavoury by ſuch volatility, not only

loſe

loſe ſight of their own profeſſion *; but moſt eaſily become a prey unto any whimſical notion, error and deluſion whatſoever.—And hence it is that ſo many profeſſors are tript, and carried off their feet at this time. Therefore if we can do no more, if we could but honeſtly hand down the faithful contendings of our reforming and ſuffering anceſtors as a teſtimony to poſterity, it might be a piece of generation ſervice, that would yield no ſmall comfort or peace of mind at laſt †. Memorable for the purpoſe are theſe words in the laſt ſpeech of the laſt martyr that publicly ſuffered on a ſcaffold in Scotland; "Do not grow weary (ſays he) to maintain, "in your place and ſtations, the preſent teſtimony; for "when Chriſt goes forth to defeat antichriſt, with that "name written on his veſture, *King of Kings, and Lord "of Lords*, he will make it glorious in the earth: And "if ye can but tranſmit it to poſterity ye may count it "a great generation work: But beware of the miniſters "that have accepted of this toleration, and all others "that bend that way; for the Sun hath gone down u-"pon them."

But I know, it is objected, and perhaps will be objected, after all that I have here ſaid, and even by ſome judicious perſons, who, in charity, we muſt ſuppoſe wiſh well to the memory and contendings of theſe worthy men, *That as they were moſtly private men, and theſe tranſactions partly of a private nature, and ſometimes not carried on in ſuch an agreeable way as they themſelves could have wiſhed, the publication of them muſt rather tend to expoſe them and their weakneſs, than to exoner them or the teſtimony they contended for, before this lukewarm or ludibrious generation.* Could I here advance any thing they would ſuſtain as an anſwer to this, I would juſt obſerve;

1ſt, That altho' theſe actors and tranſactions were moſtly private men and private matters; yet in ſo far as both were connected in carrying on the public teſtimony of the day, they behoved to be of a public nature alſo;

* The doubts and drifts of the voluble mind,
That here and there appear, turn judgment blind.
LITH——W.

† ——The man who conſecrates his hours
By vigorous efforts and an honeſt aim,
At once he draws the ſtring of life and death:
He walks with nature, and her paths are peace.
The Complaint, night ſecond.

alſo: and would it be accounted fair play to omit the one, that the other might be concealed?

2*dly*, As ſeveral of theſe tranſactions are already hinted at in the Hind let looſe,—Informatory vindication, Renwick's large life and letters, this muſt rather be a publiſhing the original, than offering what is intirely new unto the public.—And tho' we are not to judge of matters, nor ſteer our courſe always by the needle of providence in the compaſs of actions; yet I might ask for what end the original manuſcript has been hitherto preſerved, if for no uſe to the public?

3*dly*, Whatever diviſions or things diſagreeable fell in amongſt them, it but only ſhews they were but men ſubject unto *the like paſſions with others*; and tho' they were but private men, yet I might refer it to the unbiaſſed reader, whether any thing he finds here of this nature, be not leſs than what has fallen out in learned church judicatories particularly ſince the revolution. And

Laſtly, For their other faults and failings, they were but men and willing (at leaſt to the year 1688) to have them corrected ‡, and would it not bear hard upon any hiſtory, nay on ſcripture itſelf, to ſay, it were better they had never been publiſhed, becauſe the faults and failings of the penman, or the perſons therein notified, are therein related or recorded.—Nay, bear with me, if I ſhould ſay, that this is one of the proper uſes of all hiſtory, ſacred or profane; for by this important leſſon we may, for the conduct of life, learn what was imitable in the perſons and actions therein narrated, and at the ſame time with caution avoid the rocks upon which they ſplit or ſuffered ſhipwreck, and ſo by guarding againſt the errors, follies and miſtakes of paſt times, we may be rendered wiſer

‡ For inſtance, the engagement to ſecrecy which they entered into on account of the publiſhing the Lanerk declaration; which was the moſt exceptionable thing of a private nature, was by them laid aſide as ſoon as they diſcovered the evil conſequences thereof: which was no more nor leſs than what our Reformers did with ſeveral things fallen into at the beginning of the reformation, but laid aſide afterwards. And for that word to be uſed by the wanderers mentioned, P 64. let none think it was in imitation of the Maſon word; no, it was only to be uſed for a time to prevent their being circumveened by falſe friends or open enemies; a notable inſtance we have of the taking of Mr. King, who was betrayed by two of the enemy in diſguiſe of two of the ſufferers. Had this word been then and there uſed, his apprehending at that time (God willing) might happily have *been prevented.*

wiſer by the experience, and at the expence of former ages. Very pertinent for this, are a few words near the end of the life of Robert Garnock, (wrote by himſelf while in priſon, and yet in manuſcript) who was executed at the Gallowlee of Edinburgh, *Oct.* —, 1681.—— "Now, for any thing I know, I will be tortured, and "my life taken, and ſo will get no more written. So, "any that read it, I beg of them, to ſhun all that is evil "of my life, as they would ſhun hell; and if there be "any thing in it that is for uſe, I requeſt the Lord that "he may bear it home upon them when I am gone, and "make it thus uſeful for them that read it, *&c.*"

ALL I obſerve in the laſt place, anent the way and manner of this publication, is, that as Mr. Shields broke off ſomewhat abruptly with a paper that was to be given in by each perſon to their miniſters at their acceſſion to the revolution church, it was found neceſſary to add a ſhort appendix, ſhewing upon what footing the more faithful party ſtood their ground at and ſince that time.—As to the ſtile of language, it is much the ſame with the original copy: Only as there were ſome words ſuperfluous and ſome papers of leſſer note, ſomewhat prolex: it was found proper to abridge them a little, as concifely as poſſible; in lieu of which, ſome letters and other papers more momentuous have been added, and put in their proper places, which had been at firſt omitted with a few foot notes for the explanation of the ſubject and all to render it as commodious to the reader, as poſſible: and whoever ſuſpects the tranſcription either of the regiſter or appendix to be otherways vitiated from the genuine copies, may be ſatisfied with a ſight of the autographs from which they were tranſcribed.

AND now for a final concluſion, may the angel of the covenant, he who guided his Iſrael of old with a pillar of cloud by day and a *flaming fire by night*, guide all his own profeſſing people in this dark and cloudy day, wherein the night of our defections grows darker and darker, and the Jordan of our difficulties deeper and deeper:— And as the church of Chriſt in theſe Iſles, has now of a long time dwelt with the daughter of Babylon, with that cruel yoke of bondage wreathed about her neck, may the time to favour our Zion come, *yea, the ſet time*, when antichriſt that man of ſin, and all the ſupporters and abettors of the kingdom of darkneſs, may be brought down and *deſtroyed, with a revival of* the decayed power

of

of true practical religion and godlineſs, and a covenanted work of reformation, *that our captivity may be returned as ſtreams in the ſouth.*

And if the following ſheets complexly, ſhall, through the divine operation of the ſpirit, prove conducive in the leaſt, to any of the foreſaid purpoſes, that is, either to the advantage of true and real religion, or the gaining of friends unto, or confining them in the covenanted intereſt, in a ſubſerviency to God's glory and the good of his church; then I dare ſay, the principal end is gained. For that God the Father and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt will himſelf before Pontius Pilate *witneſſed a good confeſſion*, may ſtir up and enable many to witneſs and contend for the whole of his diſputed truths in theſe once covenanted but now degenerate iſles of the ſea, Britain and Ireland *that glory may dwell in our land*, is, and ought to be the earneſt deſire, judicious reader, of one who remains as formerly, thy well-wiſher in the truth,

JOHN HOWIE

Lochgoin, *Sept. 27th*, 1780.

ERRATA.

Page 16. Line 8. for *General Meeeting*, read *a General Meeting*. p. 218. laſt line, for *could ſee*, r. *could not ſee*. p 223 l. 15 & 20. for *Trierminion* r. *Frierminion*, and foot note, ſame page, for *ordon* r. *Gordon*, p. 241. foot note, laſt line, *count* r. *account*. Perhaps there are ſome others which we hope the reader will notice and excuſe.

ERRATA of the Sermons.

Page 2. of the preface in the foot note, l. 6. for 1687. r. 1
Page 3. foot note, line 6. for *requiring* r. *receiving*, p. 11. for *his behalf* r. *his and their behalf*, p. 18. foot note, for *before* r. *before*, p. 40. l. 5. from the foot for *wree* r. p. 44. l. 22. for *ſerved* r. *ſowed*, p. 66, l. 1. for *iſe* r. *life*, p l. 7. for *them* r. *me*, p. 112. laſt line, for *xxiv* r. *xxii*, p. 12 28. for *ſau* r. *Eſau*.

INTR

INTRODUCTION.

AS the Lord hath made his glorious attributes of mercy, power, and wiſdom, to ſhine brightly in the behalf, and for the good of his church and people in all ages, to his glory, and their comfort, and to the confounding of all his and their enemies; ſo he hath made the ſame to appear, in as eminent and ſplendid a manner, in, and to, and for the church of *Scotland*, as to any other. Very early, not long after our Lord's aſcenſion, he prevented this land with mercy, in making the light of his glorious goſpel to ſhine in it, when many, and theſe far mightier and richer nations, remained in darkneſs, and in the ſhadow of death. And when it was overſpread with groſs Antichriſtian darkneſs, and that for a long time, he manifeſted his love to it, by making the light of the goſpel again to ariſe, which as a clear ſun-ſhine day, after ſo long and ſo dark a night, tended to the diſcovery of all the errors and idolatries of the man of ſin, which were at the very beginning of the Reformation abandoned: So that it was among the firſt of the nations that did hate the whore, and ſhake off her yoke. And many times ſince, he hath remembred mercy in wrath, and hath evidenced his love to his people when they could expect nothing (looking upon their own deſerts) but to feel the effects of his holy anger; alſo, when his people have been weak and ready to faint under the preſſure of heavy burdens, and their enemies many, and ſtrong, then hath he ſhown his power, either in ſupporting them under theſe burdens, or elſe removing the ſame off their backs, and ſcattering and overcoming their enemies: Likewiſe when they have been involved, or near to be involved in terrible-like difficulties, out of which they could ſee no way to extricate themſelves, he hath made his wiſdom *to appear in* their behalf, either in

leading them (as he does the blind in ways they know not) by theſe difficulties, or elſe in paving to them a paſſage through the ſame. So that as the mountains are round about Jeruſalem, the Lord's holy attributes, as ſo many high and impregnable mountains have been round about the church of Scotland, loving, and not leaving, helping and preſerving, ſtrengthening and comforting her. Her privileges have been great, ſingular, and many; for no church under the New Teſtament diſpenſation hath had greater goſpel light, nor hath attained unto ſuch a reformation, not only from Heatheniſm, which ſhe attained unto even at the firſt planting of the goſpel among the nations, but alſo from Romiſh idolatries, after the goſpel light had riſen again in our dark horizon, even more and purer than any of her ſiſter churches, though they had caſten off the ſame yoke; and not only ſo, but from Prelacy and Eraſtianiſm; and was brought into the ſtricteſt and ſolemneſt of covenants, that ever a people came under: and although ſhe has never wanted enemies, and theſe oftimes very formidable, many and mighty, to contend with, and wreſtle againſt, yet all alongſt through every period, ſhe hath had valiant champions for truth, even when fallen in the ſtreets, and faithful and zealous contenders for the liberties and privileges Chriſt her Head and King had endowed and endoted her with; ſo that from the firſt begining of the Reformation from Antichriſtian darkneſs, until this very time, there hath been a conſtant teſtimony for Chriſt carried on, and kept up, though ſometimes it hath had more, and ſometimes fewer owners, and avouchers thereof, yet as one link of a chain depends upon another, ſo it hath done, and hath been preſerved unbroken, or uncut off to this day. But as great ſins and multiplied tranſgreſſions, after great light, and multiplied mercies, are very provoking to the Lord, to bring on a people guilty of the ſame, ſore judgments, and terrible deſolating ſtrokes; ſo the mentioning of our many and manifold mercies, and great and gracious privileges, ſhould be ſo far from puffing us up, that they ſhould humble us, and lay us low, even in the duſt. And as the remembrance of what once we were, and from whence we are fallen, ſhould fill our hearts with ſorrow; ſo the conſideration of what we are now, and the fears of what we may meet with, if repentance prevent it not, ſhould fill our eyes with tears. *We may take up a bitter lamentation, and ſay, How doth the city ſit ſolitary that was full of people*

ple? How is she become a widow that was great among the nations and princes among the provinces? How is she become tributary? Alas! our crown is fallen from our head, wo unto us that we have sinned. We that were once the head, are now become the tail. As there is a cloud of darkness, and deadness this day over the face of all the reformed churches; so in a particular manner, Scotland hath a great share of the same, and the cloud is so thick that our prayers cannot pass through. It hath been a long, weary, and dark night, and it yet continues a night of persecution, division and desertion, as the punishment of our defection and apostacy.

When the glorious work of Reformation which was built at the expence of so much pains and labour, prayer, tears and blood, was overturned and broken down, these solemn covenants broken and burnt, Christ's ministers ejected, and hirelings put in their room, and abjured Prelacy established, and the supremacy over the church (only proper to Christ as Mediator) settled upon the head of a monster; it might have been expected that this would have been the height of the nations revolt from the Lord, and that here they would stand. But Oh! these who had broken the bonds of a sacred covenant, and cast away these cords from them, and had proven so perfidious and treacherous to God and man, could not be thought to have any tie upon them to restrain them from running the greatest length in wickedness that ever mortals arrived at: so the generality of the bulk and body of the nation hath gone on in a continued course of rebellion against the Lord, and from one degree of backsliding unto another, until now they are near the borders of Babylon; yet notwithstanding this dreadful and almost universal apostacy, since the last fatal and fearful Revolution, even in the beginning thereof, the Lord preserved a remnant of faithful ministers and professors from saying a confederacy, and going along with these iniquous courses: though their witness and testimony was not so public as afterward it was, yet at Pentland there was a party who openly owned his cause and covenant: But for the punishment of former sins, and for future trial, they fell before their enemies, many of whom were murdered both in fields and on scaffolds. Albeit this stroke was both sore and deep, yet the wound thereof in a few years thereafter was near healed, and the dint thereof almost forgotten: for not-

withſtanding the enemies cruelty and craft, to root out the followers of Chriſt, and bury their teſtimonies for him, yet the banner of the goſpel was more diſplayed than formerly, by many faithful ſtandard-bearers, and that in the open fields, whereunto all had acceſs, and followed in great multitudes, which, though the ſame was threatened and interdicted by men, under ſevere penalties, yet it was bleſſed and countenanced of the Lord, to the conviction and converſion, edification, comfort and confirmation of many ſouls. But as it is uſual for ſuch a calm, not to be long without a ſtorm, and ſuch a ſhining blink of the goſpel, without a dark cloud obſtructing the ſame; ſo it was then, for the Lord's people being neceſſitate to make uſe of defenſive arms, it pleaſed the holy Lord (who does all things well and wiſely, in faithfulneſs and truth, and his people will be made to ſee and ſay ſo, though in the time of their meeting with croſs diſpenſations they be ready to cry out, why is it thus) to deliver them up to the devouring ſword of a cruel and bloody enemy at Bothwel-bridge June 22d, 1679. Then there was a dark cloud ſpread over us, or rather a dark night: This was a time of darkneſs and gloomineſs, of rebuke and blaſphemy: After this defeat the caſe of the land was lamentably ſad, enemies rejoiced, triumphed, and ſet up their trophies of victory, as if having taken and killed many of Chriſt's followers, his cauſe had been buried without hope of its riſing again; The hands of miniſters and profeſſors became weak and their hearts faint; the edge of their zeal was blunted, and love grew cold; much bowing, yielding, tampering and complying with the bloody enemies; miniſters quite left preaching in the fields, formerly much countenanced of the Lord, and many of them complyed with the enemies, for favours granted by them, after they had murdered many of the ſaints both in fields and on ſcaffolds; thus it was with the land: But the Lord, who is always mindful of his people in their low condition, and will not ſuffer his work to be without a witneſs, raiſed up a fitted and worthy inſtrument, Mr. Richard Cameron, who came from Holland, and went boldly to the open fields, and faithfully preached the goſpel, ſetting the trumpet to his mouth, freely giving warning of the ſins and ſnares, duties and dangers of the time, with whom the Lord ſtirred up a faithful and fruitful miniſter, Mr. Donald Cargill to join; the ſeals of both their miniſtry, *are yet upon the* hearts of many; yet the Lord for holy

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and wiſe ends ſaw it fit to remove them from us: Mr. Richard Cameron was killed at Air's-moſs, and Mr. Donald Cargill ſuffered at the croſs of Edinburgh, both, willingly and chearfully ſealing theſe truths with their blood at death, which they had profeſſed and preached in their life: After whoſe death, the caſe of the land was deplorable, yea more than it was after Bothwel for now had miniſters given over all public preaching, except in ſome private chambers, notwithſtanding the many reiterated and preſſing calls of the people, ſo that one might have wandered from ſea to ſea, and not have gotten the benefit of the faithfully and freely preached goſpel. Sin, ſnares and temptations abounded, defections increaſed, and confuſions grew; many ſerious ſeekers and lovers of Chriſt, began to languiſh in diſcouragement, and to ſigh and droop in diſpondency; the enemy raged, and threatened the ruin of all that was undeſtroyed: the generality of the people were involved in the defections, compliances, ſins, and ſnares of the time, ſo that the teſtimony of Chriſt was like to be quite buried: but the holy and gracious God, who many a time hath remembred mercy to his people in wrath, and made the time of their extremity, his opportunity of manifeſting himſelf for their help and encouragement, in his great love and condeſcendency, preſerved a remnant, in ſome meaſure, free of theſe public ſins and defections that the generality were involved in at the time, or elſe in mercy brought them off from backſlidden courſes, who did embody themſelves in ſocieties for prayer and conference; and though they were united and joint in the teſtimony of the day, which was for the prerogatives of Chriſt, the privileges of his church, and the liberties of mankind, and againſt, not only tyranny upon the one hand, but alſo defection upon the other: yet being ſcattered up and down the country, they could not have acceſs to know one another's minds, in order to the communicating of mutual help, counſel and encouragement to one another in that ſad and weary day, that they might the better, and the more unanimouſly keep up that noble teſtimony in their ſtation and capacity: However providence opened a door for this, which at the time, and ſince, hath been bleſſed to the helping to ſtrengthen the things that remained, that were ready to die: The occaſion of which was this.

THE day after the death of that famous and faithful miniſter and martyr Mr. Donald Cargill, July 28th, 1681. a Parliament did conveen at Edinburgh, in which the duke of York did preſede as Commiſſioner, for the then diſowned tyrant, Charles II. wherein were ſeveral wicked laws enacted, eſpecially that blaſphemous and ſelf-contradictory Teſt, ordained to be taken by all perſons in public truſt; againſt which, ſome of the ſeriouſly, and zealouſly godly in the Weſt, did look upon it as their indiſpenſible duty to give ſome public teſtimony, ſome way correſponding to the notoriety of the ſin, as in their capacity they could attain to, leſt their deficiency in this, might have made them interpretatively to be looked upon as conſenters to, or at leaſt connivers at ſuch a wickedneſs; and that the ſame might be helpful for handing down the teſtimony to poſterity: But deſiring that the ſame might done by the advice, conſent, and concurrence of as many as could be obtained, they endeavoured to acquaint all in every place of the nation, whom they heard owned and adhered to the teſtimony againſt tyranny and defection, as left ſtated by the two miniſters who had lately ſealed the ſame with their blood, to the end that ſome from all theſe reſpective places might conveen at a time and place appointed, for mutual unanimous conſultation, deliberation and help, in going about that affair: and for ſettling a correſpondency thereafter amongſt them. Thus was the riſe, and this gave the occaſion to the firſt general meeting, which from time to time, hath ſince continued to be kept. But becauſe theſe meetings have been ſo much talked of, and ſpoken againſt, both at home and abroad, and repreſented as Eraſtian Aſſemblies, treating of church and ſtate affairs: I ſhall therefore fairly and ingenuouſly give a true relation of all the concluſions (of any conſequence) that have been reſolved upon at theſe meetings from the firſt of them, to the very laſt (I having acceſs to be preſent at moſt of them, and ſo cannot but be judged to have opportunity to know what was reſolved and concluded therein) Though doubtleſs a better order and method in managing affairs, had been deſireable, and ſome things are liable to be miſtaken, as no wonder there was not more, conſidering the time's darkneſs and confuſions, and the weakneſs of the managers, ſome of whom had more zeal than knowledge, more honeſty than policy, *and more ſingle*-hearted ſimplicity than prudence; yet *the unbiaſſed and* unprejudiced may diſcover much ingenuity

nuity, and somewhat of the Lord's conduct, and helping them to manage and keep up the testimony according to their capacities, and stations in these meetings.

In the prosecuting of this undertaking, I shall first give some short hint of the state of the country every time these meetings occurred, especially how it was with that persecuted party at each of these times; what persecution they were meeting with from the avowed and bloody enemy, and contradiction, opposition and reproach from persons, and parties on either hand, with some brief account of what contendings and wrestlings they had with them, with some declining to the left hand by defection, and with others upon the right hand running to unwarrantable extravagancies; which in some measure will help to demonstrate what gave occasion and rise to that persecuted party, to fall upon such resolutions in these meetings, for their own vindication, but especially for the vindication of the cause by them owned, from calumnies and reproaches, for keeping up the testimony, and for preserving peace and unity among themselves. And in the next place I shall give a true relation of the resolutions themselves which were concluded at every one of the meetings; with what gave the occasion to every one of the same: And also some account of the effects following thereupon. The perusing of which though it may be humbling, seeing thereby our low condition may be evident, when so noble a cause hath such weak managers: yet the same will not be unpleasant to look over, for in it may be seen some resolutions fallen upon, and also put in practice, which might have taken heads more wise to contrive, and hands more strong to perform, then those who were helped to do both.

Before I begin with this relation, I shall premise a few things which I desire may be seriously considered, and soberly pondered, hoping they may have some weight with the unbiassed.

1st, These meetings were, and are looked upon by the United Societies (though it cannot be denied but some persons, especially at the first frequenting of them, thro' rashness, inconsideration and ignorance, vented themselves in some things to the contrary, but the miscarriages of two or three persons cannot be justly charged upon the whole) *neither as civil nor ecclesiastic* judicatories; but

but of the same nature with particular Christian societies, gathered together in their general correspondencies, in the time of extreme persecution, by mutual advice and common consent, endeavouring jointly to know the sins and duties of the day, that so they might be helpful and encouraging to one another in concluding what was necessary for their preservation, and the propagation of the testimony, according to the word of God, the law of nature, and the fundamental constitutions and laudable practices of this antient covenanted church and nation of SCOTLAND, acting jointly and harmoniously by way of consultation, deliberation and admonition.

2*dly*, These resolutions, consented unto, and agreed upon by these present at the meeting, representing the society or societies they were sent from, though they neither were, nor are looked upon as formal statutes of either civil or ecclesiastic judicatories, yet they were understood to be of an obliging force upon all who were consenters, partly by reason of the nature of the thing, and partly by virtue of their consent; but no ways obtruding the same, as extending over the whole land, because coming from us, tho' there lieth upon them also a moral obligation to perform such necessary duties.

3*dly*, At the time when these meetings were first frequented, it could not be expected that such order was in them as could have been wished, seeing the darkness and confusions of the time were great, and the weakness of those present at them not small, nor their opposition from all hands despicable; yet by degrees they afterward attained to a more exact method in managing of matters. And though the word *Convention*, at first was used to distinguish these meetings by, and some resolutions therein concluded, may at first view, seem to savour of authority; yet as the same is not to be understood in that sense, which the strict acceptation of the word may import, so the Christian charity and brotherly love of any not too rigidly censorious will cover the same, imputing it to weakness, seeing whenever they came to see such things, or any other to be wrong or offensive, they did forbear them and reform.

4*thly*, Though the word *Præses* was, and may be used still, yet that is not to be understood of one having authority, but only of one for *order*, and *avoiding of confusion* in the meeting; and the word *Commissioner* or *Commissioners*, yet they are not to be looked upon as *persons clothed with authority*, to act judicially in the meeting

ing they are delegate unto, but only as persons representing the respective societies they were sent from, that at the meeting with their brethren, they might unanimously consent and conclude upon what was incumbent and necessary for them; and that when they went home, they might acquaint the society which sent them, with what past at these meetings.

5thly, Though those who will be at the pains to read over this account, may see some resolutions concluded on at these meetings, which had small ,or no effects following upon the same, yet this need not be thought strange, if it be considered that as sometimes dispensations may fall out, betwixt the falling upon the conclusions, and the performance of what was concluded or resolved upon, (which at the time of the resolution was not thought upon) that may be the cause of counting it expedient to alter the same; and the want of ability may hinder the performance of what was intended: So the resolutions complied unto, and agreed upon at these meetings, are to be looked upon, not so much what they did, as what they were willing to do, in their station, for the advantage of the cause, if opportunity and ability had corresponded to their desire: However they cannot be altogether freed from forgetfulness and laizness, things incident to them as well as others.

Having premised these things, I shall give the relation of what I promised.

THE first of these General Meetings was kept upon the 15th of *December*, 1681, at the Logan house, in the parish of Lismahagow and shire of Clidesdale. Before, or at which time, the condition of the country was lamentable, the cruelty and malice of the enemy was come to a great height; they were pressing conformity to their iniquitous courses, and alas! they were much complied with. Defection was growing, sin was abounding, and the love of many was waxing cold, snares and temptations were increasing; and which was sad, people wanted faithful warning of the sin and danger of the time, for ministers (as if change of dispensations could give a discharge from indispensible duty) were lying bye from the public preaching of the gospel, and did not (as becomes watchmen) set the trumpet to their mouth, to give a *certain sound of what was duty* and what was sin, in such

a time of great danger and extreme neceſſity: But eſpecially the caſe of the ſcattered, reproached, perſecuted, and yet contending party was ſad; for upon the one hand enemies rage was keen againſt them, ſo that they were reduced to very great ſtraits, of hiding, chaſing, wandering, impriſonment and killing: So upon the other, as the want of the faithfully preached goſpel was very wounding to them, the enjoying of which in purity and power, would have been refreſhing, encouraging and watering to them in their weary wilderneſs condition: So the ſad reproaches and odious calumnies, particularly being of Gib's principles, which were caſt upon them by many, eſpecially by ſome miniſters and profeſſors, was not eaſy to bear. Notwithſtanding of which, and many more diſcouragements, the foreſaid day and place, A meeting did conveen, conſiſting of perſons ſent from ſeveral ſocieties up and down the country, who owned and adhered to the Teſtimony of the day. The occaſion of which meeting, is a little hinted above; in ſhort, it was this: To conſider about, and determine upon giving a Public Teſtimony againſt the *wicked* acts of the late *Parliament*, eſpecially that wretched Teſt, and for ſettling a correſpondence thereafter among all them of one judgment in owning the teſtimony. After they were met, and prayer ended, it was thought convenient that a certain number ſhould be choſen out of the whole, for the more ſpeedy and eaſy reſolving upon what they were met about; which being done, the firſt thing they did, in reference to the making of any concluſion, was the reviſing and rectifying of an Act and Declaration, (the form whereof being drawn up before) wherein, after they have related how the late deceaſt tyrant, Charles the II. was legally caſt off by the *Declaration* publiſhed at *Sanquhar*, they give reaſons of their revolt from, and diſowning of his authority; and in the end they ſhew their adherence to the Rutherglen and Sanquhar declarations. So they declare againſt whatever hath been done by Charles Stuart and his accomplices, in prejudice to our antient laws and liberties, in all his ſeveral pretended parliaments ſince the year 1660, and particularly the late parliament holden at Edinburgh, *July* 28, 1681, by a Commiſſioner profeſſedly Popiſh, and for villainy exiled his native land, with all the acts therein enacted; as that abominable, ridiculous, unparalleled, and ſoul-perjuring Teſt, and the reſt. After this was done, the ſame was pub*licly read* in the audience of all preſent at the meeting,

and

their judgment required of, and their consent sought unto it, which was cheerfully obtained; so that it was resolved that the same should be published at Lanerk, upon the 12th of *January* 1682, and some horse and foot to do the same. That which gave the occasion to the consulting and resolving upon the publishing of this Testimony, is a little mentioned above, and the doing thereof in such a public manner was necessary, seeing thereby they evidenced their zeal for the cause wronged by these wicked laws, their fear of partaking of other mens sins, lest they should partake of their judgments also; their desire to have the conviction of the heinousness of the sins witnessed against fastened upon the consciences of the contrivers, actors, and compliers with the same; and to cast a fair copy to posterity, if the like necessity calling for the same should occur; as they had got many notable instances of the like, from their predecessors of worthy memory. Though what followed upon this so necessary a duty, be matter of mourning, yet not in the least to make the lawfulness or expediency thereof to be called in question. As upon the one hand, when the cruel adversary, angry that there should be any in the land, evidencing their love and loyalty to Christ, and zeal against the wrongs done to him, his cause and interest, heard of the publishing of this Testimony, to shew their indignation against the same, they caused the (so called) magistrates of Edinburgh to erect a stage at the cross, and there *in their robes*, (by the hand of the hangman) solemnly *to burn the Declaration* published at Lanerk, and with it the Solemn League and Covenant, upon which they said, (in a paper they printed) that the Declaration was founded; and fined the town of Lanerk in 6000 Merks, because they did not hinder the publishing of it, although it was not in their power to do the same. So upon the other hand, though it made the cause owned by the publishers more clear to some, yet many ministers and professors condemned it, even for disowning the authority of the *Tyrant* by such a party, as well as for some expressions in it, as *Convention of Estates*, *In our name and authority*, &c. which were indeed not well worded, and unadvisedly put in, the defence of which was afterward past from, as it is to be seen in their Informatory Vindication.

A second thing resolved upon, was the agreeing upon and settling a General Correspondence to run circular *through the whole societies* of the nation owning the

Teſtimony, every fourteen days, or at leaſt every month. This concluſion was thought very rational and neceſſary, for the ſpeedy knowing of one another's minds about any matter in agitation among them, and communicating their thoughts to one another for counſel and direction, how to carry, in and about the ſame, and for avoiding of confuſion and preſerving of union. And as the deſign of agreeing upon this concluſion was very rational, ſo what hath followed upon the ſame, hath tended to the advantage of the cauſe and encouragement of its owners, for it hath produced this effect: Where there were ſeveral ſocieties in a ſhire, they have endeavoured to keep up a correſpondence among themſelves by one or two perſons ſent from every ſociety in the ſhire, to a place, and at a time appointed, eſpecially preſently before, and preſently after every General Meeting, for conſulting and determining matters relative to one or more of the Societies in the bounds, and for removing of differences among any of them, which was incumbent for them to do in their ſtation. Theſe are called ſhire meetings; and ſometimes two or three ſhires do ſo correſpond: And when the ſhire is large, and many ſocieties in it, they divide ſuch meetings in two, and meet together but upon ſome emergencies more than ordinary: But what things cannot be brought to any concluſion therein, and theſe matters more public, and which require the advice, concurrence and conſent of the whole, were, and are brought to the General Meeting, that there it might be conſidered, and ſome concluſion put thereto, as was proper for them to do, according to their ſtation and capacity. And this method continues unto this day.

Further, it was concluded that every quarter of a year thereafter there ſhould be a General Meeting of perſons to be ſent from all the ſocieties in every ſhire, burgh, and corner of the nation, where they reſided who owned the Teſtimony. To reſolve upon this concluſion, was one cauſe of the conveening of their meeting, which was looked upon as helpful to propagate the Teſtimony, to preſerve unity among its owners, and to ſtrengthen and encourage one another in the way of their duty in that dark, ſad and weary day. And though many have been pleaſed from ignorance or prejudice to exclaim againſt theſe meetings, and conſequently againſt this concluſion of the firſt of them, yet what effects the ſame hath produced, anſwerable to the ends of their firſt appointment,

the

following account of the ſubſequent meetings will demonſtrate.

Likewiſe, it was concluded, that nothing ſhould be done by any particular perſon, without the conſent of the ſociety whereof he was a member, in things whereof their knowledge and conſent was requiſite to be had. And alſo, that nothing ſhould be done by any ſociety, or ſocieties in a ſhire, in matters relative to the public, and which concerned the whole, without the knowledge and conſent of the General Meeting. That which made them fall upon this reſolution, was the fears that perſons or ſocieties, (having more zeal than knowledge) might run and ruſh upon things at their own hand, doing them in name of the whole, and yet without their knowledge and conſent, which though even right upon the matter, yet wanting the concurrence of theſe as much concerned, if not more than they, cannot be reckoned their deed: And if wrong both as to matter and manner, the whole would be blamed; yea the cauſe would ſuffer more reproach, ſeeing in a community it is ordinary to find ſome perſons raſh and precipitant in meddling with matters beyond their ſphere: Eſpecially there was ground for this fear, in that confuſed and dark time, for ſeeking to prevent which they cannot be juſtly blamed. And as the concluſion was, and is rational, and neceſſary for that end, eſpecially among a community which deſires and deſigns to do do nothing relative to the public, and which concerns the whole, without the knowledge, concurrence and conſent of all theſe concerned; ſo the ſame hath proved effectual for keeping of union, excluding of confuſion, hedging in of petulant ſpirits, and right managing of affairs, though ſeveral have been pleaſed to cry out againſt it as an impoſition, eſpecially ſome who have broken off from them: But as they have explained their meaning in other things, ſo alſo in this, as may be ſeen in their *Informatory Vindication*, P. 46, 47.

Moreover it was concluded, That each commiſſioner there preſent, ſhould after his return to the ſociety he was ſent from, conſult with, and ſeek their advice, if they judged it neceſſary, that ſome perſon or perſons ſhould be ſent abroad to foreign reformed churches, for making known to them the ſad condition of this church, and in particular their own low and lamentable caſe; and to come reſolved to the next meeting, as to the way and manner of carrying it on. Tho' ſome effects which followed upon this reſolution, were diſcouraging, as ſhall be

be ſhewn hereafter; yet that which made them fall upon it was reaſonable, for as this church in general was in a very ſad caſe being broken with perſecution, wounded with diviſion, and like to be ruined with defection, and ſo ſtood in need of the help and ſympathy of other churches; ſo in particular that party being members thereof, their condition was not the leaſt deplorable, being ſorely perſecuted by the common enemy; and ſadly reproached, wrongfully repreſented, and calumnies caſt upon them by many of their declining brethren; as that they were running upon wild extravagancies, particularly that they were of Gib's principles, which were ſpread not only in this land, but alſo in the neighbouring and foreign churches. Therefore to clear themſelves of theſe things, and eſpecially to vindicate the cauſe owned by them, and alſo to obtain (being become as aliens to their mother's children) the ſympathy of ſtrangers, they judged it expedient that the ſocieties ſhould take it to their conſideration, whether it were neceſſary to ſend one or more of their number, in good repute among them, and in ſome capacity for managing ſuch an undertaking.

It was alſo reſolved, that the 29th of December, next, ſhould be obſerved by all the ſocieties adhering to the Teſtimony, and united in that Correſpondence, as a day of faſting and prayer unto the Lord, that he would be graciouſly pleaſed in mercy, to direct, countenance and bleſs the action which was to be gone about upon the 12th of January, 1682. This action was the publiſhing of the Declaration at Lanerk. And that the ſaid 12th of January be obſerved as a day of faſting and prayer by all that ſhould remain at home, in their ſeveral ſocieties, and that the 26th of January, and 19th of February, be obſerved days of faſting and humiliation, prayer and thankſgiving, by the ſaid ſocieties. And the next general meeting was appointed to be upon the 15th of March at the Prieſt's-hill.

Having given this account of the concluſions of this meeting with what gave the occaſion to, and followed thereupon: I ſhall next give the relation of this one thing, which, though it ſeem to reflect upon theſe who had any hand in it, yet I could not omit it, ſeeing it would be reckoned diſingenuity in relating the laudable deeds of a perſon or party, not to give ſome account of their miſcarriages alſo: eſpecially theſe which are not only not our *to others, but alſo* confeſſed to be ſuch by themſelves:

as

as this was. But becauſe I ſtudy brevity, as well as impartiality, I ſhall give it in few words. There was one engagement unto ſecrecy taken by the members of this meeting, the import of which was, *That they ſhould not make known unto any, what concluſions were reſolved upon at the time, but upon the like engagement.* This was thought neceſſary and expedient at the time, leſt the then intended publiſhing of the Declaration, ſhould have been diſcovered, and ſo the action impeded. But the continuing of it, at the next meeting, and ſo from one meeting to another, until it was jointly laid aſide, was very diſadvantageous to the cauſe, and perplexing to many of the owners thereof; for ſome of tender conſciences ſcrupled to acquaint perſons (who either wanted clearneſs to take the engagement, or elſe it was thought fit not to tender it to them) with matters, even when the good of the cauſe was concerned in it, and ſo it was made a bond of iniquity: And others not minding what bonds were upon them by reaſon of the ſame, and from an itching humour, which is in many to tell things, became guilty of perjury, by being too lax in it.

After this meeting the caſe of the land was deplorably ſad, as it was before it. Enemies went ſtill on in preſſing conformity to their helliſh courſes, getting ready compliance thereunto, by the generality of people, and perſecuting all recuſants with rigour. But eſpecially the caſe of the witneſſing party was much to be pitied, for upon the one hand, the adverſary after the publiſhing of Lanerk Declaration breathed out cruelty and ſlaughter againſt them, ſome effects of whoſe fury is touched a little above. And upon the other hand, inſtead of compaſſion and ſympathy, which might have been expected would have been ſhown them in ſuch a ſad juncture, many of their covenanted brethren did not only condemn ſome words in the declaration, as convention &c. but alſo the thing itſelf, as coming from ſuch a party, who, they then concluded was running upon unwarrantable and unhappy courſes, and were repreſented as ſuch, both at home and abroad. Although theſe things were wounding and weighty to them, yet they did nothing abate, but rather kindle their zeal; they were more diligent than formerly, in keeping up their meetings for prayer and conference, and their deſire was more fervent to promote the Teſtimony, and tranſmit it to *poſterity; for the ſettling* of the Correſpondence,

and

and the publishing of the Declaration, was a little reviving to them in their bondage, a pledge that the Lord would do more for them, and a branch of hope reached to them, in that their low condition. But their great complaint was the want of the faithfully preached gospel which they longed after.

However, according to the appointment of the last general meeting did conveen at the Priest-hill, in the parish of Muir-kirk of Kyle, and sheriffdom of Air, upon the 15th of March 1682. After they were met, and prayer ended, this meeting (but especially afterward, method being attained by degrees, and not at the first) for order's sake was thus modelled; when it was known who were these sent from the several societies (there being always more there than such) there was chosen of these sixteen, and sometimes more, to make up which number, every shire chooseth some more, and some fewer, according to the number of societies therein, and where there was but one out of a shire, he *was always* of that number. Again out of these was chosen a Præses, not that to him was given (neither did they claim) any power or authority, over the rest, but for keeping of order, and avoiding of confusion, which was very incident among such a company. Sometimes the rest of the Commissioners were desired to go to another place, and spend the time in prayer; but what conclusions were requisite for them to know and obtaintheir consent unto, were signified to them, that they might acquaint their societies therewith when they went home; or if they had any thing to object, they might give it in; at other times they were present, that they might see and hear what past, and speak their mind, when they saw it necessary, that so they might the better give an account thereof when they went home to their societies.

Next when this was done, there were some questions enquired at every one of the selected number; such as, If they knew the mind of the society they were sent from? If they did, whether their society owned the Testimony against tyranny and defection? if they were free of scandal? as also if any there present, knew any of the rest, chargeable with such things? And if any were found so chargeable; they were in all sobriety desired to withdraw, but not to be offended, seeing what they did was out of love to them, and for their own exoneration, *to manifest their* hatred at the sin, and sense of the justness *of the censure* to be inflicted for such scandals by

these

theſe who were competent for the ſame. This method hath been ſtill followed. And about two years after this, theſe queſtions were written, which I ſhall inſert when I come to the time in which the ſame was done. And albeit, *this hath* been exclaimed againſt by many, and called by ſome cannons; yet the ſame was, and is thought neceſſary, ſeeing, at the firſt beginning of theſe meetings, and ſince, many people were ſadly involved, and inſnared in the public defections, and groſs compliances of the time; which would have been found cenſurable by church judicatories, in a peaceable and ſettled condition of the church, and in this confuſed and broken time, wanting ſuch judicatories to make application unto (however being willing to retain the ſenſe of the juſtneſs of the cenſure, which ſhould be inflicted upon the perſons guilty of public ſcandal.) Therefore out of love to their brethren, and fear of partaking of other men's ſins, they deſired and endeavoured to have the members they concurred with in theſe meetings, in carrying on, and managing the Teſtimony in their ſtations, ſo qualified, as they might with comfort and confidence join with, being of one mind and judgment, as to the matter of the Teſtimony, and free of any public ſcandal; or if they had been chargeable with any, confeſſed it, were ſenſible of the evil thereof, and willing to acknowledge offence they had given thereby, to ſuch as were competent to take the ſame. This was, nor is not a taking upon them the trial of ſcandals, or ſcandalous perſons; for all the trial which they did, and do judge incumbent for them being private perſons in their private capacity notwithſtanding of the greateſt neceſſity, is not judicial and authoritative, but meerly private and popular, for information about the caſe and practice of the perſons, in order to the regulating of their conſciences in their duty and carriage toward them; that ſo according to the judgment of diſcretion, they might be fully perſuaded in their minds, as to what was right and wrong, true or falſe, and might not remain ſtaggering or doubting in their duty toward them.

Theſe queſtions being enquired, and what followed thereupon at an end; then what buſineſs they had to conſult about, and to deliberate upon, came to be conſidered. The firſt thing done at the meeting, as likewiſe at ſeveral meetings afterwards, was the reading of the concluſions of the *foregoing* meeting, and it was enquired *at every member, if he* approved of the ſame.

At this meeting they did approve thereof. That which moved to this was, that in caſe any particular perſon, or ſociety had ſeen ſince the laſt meeting ground of objection againſt any of the reſolutions therein concluded, they might give them in, that ſo, after due conſideration, if it were found neceſſary, ſuch reſolutions might either be altered, or quite laid aſide.

Next, it was concluded by them, that the honourable *Alexander Gordon* of *Earlſton*, attended by *John Niſbet*, ſhould be commiſſionate to foreign nations, to repreſent their low caſe to the reformed churches there. And that money ſhould be collected and brought into Edinburgh, betwixt and the 4th of April next thereafter, for helping to defray his expences in that undertaking.

The import of his commiſſion was this :—" After " narrating the motives preſſing to ſend him abroad; " as the low caſe the church of Scotland was in by per- " ſecution; and that in particular, their cauſe and caſe " was ſadly miſrepreſented abroad, by the ſubtle dealings " of adverſaries, whereas they declared, they neither " maintained, nor deſired to hold any thing contrary to " the written word of God, their ancient laws, civil and " eccleſiaſtic, and their former work of Reformation, " agreeable thereto: They do concredite him faithfully " to inform all the Proteſtants, to whom he ſhould come " (they deſiring to know their caſe, in order to the ſym- " pathiſing with them, and holding up their caſe unto " the Lord, as members of the ſame body, under Jeſus " their Head) of their preſent caſe, principles, former " and latter proceedings, and that they were (through " grace) labouring to keep themſelves clean in the way " of the Lord, as it had been walked in by their prede- " ceſſors, in their carrying on the noble work of Refor- " mation, in the ſeveral ſteps thereof, from Popery, " Prelacy, and Eraſtian ſupremacy. And it is upon " theſe heads, their ſufferings were, and are ſtated; " and for the more clear and full knowledge whereof, " they recommended them to the information of him " whom they had ſent, as being well ſeen in their affairs: " Humbly deſiring, that what information he ſhould " give, might be credited: And that what information " they had gotten, or might get, of their principles, " or practices being contrary to the ſcripture might not be " believed, the ſame being only falſe aſperſions caſt upon " them. Concluding with an intreaty to all the lovers " *of Zion*, not to ſlight, but to ponder deeply, the ſad

" caſe

"caſe they, as a part of the Proteſtant Intereſt, were re-"dacted unto."

This concluſion was in purſuance of one in the former meeting, that every Commiſſioner there, ſhould ſeek the advice of their ſocieties about ſending ſome abroad to reformed foreign churches, for making known to them the ſad caſe of this church. And in a particular manner their own low caſe, and to come reſolved about it to this meeting, which accordingly was done, and they thought the ſending ſome abroad very rational and neceſſary. So at this meeting it was unanimouſly concluded upon; and Earlſton as the man of greateſt repute, and beſt qualified among them, was jointly pitched upon. Notwithſtanding whereof within a few days after, ſome (eſpecially Andrew Young, a man of no deſpicable parts, and one who was then ſeemingly zealous in promoting the Teſtimony, yea and cordial in this concluſion) went to Glaſgow, where conſulting with ſome friends, they diſſented from this reſolution, alledging, among other things that the perſon nominate was not fit for managing of a matter of ſuch importance. In which diſſentment joyned ſeveral ſocieties, refuſing to concurr by collecting money for promoting it. And the reſt being bent for the ſame, it occaſioned no ſmall diviſion and contention, both by word and writ. But the concluſion was rational, and ſeemed neceſſary at the time, the reaſons moving to the falling upon it, is ſomewhat ſhown above: In ſhort, it was the endeavouring to repreſent the deplorable condition of this church, eſpecially, the ſad caſe themſelves was redacted unto; and to ſeek the rolling away of reproaches induſtriouſly heaped upon them: and to ſhew the juſtneſs of their cauſe they were contending and ſuffering for, that ſo they might obtain that ſympathy abroad, which was denied them at home. Howbeit this concluſion was diſſented from and much oppoſed. Yet, Earlſtoun, in April, went from this land for London with John Niſbet, where he left him, and went to the Netherlands.

Likewiſe it was concluded, that the Commiſſioners there preſent ſhould acquaint and deſire every man of his reſpective ſociety, to provide for himſelf fit weapons, in caſe there ſhould be any need requiring the ſame.

The reaſons moving to this reſolution, were the endeavouring to retain, and maintain that principle of ſelf-defence *whereupon it was founded*, which nature teach-"es *yet it is contradicted and* oppoſed by our unreaſonable

adversaries, from whose unjust violence (by whom they were killed all the day long, and accounted as sheep for the slaughter) they sought by this mean to defend themselves, and resist them; not only in their wanderings, but also when together in their meetings, in case they should be assaulted by enemies. As also that they might be in some posture for their own defence, if bloody papists should make a massacre.

Moreover, it was concluded, that although persons having made defection from the way of God, or lying under public scandal, providing they be sensible of their sin, and give signs of their repentance, may be received into the society, upon engagement to make acknowledgment of their sin, according to the degree of their offence, and the satisfying of the offended, to these who are competent to receive the same. This conclusion since, hath many a time been put in practice; and that which gave the rise to this resolution, was, Many persons in the time of temptation, and hour and power of darkness, having made defection, who through grace attained not only the sense of the dishonour done to God thereby, but also of the offence done to their brethren, with whom they were willing to be reconciled, by acknowledging their offence: And in particular from the sense of the justness of the cause owned by the witnessing party, they were desirous to incorporate themselves with them, which they did signify to them; who though they were willing to encourage them all they could, in the way of duty, yet as to joining with them, being guilty of such scandals, they knew not well what to do in it, so they represented the case to their brethren at this meeting, to get their advice, about the same; who taking it to their serious consideration, resolved upon this conclusion, above mentioned, as the only expedient which they could fall upon, in their case, and circumstances: seeing albeit they wanted ministers, and were not themselves competent for the trial and removal of scandals; yet, that such an engagement should be required and obtained, was rational, they thereby declaring the justness of the censure to be inflicted, albeit they could not do it.

After this meeting the cruel and bloody enemy went on incessantly, and unweariedly in their persecution against dissenters, defection increased, tentations and snares *were strawed* thick in peoples way, whereby many did *fall, were broken* and snared, and taken: Faithful and

public

public preaching could not be obtained, whereby people wanted not only the diſcovery of ſins and ſnares then abounding, and of judgments imminent and lying on, and of wrath impendent and hanging over the land; but alſo the diſcovery of their proper and pertinent duty, and what Iſrael ought to do, in ſuch a day of darkneſs and gloominess, perplexity and grief, as that was. But in particular, the caſe of the witneſſing party was much to be commiſerate, though they got pity from few; for as they could not have the benefit of the goſpel by faithful miniſters, that they could hear of, and have acceſs to, in all the land, againſt whom they had not juſt grounds of withdrawing, in the preſent circumſtances, which was to them their greateſt grievance under their heavy preſſures; ſo adverſaries rage againſt them was nothing abated, and the mouths of reproachers opened wide againſt them, and their tongues bended like bows for lies, but they where not valiant for the truth upon the earth. Among other things, the diſſentment from the concluſion of the laſt meeting about Earlſtoun's going abroad, was very diſcouraging, and was the occaſion of much contention and diviſion; for theſe who were for the concluſion, were bent for proſecuting it to the utmoſt of their power, and theſe who diſſented were as much againſt it. There were ſeveral writings paſt between the one and the other: Some in Glaſgow who were chief in the diſſentment, wrote to thoſe in Edinburgh, who were for the concluſion, giving reaſons of their ſo doing, which was anſwered. And *Mr. Young*, a great ſtickler for the diſſentment, with moſt of the ſociety in Teviotdale wrote alſo to thoſe in Edinburgh; ſo that the debate came to no ſmall height, and was like to be the occaſion of a greater rent than it produced, if it had not been timeouſly prevented.

HOWEVER, a General Meeting did conveen at *Talalinn*, in the Pariſh of Tweed's-muir, and Sheriffdom of Tweedale, upon the 15th of *June*, 1682. After they were met, and prayer ended, and the meeting modelled after the wonted manner; when the queſtions were going through the members, which was ordinary to be enquired at them, about themſelves and theſe they repreſented, their owning the Teſtimony, and being free of public ſcandal, there fell in confuſions among them; for James Ruſſel, *a man of a hot and fiery ſpirit*, being one *of thoſe who enquired the ſame*, did ſtretch ſome of them

too

too great a length, and added one queſtion which was never enquired either before or after, nor much at the time, which was, *If they or their Society were free of paying cuſtoms at Ports or Bridges?* This he enquired at either one or two, which when perceived, it occaſioned ſome debate, and ſo was deſiſted from; however this queſtion of paying cuſtoms, was much toſſed by the ſaid James Ruſſel and ſome few with him, who not long after, made it, among others, a cauſe of ſeparation from the witneſſing party, by whom it was never ſo far ſtretched; for as they did find no fault with thoſe that ſcrupled to pay it, if they did not impoſe the like upon others; ſo they that had clearneſs for the ſame, did not withdraw from them upon that head, if they were free of all other things which are ground of withdrawing, though they could have wiſhed they had been free of that alſo; ſeeing albeit they counted it one of the grievances and miſeries under which they were to groan, as having ſome tendency indirectly, to the upholding and maintaining of a tyrannical power, which hath been long exerciſed over the conſciences, bodies, and eſtates of the Lord's people: yet not deſiring to wreathe an inſupportable yoke about their own necks, they looked upon the paying thereof to come under another conſideration than the Ceſs, *&c.* the one being newly laid on, and enacted for wicked ends, and employed for unlawful uſes; and the other being an antient thing, and a part of the town's privileges, and often employed for neceſſary uſes, as helping of High-ways, Bridges, *&c.* Nevertheleſs many of them did not make uſe of this argument, not being acquaint with the way of its firſt laying on, nor what uſe was made of it, but only pleaded the neceſſity of it, conſidering that ſeveral reputed ſtraight and honeſt in the cauſe, but poor, had no other way to maintain themſelves and families, except they went to the market to ſell ſomething, for which they behoved to pay cuſtom: in that caſe they thought they might as well do it, as buy ale and bread, which paid exciſe, whereby that tyrannical power was upheld indirectly, as well as by the other, yet not to be refrained from, ſeeing they could not live without theſe. But to return, as the queſtions were going through the members of the meeting, there was a young man of Dumbarton ſhire, found to have joined with ſome that payed the Ceſs, for which he was *debarred from* ſitting there; as alſo, another was debar*red, after* ſome debate, becauſe of his marrying with

Mr.

Mr. Alexander Peden, and joining with ſome that gave meat and drink to dragoons: But that which occaſioned the hotteſt debate and greateſt confuſion, was about Alexander Gordon, who had joined with *Mr. Peden,* in accepting the ſacrament of Baptiſm to his child from him, whereupon the conteſt aroſe, one part of the meeting ſaying *Mr. Peden* might be joined with, and the other not: So ſeeing the matter was under debate, and could not be there and then decided, it was thought moſt expedient to ſuſpend Alexander Gordon from the meeting, until enquiry and trial be made, How it was with *Mr. Peden* at the time, and how it was when he joined with him, that thereby it might be the better known how to proceed therein. And for this effect, James Ruſſel promiſed to ſend one, or come himſelf out of Fife, and to come by Edinburgh, that one might be choſen out of Lothian to go along with him to the Monkland, where they were to get a third perſon to go along with them to *Mr. Peden;* which thing James Ruſſel failed to do, and ſo the enquiry and trial was not made. At length, when they came to ſpeak of the concluſion anent Earlſtoun's going abroad, the debate betwixt the one party and the other came to be ſo hotly handled, that they parted from one another, the one part going to the one part of the field, and the other going to another. However, thoſe who adhered to the concluſion, drawing together, formed themſelves into a meeting, whoſe reſolutions were as follow:

In the firſt place, they did approve all that was done by the former meeting, and in particular teſtified their adherence to all that was done in proſecuting the firſt appointment of the ſaid meeting, and alſo their diſſenting from all thoſe who had declined the ſaid appointment, until they ſee their fault therein, which was, firſt, to do, and then to undo, by aſſenting, and then diſſenting. Albeit this reſolution may appear at firſt view to be raſh and precipitant, in that they withdrew from their brethren upon ſuch grounds, yet if matters be rightly weighed, it will ſeem more moderate, though not altogether juſtifiable. If the time of reſolving upon the ſame be conſidered, which was immediately upon the back of hot debates, when their ſpirits were aloft and unſettled, and the edge of their zeal keen againſt that which they judged wrong in them. As alſo the extent thereof, which was not a *withdrawing from* them in private ſocie-

ties

ties for prayer and conference, but only in theſe public and general meetings, until they ſaw their fault in that diſſentment, and likewiſe the occaſion of falling upon it, which was, as is mentioned above, the diſſenting from the concluſion about Earlſtoun's going abroad, and continuing in it; in reſolving of which they were joint and unanimous, and the ſame was rational, ſeemed neceſſary, and was orderly gone about.

That which followed upon this reſolution, ſhall be be ſhewn afterwards.

Next it was concluded by them, that betwixt and the 24th of that inſtant, every ſociety adhering to them in that particular, of proſecuting the firſt appointment of the laſt meeting, ſhould bring their quarterly collection in to Edinburgh.—This was in order to the helping to defray the charges of Earlſtoun when he was abroad: which was accordingly done, in ſo far as their ability could reach.

It is here to be noted, that the ſocieties every quarter of a year, did gather a collection of money, which was ſometimes more and ſometimes leſs, in their reſpective bounds, and ſent with their commiſſioner to the General Meeting, where it was conſcientiouſly diſtributed, a part of it for public uſes, wherein the whole was concerned, if any ſuch thing called for the ſame, or to priſoners, of which always there was not few in ſeveral priſons, or to indigent perſons in the country, according as their need required.

Likewiſe it was concluded, that the firſt Thurſday of that inſtant, the third Thurſday of *July*, and firſt Thurſday of *Auguſt*, were to be obſerved for days of public faſting, by all the ſocieties in the kingdom, owning the Teſtimony.

In fine, when the meeting was near the diſmiſſing, the diſſenters from the concluſion, ſent ſome to thoſe who were for it, deſiring to have another meeting with them; whereupon ſome of either ſide going together, after ſome deliberation, condeſcended upon both time and place, which was to be upon the 11th day of *Auguſt*, at Edinburgh.

As Satan, that grand enemy of the Lord's people, did raiſe the fire of diviſion, the flames whereof burnt ſo high, ſeeking thereby to bring the cauſe under reproach, and its owners in contempt; and when the ſame ſhould come

come *to be told in Gath, and publiſhed in the ſtreets of Aſkelon, the daughters of the Philiſtines would rejoice, and the daughters of the uncircumciſed triumph*; ſo after it, he was not wanting, to raiſe the fire of perſecution againſt the whole, thereby ſeeking the deſtruction of all together; for immediately intelligence of their meeting together being ſent (as was alledged) by the Curate of *Tweed's-muir* to the council at Edinburgh, who preſently iſſued out a proclamation againſt them, (who were therein ſaid to be 80 perſons) ſtrictly diſcharging all perſons from reſetting, harbouring, or ſupplying them, under the pain of holden like guilty themſelves; as alſo, commanding their Bailiffs, Sheriffs, *&c.* to ſearch, take and apprehend them, wherever they could be found: whereby their caſe was very diſtreſſed, being upon the one hand divided among themſelves, and upon the other hand, not only ſorely perſecuted by their cruel and bloody adverſaries, but alſo, inſtead of pity, miſrepreſented and reproached by many of their declining brethren. And however deplorable their caſe was, the condition of the reſt of the land was not much better; for enemies cruel rage and outrageous cruelty reached all thoſe who had the conſcience or confidence to ſtand at a diſtance from compliance with their iniquitous courſes. Deadneſs and darkneſs not removed, but rather growing, occaſioned much, through the want of the public and free preaching of the Goſpel, the having of which, in the ſaddeſt of times, is a great encouragement, and proves comforting and confirming, in order to the holding on and holding out in duty; yea, though the trials and afflictions attending the going about the ſame ſhould be many, and theſe fiery and bloody.

Nevertheless, according to the appointment of the laſt meeting, A General Meeting did conveen at *Edinburgh*, upon the 11th of *Auguſt*, 1682. conſiſting of perſons who were for, and alſo ſuch as were againſt the foreſaid concluſion. It might have been expected, that at this time the ſpirits of both parties ſhould have been meek and mild, having ſo much time, calmly and deliberately to think upon matters, and that paſſion ſhould have been guarded againſt, having ſeen ſo much of the bad effects of it formerly. But as confuſions and diviſions were at the laſt meeting, ſo they were at this; which was matter *of humiliation* to behold, and is ground

of ſorrow to think upon; a part of which was thus occaſioned: As Mr. James Renwick and James Ruſſel, with ſome others, were coming home from the laſt meeting, being all for the concluſion which was diſſented from; it was judged neceſſary by them, that an anſwer ſhould be written to the Letters ſent from Glaſgow by ſome of the diſſenters; intending thereby further to clear and confirm thoſe who adhered to the concluſion, and for convincing and reclaiming thoſe who were againſt it, or for rendering the obſtinate more inexcuſable: and to do this, Mr. James Renwick and James Ruſſel were employed, who undertook to write each of them one, and promiſed to meet two or three days before the meeting, for reviſing each other's papers, and if needful to put them both in one. Accordingly they did meet, and read each other's papers; but Mr. James, though he agreed with the ſcope and matter of the other's writing, yet not with ſome expreſſions in it, ſo it was concluded that each ſhould be kept by itſelf. However, upon the foreſaid day of meeting, after the commiſſioners had given in their commiſſions, as was uſual, and the preſes choſen, Mr. James's paper againſt the diſſentment was read, containing an anſwer to the objections of the opponents, and likewiſe ſome reaſons inducing to foreſaid concluſion. But as he was of a meek and tender ſpirit, ſo in this paper, tho' the reaſons were ſolid, weighty, and ſharp, yet the ſtrain of it was condeſcending and gaining, whereby there was nothing ſaid againſt it; but when James Ruſſel's (who was of a fiery and hot ſpirit) his paper came to be read, the moſt part of the meeting as well thoſe who were for the concluſion as thoſe who were againſt it, except two or three, condemned it, as having too much bitterneſs, untenderneſs and reflections in it. But in the time of his and the meeting's contending about that paper and other things, an alarm coming, they parted at that time, and at night met again without the town, where after long reaſoning and debating betwixt the meeting and him, and two with him, *viz.* John Henderſon and Patrick Grant, in which the heat was not ſmall, nor the confuſions few, upon which he and theſe two gave in a written proteſtation (which they had drawn up before) to the meeting, intitled, "The Proteſtation of the Societies of true Preſbyterians "in the ſhire of Fife and Perth, againſt diſorderly per-"ſons." In which, adhering to foreſaid concluſion at

laſt

the laſt meeting, they proteſt againſt admitting any to ſit as members of the meeting, contrary to the concluſion of the laſt, and then mention ſeveral things, whereof if any were guilty, they were not to be admitted as members of a *Convention*, (ſo term they the General Meeting) ſome of which the meeting did look upon as cauſes of withdrawing, and ſome not. Likewiſe they gave in a paper about the names of the days of the week, and months of the year, wherein were ſeveral unſuitable and unſavoury, unchriſtian expreſſions; and ſo he and his comrades left them, after he had occaſioned ſome confuſion, which otherwiſe might not have fallen out, as was evident both at the laſt meeting and this: And after he was parted from them he was was not idle; by taking trouble to himſelf, he created more to others; for he and ſome few with him, ſeeking to juſtify what they had done, were at no ſmall pains to inform, or rather *miſinform* ſeverals about the proceedings at the laſt and this meeting, in going through the country, reading his papers to ſundry men and women. Yet he gained few to his party. Yea, he wrote abroad to Earlſtoun, miſrepreſenting the proceedings of this meeting and the laſt, whereby he and Mr. Hamilton were in hazard (as no wonder) of being jealous of friends, and their doings at home: To know the certainty of which, he ſent here a copy of the information he had got; which when received, was both aſtoniſhing and wounding to look upon. Whereupon it was judged neceſſary for the vindication of the cauſe, clearing of themſelves, and better information of friends abroad, to ſend one to them who knew the whole affair, and was in ſome capacity to inform them of every circumſtance relating to it, and expedient for them to know. So Mr. James Renwick was fixed upon as the fitteſt; who accordingly went, and by his true and clear information gained them to a better impreſſion of thoſe they were ſomewhat jealous of before; and immediately came home again. However, as James Ruſſel after this, much oppoſed the witneſſing party by word and writ, both at home and abroad; ſo in particular he oppoſed Mr. Renwick both before and after he was a miniſter, againſt whom he alledges, that at this time, when he was abroad, he was guilty of perjury in acquainting Mr. Hamilton with matters, without taking the engagement to *ſecreſy*, which was ſo far given heed to by ſome, through *his influence*, that they made it a cauſe

of their not hearing him preach, until afterwards they came to be better informed, and then they did acknowledge their fault. But as Mr. Renwick was ſadly miſtaken in other things, ſo alſo in this; for when the engagement was tendered to Mr. Hamilton, he ſcrupled to take the ſame, which when conſidered by Mr. James, he judged it his duty notwithſtanding thereof, not to keep up matters from him, which if he had done, would have tended to the prejudice of the cauſe, and thereby he would have made it a bond of iniquity, contrary to the intention of its firſt impoſers.

Howbeit, if Mr. Renwick was wrong in this, James Ruſſel was firſt in the fault, by his acquainting the ſaid Mr. Hamilton, with matters before him, without the ſaid engagement (viz. *in his accuſation, and miſinformation written to him, which is yet extant.*) But to return from this unpleaſant digreſſion. After James Ruſſel, and the other two were gone, and day light being come, they were neceſſitate to part, for fear of danger. Yet that ſame day they met again within the town, where Alexander Gordon, and ſome of the diſſenters from the concluſion, above ſpecified, being preſent, it was judged neceſſary that ſomething ſhould be done in relation to them. So concerning Alexander Gordon, ſeeing he was ſuſpended from the former meeting upon the account of his baptizing his child with Mr Peden, this meeting upon the account that the enquiry about Mr. Peden was not made; enquired at him, if he was willing before them, to engage to acknowledge his offence, providing Mr. Peden, after trial, be not found to have been faithful when he joined with him; which he moſt willingly and chearfully did. And ſo upon this condition, he was received in, as a member of the meeting.

Likewiſe concerning the diſſenters the meeting proceeded thus, in order to them; aſking if they were willing to acknowledge their offence in what they had done, which if not, they were not clear to act with them. To which, the diſſenters ſaid, that they deſired to hear Earlſtoun's letter (which he had ſent home, giving ſome account of his progreſs abroad) becauſe poſſibly thereby, they might be more convinced of their miſtake, and cleared in their duty: which the meeting granted. And when they had heard the ſame, they acknowledged that the appointment of ſending one abroad was duty: and that they were out of their duty in their diſſenting

from

from it. And so jointly with the rest of the meeting, approved all the conclusions of the foregoing meetings, and so approved of the dissenting from them upon the account of declining the foresaid appointment. This was satisfying to all the meeting, whereupon they were received as members thereof; and in token of the burial of that dissentment, it was concluded unanimously, that the objections of the dissenters, together with all answers thereto, should be destroyed. After which, these conclusions were jointly by them concluded upon.

1st, It was concluded that a call should be sent to Mr. Thomas Douglas, inviting him to come home, and when come, if no exceptions be found against him, he is to be joined with, but if there be any just exceptions, his charges are to be paid and himself dismissed. The falling upon this resolution, proceeded from their longing to have the gospel freely preached by faithful ministers, which they had long been deprived of: and to have that foul stain, that they would hear no ministers, which was cast upon them removed. And from a desire in particular to have the benefit of his ministry, with which, they had been privileged before, having heard of his remaining affection to the cause, they judged it their duty to write to him, being at the time in England, in order to his home coming. Accordingly a letter was written, and sent, to which he returned an answer, giving some reasons of his not coming which were not very satisfying.

2dly, Also, it was concluded upon the account of disability to manage the affair, that the honourable Alexander Gordon of Earlstoun, be desired to settle his affairs abroad, and to turn his commission into his much honoured brother Robert Hamilton his hand; yet not to leave matters in confusion, which may prove disadvantageous to the cause, by rendering friends suspicious of them, but that these who know of his errand, and being there, may be also acquainted with his departure. And for that end what time he saw fit, was assigned to him to settle his affairs abroad, but with all expedition in his return home, was injoined upon him. And for his more speedy, and better return: It was concluded that all the societies should collect money, according to their abilities, and bring the same timeously to their next adjacent societies that it might all come into Edinburgh betwixt and the *last of that instant*.

The

The reaſon of their deſiring Earlſtoun to return, it couched in the concluſion; in ſhort, it was the maintaining him abroad, far ſurmounted their ability, tho' not their willingneſs. However, having found ſome good effects his being there had produced, they ſaw it neceſſary that his place ſhould not be left empty, ſo they condeſcended upon Mr. Hamilton to ſupply the ſame, into whoſe hands they ſhould turn his commiſſion. Yet fearing leſt friends abroad among whom he had been converſant, might become thereby ſuſpicious of them, that he ſhould acquaint them therewith, but affixing him no time for his return, though their deſire was, that he ſhould haſten it. Albeit this was ſignified to him preſently after the meeting, yet he did not return until the ſpring.

Likewiſe it was concluded, that none thereafter ſhould be admitted as Commiſſioners without written commiſſions, that ſo order may be kept, and counterfeits diſcovered. This was only that order might be obſerved, and for diſcovering any cheats or counterfeits, in caſe any ſuch ſhould endeavour to creep in among them, to get notice of what they were about.

As likewiſe it was concluded, that whatever is, hath been, or may be concluded by the General Meeting, may not be diſſented from, but theſe who have any thing to object, let them come to the next meeting, and give in their reaſons, that they may cognoſce upon them, and determine as they may be found relevant. This was not, but that their concluſions might not be diſſented from, not looking upon them as unalterable ſtatutes; but their meaning and deſire was, that off-hand, they ſhould not be declined (eſpecially by theſe who had been unanimous in making the ſame) in the interval between the meeting they were reſolved at, and the other following, having before their eyes the ſad effects which the diſſenting from the concluſion about Earlſtoun's going abroad, had produced. And ſo for preventing the like in time coming, and out of love to have union preſerved among them, they judged it neceſſary that in caſe any ſhould come afterward to find ground of objections againſt any of the concluſions reſolved upon at the preſent meeting, they had free liberty to give them in at the next, that ſo after conſultation, and deliberation about the ſame, the concluſion might ſtand, be altered, or altogether laid aſide, as the objections were found groundleſs, or relevant.

Moreover

Moreover, it was concluded that every ſociety ſhould bring the names of their places, and the names of the places of their next adjacent ſocieties, to the next *General Meeting*, that ſo a way may be fallen upon, which hitherto was neglected, to keep with their ſaid next adjacent ſociety, a Chriſtian fellowſhip in prayer, according to the ſecond concluſion of the firſt *General Meeting* which met at the Logan-houſe upon the 15th of December, 1681.

Though little or no effects followed upon this concluſion, according to the method laid down in it: yet that which was very advantageous to the cauſe and proved ſtrengthening to the hands of the owners thereof, was the reſult, *viz.* the ſettling, and keeping a Correſpondence of ſome ſocieties together, which is commonly called Shire-Meetings, the manner of which is a little deſcribed above.

Laſtly, It was concluded that the laſt Thurſday of that inſtant, the laſt Thurſday of September, and the ſecond Thurſday of October, were to be obſerved as days of faſting and prayer, by all the ſocieties: and the next General Meeting was appointed to meet at Darmade, upon the 2d of November, which day, was to be kept a day of faſting and prayer by all remaining at home.

As before this meeting, ſo after it, the caſe of the country was ſad: the enemies deſire, not only to kill the body, but alſo to wound the conſciences of people, was inſatiable, whereby the land was defiled. They went ſtill on preſſing conformity with their wicked courſes; eſpecially that wretched *Teſt* was much impoſed upon the conſciences of many, and much yielded unto: and compliance with abjured Prelacy, was much endeavoured, and (alas! much obtained) the recuſants impriſoned, fined, or otherwiſe dealt with as theſe enemies ſaw fit. But in a ſpecial manner, the condition of the *United Societies* was very much diſtreſſed, having a potent and powerful enemy to wreſtle with, whoſe malice was cruel, and keen, againſt them: But that would have been more eaſily borne, if they had wanted contendings with ſeveral of their dear brethren, both upon the one hand, and the other, which they could not get evited, unleſs they had ſhown the want of love to them by ſuffering ſin upon them, in not witneſſing againſt it. Before, they had but one party to deal with, and theſe all on the left hand, going

going on in declining courſes, from formerly ſworn unto principles: now, they had another to contend againſt on the right hand, running into exceſſes of zeal, beyond its due boundaries; ſo that betwixt the two they were at no ſmall trouble. James Ruſſel after his ſeparation from them, at the laſt meeting, laid out himſelf greatly, with a few others, to miſrepreſent the *Societies*, both by word and writing, at home and abroad, which was matter of diſcouragement, and grief.

However in the midſt of theſe perplexities they were grappling with, they wanted not ſome matter of encouragement, and ground of hope. Though they wanted the ſympathy of many at home, whoſe concernedneſs with them in their low condition might have been expected; yet the Lord whoſe tender mercies fail not, ſtirred up ſome abroad, to pity and ſympathize with them in their wilderneſs ſtate.

Mr. William Brakel, a faithful and godly miniſter of the church of *Leewarden* in *Friezland*, through the information of *Earlſtoun*, but more eſpecially of *Robert Hamilton*, (one who hath various ways declared much concernedneſs with, and laid out himſelf not a little for the encouragement of the ſuffering remnant) this miniſter highly approved of the cauſe owned, and ſuffered for, by the United Societies, as being the Lords cauſe: and ſhewed much ſympathy with them in their diſtreſs; as may be evident in a letter written by him to them, very ſuitable and pertinent to a people warfaring under the croſs. Which letter, becauſe it was ſo much ſpoken of afterward, and to let the tender ſympathy of that worthy miniſter with the afflicted be ſeen, for which he will not want his reward: And that the ſame may tend to his commendation, although ſince, by the miſinformation of ſome Scots miniſters in Roterdam, and others, too much given heed unto by him, he hath altered his mind, I ſhall inſert here a true copy of it in Engliſh into which language it was faithfully tranſlated out of the Latin, in which it was originally written.

To our Fathers and Brethren that are under the perſecution, in the Church of Scotland.

ALTHOUGH I do not eſteem my gifts ſo great as to write to you who are ſo eminently taught of the Holy Spirit; yet I cannot keep ſilent from ſhewing you, that *my ſoul is knit to yours*, which ſometimes uſes to be a com-

comfort to the afflicted, to wit, to have ſome to bear burdens with them.

Whether I ſhall weep for ſadneſs, or rejoice for gladneſs, is to me a great doubt. If I gave way to affection, grief would prevail; but when I conſult with reaſon, joy abounds; becauſe I heartily embrace the cauſe of this, although joined with the cauſe of the other; and I would not wiſh the cauſe of that taken away, with any diſadvantage to this.

My heart is not a little wounded with ſympathy, when I call to mind the ſad things you are meeting with; when I conſider how you are deprived of all the good things and means of life, that you are put to lodge day and night in the open air, without any ſhelter from the ſun's heat, rain or cold, (how do you live? ſurely God feeds you from heaven) when you embrace the bare rock for a bed, having the heavens, or it may be the cold ſnow for a covering; when I conſider what it is to ſee the little ones (it may be) weeping for hunger and cold, and cannot get wherewith to warm them; when I conſider what it is to be always ſurrounded with deadly foes, and to hear ſometimes of the huſband, ſometimes of the father or mother, wife, ſon or daughter to be taken to execution, and all the day to be as lambs alloted to the ſlaughter; what brother? what Chriſtian? yea, what unbiaſſed man can think on theſe things but with exceſs of grief?

But, upon the other hand, when I conſider the heavenly abounding bleſſings, the great abundance of the Spirit, and ſpiritual joy, the deadneſs to all worldly things, the ardent love to God and your neighbour, the chearful martyrdom for the name of Jeſus, the holineſs of life, *&c.* which God your father has in a more abundant manner beſtowed on you than any church in the world in theſe times. When I call to mind, that God is preſerving you as a remnant of anciently a moſt flouriſhing church, and calling you as the firſt fruits, yea, I ſay, the firſt fruits of a church ſhortly; yea, I ſay, ſhortly to be raiſed up: When I ſee our Lord and Maſter Jeſus Chriſt, the only head of his church, glorified in your miraculous preſervation, and encompaſſing you as with a wall of fire round about, calling you either living or dying, and ſetting you forth, and preſerving you to all, either godly or ungodly, who are lurking in quiet here and there, for to give a *teſtimony for* himſelf. I ſay, when

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I ſeriouſly ponder theſe things, how can I be ſad? what ſhall I ſay, but glory to the Lord? what ſhall I do, but moſt willingly approve of his moſt holy and wiſe government of his houſehold, who follows you with a greater and more infinite and eternal love and good will than I can expreſs; ſhould I ſeem to repine by wiſhing a change, and ſo diſapproving of his diſpenſations? nay, the moſt holy and merciful God does all things well.

But what ſhall I ſay unto you, my dear brethren? I approve of your careful and mutual correſpondence with one another, and all the churches; I approve of your ſtrict diſcipline, both as to the private life of every member, and alſo as to your ſeparation from theſe ſwelling in pride Biſhops and their adherents. And likewiſe I approve of your ſeparation from theſe who have accepted the indulgence from the civil magiſtrate, and ſo have acknowledged a foreign and extraneous power in the church, and introduced it into the church againſt the ſole government of our only King Jeſus Chriſt, which hath proven the deſtruction of the church, and the greateſt hinderance to its reſtoration. I approve alſo of your ſeparation from the frighted and fearing, though otherwiſe pious men, and theſe who are inclining to the indulged ſide, loving a ſhort bodily eaſe, though with a check of conſcience; who deprive themſelves of all that open boldneſs they ought to have, and entrap themſelves in inextricable ſnares, not conſidering how great hurt they do to the church. O how much rather is it to be choſen to die a noble and Chriſt-glorifying death, and to obtain the crown of martyrdom, or to endure all ſorts of injuries and oppreſſions in the deſarts and mountains, *than to enjoy the the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon, for what fellowſhip hath righteouſneſs with unrighteouſneſs.*

Go on therefore, dear brethren, as ye have begun; *Come out from among them, ſaith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; Then ſhall I receive you, and be to you a father, and ye ſhall be unto me as ſons and daughters, ſaith the Lord of hoſts.* Let not the devil and his inſtruments and followers fright you, who is come unto you full of great wrath, becauſe he knows his time is but ſhort, for the God of peace ſhall bruiſe him under your feet.

Let not the cruelty nor ſubtilty of enemies, nor hunger, nor cold, nor the priſon, nor a gallows, nor the ſword, fear you: *none of theſe things ſhall ſeparate you from the love of God. Yea, your light affliction, which is but for*

for a moment, worketh for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Let always that ſaying of our Saviour's be in your mind, *He that takes not up his croſs and follows me, is not worthy of me, He that finds his life ſhall loſe it, but he that loſeth his life for my ſake ſhall find it.* Neither let your peace entice you to comply with thoſe, who, although they be godly men, yet they live only for themſelves, and not for the good of the church; nay rather for its hurt. O how pleaſant and noble a thing is it to lay the foundation of a more pure church, to make a way by which King Jeſus ſhall enter to reſtore his church in *Scotland.* O! how profitable will it be to after generations to have you for a good example to follow? and that they can ſay of you, ſo and ſo did our forefathers, ſuch and ſuch things ſuffered they in ſuch and ſuch a caſe; they behaved themſelves ſo and ſo. O what exceſs of joy ſhall they have, who (after the perſecutions are over) ſhall ſee the people of God in peace glorifying him? How ſhall they then be confounded who are ſitting ſilent, frighted, and deſerting the cauſe and people of God? How ſhall they then come trembling and confeſſing their faults to you? and theſe who are now perſecuting you, how ſhall they bluſh and be aſhamed? Let me ſpeak to you in the words of Iſaiah, *Hear ye the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word, your brethren that hated you, that caſt you out for my name's ſake, ſaid, Let the Lord be glorified; but he ſhall appear to your joy, and they ſhall be aſhamed.* Then ſays the Pſalmiſt, *The righteous ſhall rejoice when he ſeeth vengeance; he ſhall waſh his feet in the blood of the wicked. So that a man ſhall ſay, verily there is a reward for the righteous, verily there is a God to judge the earth. Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompence tribulation to them that trouble you; but to you who are troubled, reſt.*

Therefore my brethren, watch, ſtand faſt in the faith, quit yourſelves like men, be ſtrong, and God will ſtrengthen your ſoul. All ye that hope in him, be ye ſtable, unmoved, always abounding in the work of the Lord. *Hold faſt that you have, let no man take your crown. Be ye faithful unto the death, and God ſhall give you a crown of life. For the rod of the wicked ſhall not reſt always upon the lot of the righteous.*

Farewel, Reverend Fathers, dear brothers and ſiſters; the Lord enlighten you with the light of his countenance, and grant you to taſte of his all-ſufficiency, and ſtrengthen

you in the faith, that ye may always behold these things that are invisible, and live by them; and that he may fill you with the spirit of joy and gladness, and that he may cherish you in the hope of the life to come, and sanctify you more and more, that ye may do all things in his sight, in faith, as the Sons of God through Christ Jesus, in love, in fear, in obedience, with chearfulness, wisdom, patience and constancy.

The Lord be your sun and shield, and rock of habitation, yea, all in all to you, both in time and throughout all eternity. ——— ——— shall shew you our mind in the rest. Be mindful of me in your prayers, that the Almighty may give me a greater measure of his Spirit, for comfort, holiness and faithfulness in my work, and fitness to go about it. The Lord be with you. I greet you with the right hand of fellowship.

WILLIAM BRACKEL.

There was likewise at this time, a Letter sent by ROBERT HAMILTON, which, though it be directed to *Mr. Renwick*, yet it was designed for the whole Societies, as is evident through the whole; the tenor whereof follows:

SIR,

AUGUST 22*d*, 1682.

YOU may let me know if you received my last. It may be we shall not have many occasions to write, for the execution-day of the Lord seems to approach, not only upon Scotland, but upon the whole churches; and that because of the contempt of the precious gospel, and the perfidy, indifferency, formality and unconcernedness of the professors thereof. The day is coming, wherein all that bear a name of godliness shall be tried. O my friends, the day is coming, wherein the people of God shall be put to that blessed necessity, to have no where to shelter themselves, but under the shadow of the Almighty. O happy these, who have been or shall be in any measure helped to be faithful; who shall get their soul for a prey. I doubt not but some shall be witnesses both of the Lord's glorious coming, and of his striking through kings, and breaking down of kingdoms, drying up of rivers, purging and cleansing of his house, and taking

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of his ſeat to reign and rule as a free king in his own houſe; but O! who is the man that ſhall abide the day of his coming? I trow, it will be hard to determine: Yet I cannot but believe and hope, that poor deſpiſed Scotland's muſter in that day, ſhall come ſhort of no land in the world, which has been honoured above all others to bear the ſtandard with this glorious motto, CHRIST JESUS, not only King of the Jews, but KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS, Zion's King, without competitor.

And, my dear Friends, that the Lord's way may be the more remembered, I think it might be of great advantage to lay it upon every ſociety to keep a regiſter, not only of the Lord's glorious way of dealing with his people, in hiding, delivering, conducting them, &c.; but alſo his method with the enemies of all ſorts;—to ſet down what and when ſuch a family or perſon did againſt the Lord, his work, or any of his people; and then to ſee them in their families, in their children, and in their deaths. If this be gone about, I can aſſure you, that not only the preſent generation, but the generations to come ſhall profit thereby. For this long time, and now more than ever, the Lord has been making up the want of faithfulneſs in miniſters, by preaching with terrible things in righteouſneſs, and that not only by his legible judgments on the families, perſons, and deaths of the open enemies; but more eſpecially upon the perſons, families and deaths of lukewarm, apoſtate profeſſors. When I was in that land, I travelled ſomewhat in that work to great advantage; there are few or none you ſhall find of ſuch, but either they died miſerably, or are living ſo; either without children, or poſſeſſed with devils, madneſs, fools, whoremongers, &c.——As alſo, I think if the Lord had not a mind to return to our land, he would not have been at pains to have written ſuch large hiſtories of his wrath upon families and perſons as he has done, which if he returned not again, ſhould all be buried: neither would he have received ſuch a burnt-offering at Scotland's hands, as the heads, hands, and eſtates of ſo many of his moſt precious children. Of this I need ſay no more.

It might alſo be thought upon, if it were not fit to have the fitteſt perſons choſen out for catechizing, which is a duty ſo neceſſary this day; I am ſure as neceſſary *as any I know*. *I hope* when our neceſſities are

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ſo great, that none will ſcruple to undertake it, providing they find themſelves able.

O go on, go on, he is faithful who hath ſaid it, it ſhall be well with the righteous.——And is it not ſomewhat promiſing this day, that the Lord is helping ſome to keep foot-ſide with the brethren at home, not only in our firſt Teſtimony againſt M. M——d, but in the late endeavours; and ſeems not only to favour us, but to accept of them at our hands? It is obſervable, our moving and yours was not only one way, but at one time, notwithſtanding the diſtanee, and ignorance of one another's moving; for though there have been ſome in that land, who not only for themſelves, but in name of country-ſides have written to me, as I am informed by my brother; yet ſince I left that land, I have received few letters from any, and I judge none concerning the public. What has been in it, I ſhall not ſay, though for mine own part I have been made to bleſs the Lord for it, who in that trial, as in others, learned me to draw nearer and nearer to himſelf, and to rejoice in his favour, love and unchangeableneſs, yea, under the ſhadow of his wings. And O unſpeakable love! who in any meaſure has kept us in his hand; for ſince I ſaw you, I have been threatened to be ſtarved out of my judgment, or conſcience, and to be bribed out of it with the offers of honour and preferment. O praiſes, praiſes to him for his goodneſs!

O dear Friends, let us fall down before the Lord, and adore him, who after all our ſeveral trials has not only brought us to be one in mind and judgment, but alſo employed about the ſame thing; O for grace, for grace to be kept in his hand. When I was as a dead man, he called me out from all my acquaintances into a ſtrange land. A ſtranger to their humour, to their language, to their perſons, poor and empty, yet he led me out, I not knowing whither I was going, he put work in my hands, made friends for me, and is now carrying on his work. O bleſs, bleſs the Lord? and pray that it may go forward. I muſt ſay to the commendation of the goodneſs of God, that though when I came here, (as afterward they declared) they not only hated our nation, but our cauſe. But O what a change, in ſuch a time! for the Lord (after that they were engaged to mind our church publicly, and to appint weekly and monthly meteings for the

the ſame) gave them an opportunity for a public teſtimony, ſtating it the ſame with our own, after he had let them (in much prayer and wreſtling, day and night) find the ſweetneſs of that way, he gave them the victory to the wonder of themſelves and on-lookers, and to the aſtoniſhment and conviction of their adverſaries, which not only has encouraged the godly to public teſtifying, but endeared them ſo to our church and cauſe, that they cannot hear it ſpoken of, but they are at the melting down with tears. But having ſpoken of this in my laſt, I need ſpeak no more of it, only let it ſtir up all ranks to thankfulneſs, tenderneſs, more holy zeal and forwardneſs.

Amongſt many other overtures my brother ſhewed me from you, that of having our youth educated for a new nurſery of miniſters, did not a little aſtoniſh me, it being of a long time both my great work and exerciſe here, and I propoſed it, and the Lord had made it acceptable at the very firſt moving of it, ſo that I was deſigned to have written it to you long ſince, had not the weight of it ſo preſſed me for ſome days, tying me to my chamber.

O dear Friends, lay it to heart, perſons, and families, and ſocieties, every laſs and lad, by faſting and prayer, ſee how the Lord ſeems to paſs by the miniſters of Scotland, pitching upon ſtrangers, who not only offer their ſervice, but are willing to lay down their lives for the rebuilding of that once ſo glorious and beautiful work, and to be at the coſt and charges of educating our youth, whereby they may be fitted for the ſervice of the houſe of our God, aad to ordain ſuch as ſhall be judged fit for the great, O great work of the miniſtry.

Worthy and dear Friends, as this would be gone about with much faſting and prayer, ſo, for the Lord's ſake, let none be choſen for this end, but ſuch who have given evidence of their REAL PIETY, HOLINESS, and TENDERNESS: And O let none, as they would not be made monuments of the Lord's anger and wrath in an extraordinary way, venture upon it uncalled. Let them read Iſaiah's and Jeremiah's call, and Titus i. 7, 8, 9. &c.

O the plagues, the plagues that may be ſeen on our miniſters this day, yea on ſuch as were once as bright ſtars in our horizon, may be a terror to all poſterity to venture lightly on ſo great a work. Let not the want of learning ſtartle any, *where the* main thing is really felt

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and known: yea, it has not been the want of learning, but of grace, holy zeal, and courage, that has so brought us among the feet of our adversaries, and kindled the wrath of the Lord so hot against us. O then, upon all hands, let it be gone about with much fasting and prayer, as being the ordinary and appointed way to know the Lord's will, and to be fitted for going about it, and managing it aright.

Worthy friends, to me this matter hath been often represented, as amongst the greatest concernments yet in hand; as a mean that may be eminently for recovery from the dead, or of giving us the sorest blow that ever we yet had. O! a down pouring of the Spirit in his fulness, be your allowance, both for your encouragement in your managing of it, and for a token of our Master's approbation of the work.

And O forget not to mind poor *Freizland*, and in particular the work begun here, let the godly here, lie near to your hearts and prayers before the throne, for that church, I dare say, is dearer to them than their lives. Mind also worthy Mr. Brackel, who has now written to you: it is he whom the Lord is honouring here, and hath honoured to give a great testimony, of which I gave you an account in my last. And O for the Lord's sake mind worthless, worthless me, who am as a dead man, of a long time, separate from my brethern, and shot at, yea bitterly shot at, by all ranks of off-fallers from the cause of God. I will tell, I must tell you, I have found my Lord, unchangeable, in every estate the same, ay the same up making, and more than up making portion; sweet and easy is his cross; I cannot get him commended: O his love is lovely, yea lovliness itself: O if he were sent, whose mercy endureth for ever! O seek him to our land, to our mother, and to ourselves, that his kingdom may come, and his will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. O let him do with us as he will, that he would but come as in the days of old; yea, and forever blessed be his name for what I have already seen and heard, both of sweet Scotland, and poor Freizland. O let us not envy that he is enlarging his tents and setting up in other places; his presence is more than able to fill heaven and earth; there is no fear that he want plenishing where he comes. Let him conquer, let him conquer, until he has stretched his conquest from one *end of the* earth to the other, in breadth and length,

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and length, and have made a footstool of all his enemies.

Dear and worthy Brethren, I will not further trouble you, expecting that my brother shall write unto you; only this I add, that as for the number of those that come in order to the ministry, it is condescended upon, that four or five come at first, and they are to stay by Mr. Brackel, or else in some College here in the winter, and then receive ordination in the spring; for once having so many, more might be condescended upon, as the Lord gave clearness. The Lord himself direct and guide you through all the parts of it, that he be not further provoked.——The Lord be with you all, and send a joyful meeting.

ROBERT HAMILTON.

Mr. Renwick in his third Letter (as it stands in the printed volume) hath respect to this and some other Letters received from Mr. Hamilton, in which he shews his sense of the weightiness of that affair; but it appeared sadly afterward, that others of them took too little notice of this Letter.

After the Letter from Mr. Brackel was spread abroad among the societies, coming at such a time, and containing such things suiting their case, and being sent not only from a stranger, but a faithful godly minister, the same proved hand-strengthening and heart-comforting and confirming to them, to prosecute that noble testimony in their station and capacity which they had put their hand unto. And to evidence the grateful sense of the favour received by his Letter, they wrote to him. Moreover, after this meeting, Earlstoun wrote home, giving an account, that there was a door opened abroad for teaching young men at an university, a benefit which could not be rightly gotten at home, which was obtained by the means of the said Mr. William Brackel; though Mr. Hamilton and Earlstoun were not wanting to do what they could in it also. So he desired there might be some young men presently sent over, in order to the following of their studies there, where afterward they might come to get the benefit of ordination, when fit for the same; which letter when received was very refreshing and encouraging, seeing thereby their deplorable case was not *only pitied by strangers*, but the hope

of getting the benefit of the gospel again, was a little revived. So by some who received it, with consent of others, it was judged expedient (seeing the contents of the letter could not be answered without the consent of friends) to acquaint the *Societies*, upon the account of the getting that business soon dispatched, to meet sooner than the time appointed by the last meeting. Whereupon the time and place was appointed to be at *Edinburgh*, upon the Eleventh of *October*, and the societies to be acquainted therewith.

ACCORDING to which appointment, A General Meeting did conveen at the time and place above-mentioned; where, after these representing the respective societies had given in their commissions, and the Præses chosen, he enquired, in order to the knowing that none were there who were guilty of scandal, if any person had ought to object against any present: At which some rose up, and said that Andrew Young who was there representing the society of Teviotdale had revealed that which he was engaged not to discover; which thing he denied. save only his telling to some, not concerned, of some persons who were present at the publishing of the Lanerk Declaration: As also, that he had heard *Mr. John Hepburn*, against whom there were reasons of withdrawing; which the said Andrew Young granted he did, and yet resolved to go on in the same. After long and hot debating and jangling betwixt him and severals of the meeting, it was at last concluded by them, that the said Andrew Young should be suspended from sitting there, upon the account of joining and resolving to join with the said *Mr. John Hepburn*, against whom there were several reasons of withdrawing, particularly his not joining and concurring with our late *Martyr ministers*, in rejecting and disowning the authority of *Charles Stuart*.— By which joining, he had broken that conclusion of the General Meeting, *viz. That nothing should be done by any particular person without the consent of the Society whereof he was a member, in things wherein their knowledge and consent was necessary to be had*, &c. After he was acquainted with this, he went away greatly enraged, saying he would oppose himself to them and their doings, which he hath in some measure made out since.

When the confusion occasioned by this debate was over, and nothing found against any of the rest of the meeting,

meeting, they proceeded in order to the chooſing of the young men who were to go abroad to follow their ſtudies, the doing of which was a great end of appointing this meeting ſo ſoon; which was gone about after this manner: Firſt, praying that the Lord would direct them in that weighty affair. Then the young men who were preſent, and to be put in the liſt, were deſired to ſpeak their minds, which they did ſatisfyingly, firſt of the work they were to go about; next of the going in ſuch a manner, which was not ordinary. There was ſix put in the liſt, (all of a blameleſs life, and not only of one judgment with themſelves, but forward and zealous then, in adhering to, and promoting the Teſtimony) of whom four were preſent, *viz. Mr. James Renwick, John Smith, Mr. John Flint,* and *Mr. William Hardy*; and two abſent, *viz. Mr. William Boyd* and *John Niſbet.* Then there was ſix pieces of paper taken, all of one magnitude and form; and upon four of them were four figures, each of them having a figure a-piece, and two wanted, in order to the electing of four out of the ſix, which was the number judged fit to be ſent abroad at that time. Whereupon the four young men were called in (being before deſired to remove) and gave an account of their ages to the meeting. Then after praying again that the Lord would determine as he ſaw fit; theſe young men preſenting themſelves, drew the pieces of paper out of a bonnet, the eldeſt being ſtill preferred to draw firſt. As for thoſe who were abſent, two drew for them. Thoſe who got the papers wanting the figures were to ſtay at home, which fell to be *John Smith* and *Mr. William Hardy*; and thoſe who got the papers wich the figures were to go abroad, two of them were preſent, *viz. Mr. James Renwick,* and *Mr. John Flint,* and two were abſent, *viz. Mr. William Boyd* and *John Niſbet,* for whom two drew. Then praying that the Lord would bleſs thoſe on whom the lots had fallen, this work was cloſed. Thereafter it was concluded, that 100 Pound Scots, ſhould be allowed to the four young men called to go abroad, (to each 25 Pound Scots) in order to defray their expences in their voyage, and that what was needful to provide them in cloaths and other neceſſaries, was, over and above, to be taken off for them at Edinburgh: And the collection for this effect, was to be ſent with thoſe who were to come from the Societies to the next General Meeting; and the young Men were deſir-

ed to be ready for their voyage betwixt and the ſecond week of November. This concluſion was chearfully conſented unto, and as willingly and readily put in practice; for immediately thereafter, not only the money was given to the young men which was allowed them, but alſo what was needful was provided for them at Edinburgh, two of them, *Mr. William Boyd* and *John Flint*, in November thereafter took ſhip, and went to the Netherlands, to the *Univerſity* of *Groningen*; but *Mr. James Renwick* was not ready to go until December. However, though he went not ſo ſoon as the other two, yet in the ſhort time he was there, the Lord ſo fitted and qualified him for the great work which afterward he undertook, and finiſhed with joy, that he was ſooner ready for the work he was ſent about than any of them; for on May 10th thereafter, he was ordained by the Preſbytery of Groningen, in whom they had great ſatisfaction, and to whom they gave no ſmall commendation, as may be ſeen in their teſtificate to him. As for John Niſbet being at that time at London, where Earlſtoun had left him, he was written unto, ſhewing him of that buſineſs, and a teſtificate ſent him; but he delaying to go, was not long after taken and impriſoned. Although this ſending of thoſe young men abroad in order to the obtaining of ordination was much condemned; yet in the circumſtances they were then ſtated in, it was juſtifiable. The reaſons moving to it, with a ſhort vindication of the ſame, may be ſeen in the Informatory Vindication, but more in the account of *Mr. Renwick's* life and death.

Alſo it was concluded, that Mr. James Renwick, John Smith, and Mr. John Flint ſhould each of them draw up a paper declaring the grounds whereupon, and the reaſons why, the *United Societies* did withdraw from thoſe who had made defection in this backſliding time, withal inviting (the reaſons of withdrawing from them being removed) upon their owning the Teſtimony, to come and join with them, yet teſtifying the lawfulneſs of ſtanding at a diſtance from thoſe who will not; and alſo clearing themſelves of the foul aſperſions and ſad reproaches caſt upon them. Which papers were to be given in to the next meeting, who were to conſider upon the ſame; and theſe of the foreſaid perſons who were to go abroad, were deſired to have theirs in readineſs to be left when they departed.

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This concluſion at the time ſeemed neceſſary; and the motives preſſing thereunto very weighty, (albeit it produced ſome bitter effects, occaſioned by the miſmanaging of the ſame, as ſhall be ſhewed afterward) for being upon the one hand traduced as Separatiſts, Schiſmatics, and Rejecters of the goſpel, *&c.* which was wounding to hear, and grievous to bear, though their innocency of the thing made it the more ſupportable. And upon the other hand, longing for this goſpel, of which they had long had a famine, and being deſirous to have the opportunity of hearing it from theſe, from whom they had withdrawn upon valid grounds, and in hearing ſome of whom formerly, their ſouls had been refreſhed, and whom they followed while they continued preaching freely, and faithfully, as becomes ambaſſadors of Chriſt: They judged this the moſt rational way to clear themſelves of theſe grievous imputations, and alſo to declare their willingneſs to join with and hear theſe miniſters from whom they had withdrawn, tho' they were (as they ſhould have been) dear to them, providing the cauſe of withdrawing were removed, to call and invite them, with whom then they would with heart and hand, thereby teſtifying that their withdrawing was not obſtinate.

According to the deſire of the meeting, the three young men wrote each of them a paper; and the two who went abroad, left theirs, before they took voyage. That which followed upon this reſolution, the account of the following meetings will make manifeſt.

Further it was concluded, that the much honoured Mr. *Robert Hamilton* ſhould be conjunct with his brother, the honourable *Alexander Gordon* of *Earlſtoun*, in his commiſſion. And therefore the meeting gave full power to Mr. *James Renwick*, to write in their names unto both the foreſaid perſons, in order to this appointment.

The reaſons inducing to this reſolution, were *Earlſtoun's* great deſire that it ſhould be ſo, knowing that, as in managing that affair, two would be better than one; ſo, that Mr. *Hamilton* would be a good ſecond, whereof he had already gotten ſeveral experiences*. Alſo, con-

* Mr. Hamilton had obtained acquaintance in Leewarden, and with Mr. Brackel before Earlſtoun's going abroad, to which he was led by a ſpecial providence. As alſo, one reaſon of the commiſſionating of Mr. Hamilton, and calling home Earlſtoun, was, the latter was *expenſive above their ability to afford*, and the *former was none at all, but ſeveral times*, and ways procured *help to them at home, from* the hands of ſtrangers.

conſidering his being conjunct with Earlſtoun, he would prove advantageous to the cauſe, in order to the obtaining of ſtrangers to have a good impreſſion of the ſame, and ſympathy with its owners, at the time in diſtreſs; he having, both before, and after *Earlſtoun* went there, laid out himſelf very much for that end; and it was hoped that he would do it more, when the ſame was laid on him by them. As likewiſe when *Earlſtoun* ſhould return home, to which he was deſired by the laſt meeting, he might the better ſupply his place. In purſuance of this concluſion, and of the meetings deſire to Mr. Renwick, he wrote abroad to both the foreſaid perſons.

Moreover, it was concluded, that the 24th of that month ſhould be obſerved by all the ſocieties, a day of thankſgiving unto the Lord for his known mercies received at the meeting. Which in particular, was the getting ſuch a demonſtration of the ſympathy of ſtrangers with them in their diſtreſſed caſe, as that they had acceſs to ſend young men to an Univerſity, where they would have opportunity of learning: And when fit, get the benefit of ordination, whereby they were in expectation of attaining the great privilege of hearing the goſpel, within a ſhort time: A mercy to be highly prized, much valued, and to be thankful for, when they have ground of expecting it, as well as fruitful under it, when enjoying the ſame.

It was alſo concluded that the 16th of November ſhould be obſerved by the ſocieties as a day of humiliation, upon the account of the many provocations that the holy Lord gets; leſt that he ſhould withdraw from them. And likewiſe that the 12th of December ſhould be obſerved by the ſocieties, as a day of faſting and prayer, to ſeek earneſtly of the Lord that he would remove Satan's fire and fury; which (alas) was too much to be ſeen among them, and that he would endue them with the ſpirit of meekneſs and patience.

The occaſion of making this a cauſe of a faſt was, at the preceding meeting, in contending with *James Ruſſel*, there was too much of a ſpirit of bitterneſs on both ſides evidenced, as alſo at this meeting, in debating with *Andrew Young*: therefore having a ſight of the evil thereof, they deſired to mourn for the ſame, and to ſeek of the Lord that he would be graciouſly pleaſed to remove it; and endue them with a ſpirit of meekneſs and patience, which are among the fruits of the Spirit, and ſuitable

able to appear in contending for the cauſe with oppoſites either upon the right hand, or on the left.

AFTER this meeting, as well as before it, the caſe of the land (which once might have been called *Hephzibah* and *Beulah*) was deplorably ſad; enemies riding over the heads of the Lord's people, under whoſe cruelty and oppreſſion they had been long groaning, and whoſe burdens were made nothing lighter, but rather heavier. The yoke of prelacy and tyranny was wreathed harder about their necks. And alas! the generality, was *Iſſachar*-like, couching under the burdens, but few zealous and *Naphtali*-like, to jeopard their lives upon the high places of the field, for the intereſt of Chriſt, their own defence, and their brethrens. As enemies had been much endeavouring to get that principle of ſelf-defence quite abandoned by the people; ſo, the ſame was now laid aſide by the generality. And as prelacy was ſet up, and yielding to it ſore preſſed; ſo it was much bowed unto, even by many of theſe who had confeſſed with their mouth that it was a ſin, having many aggravations attending it. And as the *Teſt*, and other oaths, which heathens would abhorr, was much preſſed before, ſo now alſo.

Faithful and free preaching was wanting, whereby the ſins and ſnares which then were not few, were not diſcovered, and ſo people was left to comply, or not comply, as they pleaſed. And whatever trials and temptations, the land in general met with; the United Societies in particular, never wanted their ſhare of the ſame: If inſnaring oaths and bonds were preſſing through the country, they wanted not the temptation of the ſame, but through free grace they were kept from compliance therewith though they incurred ſuffering thereby; and the ſympathizers with them, upon the account of ſtanding at a diſtance from them, were few: if ſearchings of rude and bloody ſoldiers, filled with helliſh fury, were made; the moſt of theſe ſearchings were for them: And if the country wanted public and faithful preaching of the goſpel; ſo did they at this time, which was their greateſt grievance. But oftentimes the ſocieties had troubles and trials peculiar to themſelves, and which the reſt of the land were not perplexed with, as at this time: for beſide the rage of malicious enemies, which was keen againſt them, as well (yea more than) againſt others, and the want of the faithfully *preached* goſpel, a want which

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the whole land was tryſted with; they were ſadly repreſented as Schiſmatics, Separatiſts, and Rejecters of the goſpel, though in the mean time they were grieved for the want thereof, and longing for it; witneſs the concluſion of the laſt meeting to draw up a call to the miniſters, which was at this time to be conſidered. They had alſo other griefs, which were heavy to bear; as their contendings with *James Ruſſel*, who as is related above, having ſeparated from them, had miſrepreſented them both at home and abroad. And likewiſe *Andrew Young*, was now much againſt them; which as it proved ſtrengthening to adverſaries; ſo it was weakening to the hands, and wounding to the hearts of friends.

HOWEVER, a General Meeting did conveen at Edinburgh upon the 10th of January, 1683. Prayer being ended, and the meeting modelled after the wonted manner; they approved of what was concluded at the laſt meeting.

1*ſt*, It was concluded, that *John Smith* ſhould draw up the call to the miniſters, and preſent the ſame to the next meeting. The occaſion of this reſolution was, according to the deſire of the laſt meeting: each of the three young men drew up a paper, and two of them going abroad, left theirs before they took voyage: and the other was preſent at the meeting. After all the three papers were read, and ſerious conſideration about the ſame, none of them was thought fit to give in by itſelf. So it was concluded that *John Smith* ſhould draw one out of all the three, and to preſent the ſame to the next meeting to be by them conſidered.

Next, the meeting having received the collections from the ſeveral ſocieties, deſtributed the ſame according to the neceſſities of ſome families, and others in need. And appointed receipts for the ſame to be brought to the next meeting.

Likewiſe, it was concluded, that the 25th of that inſtant be obſerved by the ſocieties, as a day of prayer unto the Lord, bleſſing him for their preſervation at the time (which was no ſmall mercy, having met as it were in the midſt of their enemies, and parted in ſafety,) and alſo for ſeeking counſel and direction for managing matters at the next meeting. Which in particular was the reſolving upon the call to the miniſters, which was looked upon by them as no ſmall buſineſs: And the next

meeting

meeting was appointed to meet at the *Myres*, upon the 14th of February, 1683.

THE cruelty of enraged enemies, the condition of the land in general, and of the ſocieties in particular continued as is before related, but can ſcarcely be diſcribed in few words; but the reproaches and miſrepreſentations of oppoſites on each hand were weighty.

Notwithſtanding theſe things were great hinderances to them, in proſecuting that noble Teſtimony in their ſtation, which they were owning, and ſuffering for; yet through grace they were kept from ſinking under them, ſo as to lie by altogether from the duty called for at their hands; and their zeal was rather increaſed, than diminiſhed, though in ſeverals of them there was more of it, than of knowledge (without which, it can neither be ſolid, nor laſting) and no wonder if the occurrences of that time de duly pondered: It was a time of deadneſs and darkneſs, a day of ſtumblings and jumblings: poor people being without guides and teachers, like ſilly ſheep, wandering upon the mountains, without a ſhepherd, and yet having ſome zeal upon their ſpirits, which they would gladly have vented: It is not much to be admired that they went wrong in ſome things (which yet they would have been loath to have done, if they had known it to be ſo) over which the mantle of charity ſhould be caſt, and themſelves pitied rather than remembred with diſdain, and told of with upbraiding: And though it will not juſtify any thing wrong done, yet it ſhould make people more charitable, and tender of the doers; eſpecially ſeeing they are ſenſible of it themſelves, and confeſs it. Their deſire to have the goſpel preached (though they were repreſented, as if they would hear no miniſter) even by them from whom they had withdrawn upon valid cauſes, providing the ſame were removed. Therefore they judged the condeſcending upon a General Call to be given in to them, was the fitteſt way to obtain their foreſaid deſire, and to exoner themſelves, but the miſmanaging the ſame was humbling to them, and no ways advantageous to the cauſe.

ACCORDING to the appointment of the laſt General Meeting, a meeting did conveen at the *Myres*, in the pariſh of *Egleſham*, and ſhire of Renfrew, upon the 14th

of February, 1683. They approved of what was done at the foregoing meeting.

According to the first resolution whereof, the call to the ministers was brought to this meeting, and agreed upon; and appointed that a copy thereof should be delivered to the ministers that could be gotten at Edinburgh by————, and that three copies be sent to the ministers after named, viz. *Mr. Alexander Peden*, *Mr. Michael Bruce*, *Mr. Thomas Forrester*, and *Mr. John Hepburn*. After the meeting, copies of the call came to several of the ministers hands, and some diligence was used for that effect. Two men went from Glasgow, with a copy thereof to give to *Mr. Forrester*, who coming to the place where he resided, and not having the opportunity to see him, left it with some of his elders, that shewed it to him, who was much displeased therewith; a letter was written concerning it, and subscribed by them, which was sent to Glasgow, and an answer returned. Likewise *Alexander Gordon*, and———— was appointed to go to Ireland, with copies of the call to present it to *Mr. Alexander Peden*, and *Mr. Michael Bruce*, as also to *Mr. Samuel Arnot*, who were all at the time in that kingdom. They accordingly went, having a letter with them directed to all the three ministers, with some of whom they had conference. But neither that, nor what else they did there, produced any thing tending to that much desired union with them.

A copy of the letter follows, which evidences the longing desire we had for the benefit of the gospel; as also the great respect, and high esteem we had of these ministers to whom it was directed.

Worthy Fathers,

THE Remnant of the church of Scotland has condescended upon an unanimous call to all the ministers that can be found any way concerned with the cause for which they are suffering; and have declared one in general to the said ministers: But we (knowing your concernedness above many) have thought fit to send to you a copy of the same particularly, because of many motives, which to us are weighty. And

1*st*, Because there is so much ignorance in the country, anent the very fundamentals of religion.

2dly, Be-

2*dly*, Becauſe there is none now in Scotland, to hold up the fallen banner of our Lord by the preaching of the goſpel.

3*dly*, Becauſe there is ſo much need of baptiſm to infants, and ſo many like to be hard put to it, what by reproach from pretended friends, and perſecution from enemies, becauſe their children are unbaptized.

It is true, we know that it is not abſolutely neceſſary to ſalvation; yet we ought to uſe all means lawful, to have the ſame in a cleanly way.

Theſe are ſome of our grounds for ſending ſo expreſly to you, who we hope will anſwer us. Theſe our Commiſſioners can ſhew you more fully our caſe, and how great our need is of ſuch as you: Therefore we earneſtly intreat you to make as little delay as ye poſſibly can. It may be ye think we will not hear miniſters except they preach publicly in the fields: But for anſwer, we will hear all miniſters (whether in houſes or fields) who will preach according to the word of God, our Covenants, Confeſſion of Faith and Catechiſms Larger and Shorter, that ſhall embrace this our call, and preach without any limitation, either to time or place, but as conveniency ſhall offer itſelf.

Having no more at preſent to trouble you with; we reſt (in the name, and behalf of the reſt) your aſſured friends, in Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.

BY the means related above, and otherways, the call being made public, it occaſioned the United Societies to be much miſrepreſented by many (and even by ſome who had better thoughts of us before) thinking that we were running upon extravagances. But as ſome of us at the concluding thereon, and others afterwards, when they ſaw it, were diſpleaſed therewith; ſo it was not long till the faults and miſtakes in it were ſeen, and condemned by all of us, as well as by others; and it was deſired that all copies thereof ſhould be called in, delivered back, and no more made uſe of, yea, ſuch was our ſenſe of ſeveral things wrong in it; and that it might be known we did not own it, ſomewhat was publiſhed concerning it, in our informatory vindication.

However, tho' we retracted the call becauſe of its unſoundneſs in ſeveral particulars, yet it was thought fit to draw up another call to miniſters, that thereby we might endeavour to have the benefit of the goſpel as formerly

we enjoyed it: and to endeavour to wipe off that reproach caſt upon us, that we were Schiſmatics, and would hear no miniſter at all. Which call being drawn up, and agreed unto at the next meeting at Edinburgh on the 8th of May thereafter; and preſented to ſome of the miniſters, but not embraced; a copy whereof, may not be improper to inſert here, ſeeing it falls in to be ſpoken of in this place: And is as followeth.

A Call by a Remnant of the true Preſbyterians of the Church of Scotland, who deſire to adhere to the true principles thereof: Containing a vindication of their withdrawing: And a proteſtation, in caſe of not accepting of this Call; which is to thoſe who were once faithful miniſters of our church.

We are called Schiſmatics and erroneous in our principles, which we deſire to clear ourſelves of, to all unbiaſſed Preſbyterians in Scotland, or through the world: And ſo we ſhall ſet down the cauſes of our preſent withdrawing.

It is well known, that while theſe outed-miniſters preached faithfully in the fields, and in houſes, pleading for their Lord and Maſter's right, whoſe embaſſy they did carry, they were eminently countenanced of the Lord, then our ſouls did cleave to them; and ſeveral of us (in humility be it ſpoken) did lay out ourſelves to the uttermoſt of our power in our ſtations for the upholding of the ſweet and precious ordinances of our Lord and Maſter, which our ſouls rejoiced to follow, and as an evidence of our love to theſe ordinances, we, according to our engagements in our covenants did appear in armies, with no other deſign (of which our conſcience bears us witneſs) but for the extirpating of Popery, Prelacy, Eraſtianiſm, and whatſoever is contrary to ſound doctrine, and principles, and againſt the ſupporters thereof; and for the ſetting up, and eſtabliſhing of Preſbyterian government according to our covenant engagements, and ſome of the miniſters joined with us for our encouragement: But the Lord thought fit, for ends known to himſelf, and ordered it ſo, as that party was broken (at Bothwel) and upon the back of that diſpenſation, many ſtumbled, both miniſters and people, for which, we think we may allude to that in John vi. 66. *From that time many of his diſciples went away back, and*

walked

walked no more with him. So a little time after that break, the enemy driving forward their own deſign; and ſeeking by all means the eſtabliſhing and ſetting up of their ſupremacy, and uſurping more and more over the prerogatives of our King and Lawgiver, they found a fit opportunity, by a pretended favour, an act called the Act of Indemnity, in which they granted liberty to all that were in arms (ſome miniſters and heritors excepted) upon the taking of a bond: And likewiſe a liberty to miniſters to preach (except the fore-mentioned) upon the terms of ſome injunctions, limitations and reſtrictions, which we ſhall not name here, becauſe we deſign brevity; but in a word, it was the enemies uſurping, and the miniſters yielding up the government of Chriſt's houſe into the hands of theſe horrid and avowed uſurpers, which a great part of the miniſters of the church of Scotland did in a meeting at Edinburgh; the great part of them voting at that meeting for receiving of their miniſtry on the terms propoſed by the uſurpers; and ſo moſt baſely gave up the government of Chriſt's houſe into the hands of theſe his ſtated enemies; and ſome of them went to their houſes and preached upon the ſame terms, receiving their new entry (though moſt corrupt) from them, which was not the door, by which at firſt they did enter.

We grant, there were ſome who voted not for the receiving their miniſtry upon theſe terms, but yet gave not their proteſtation againſt their brethren, though their call to it was clear, for fear of hazard or ſomething to that purpoſe, which cannot be found ſound. And ſo this is one of the grounds of our withdrawing, until there be evidences of their repentance, both by word and practice; And this we do for conſcience ſake, deſiring to adhere to our ſworn covenants, and to adhere to our ſworn-unto work of Reformation, in doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline and government, for the breaking down and diſowning of which, the foreſaid miniſters will be found guilty, while they preached on thoſe terms; for they were not found to declare faithfully for our ſworn-unto work of reformation, in doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline and government; neither could they, becauſe their practice ſaid the contrary. And therefore in conſcience, when we ſaw their deceitful dealing, we could not join with them, leſt we ſhould ſtrengthen their hands in their defection; *and therefore* we hope we may be exonered

cuered in withdrawing from theſe, leſt likewiſe we be found guilty in the tranſgreſſion: But at that time the Lord ſtirred up ſome to witneſs faithfully againſt all theſe uſurpations and encroachments upon Chriſt's prerogatives, and againſt their brethren that complied with the deſign of the enemies, therefore out of conſcience of duty we joined with thoſe who witneſſed faithfully and freely, even to the laying down of their lives, when called to it. And for others of the miniſters, the cauſe of our withdrawing from them, was, Becauſe they joined not with their brethren, but left the work in the heat of the day, and left their brethren to the violence of the enemy, and left their poor flock to be devoured of ravening wolves, the ſad effects of which is ſeen this day; and they have followed the example of the prophet *Jonah*, ſo that when they ſhould have taken their lives in their hands; as he went to *Tarſhiſh* when he ſhould have declared the Lord's meſſage to Nineveh; ſo they, when they ſhould have declared the Lord's meſſage to his poor ſuffering people, they left the work, and went to the following a way of ſelf-preſervation and ſafety,—and from following of their duty, which we teſtify againſt by our withdrawing, ay, and until they repent, and be ſet to the work again, as may be found conſiſtent with Preſbyterian principles; and then, and not till then, we ſhall deſire to join with them with all our hearts, as what we ſhall ſay afterwards will clear. This is, in ſhort, for our vindication, and theſe are ſome of the grounds of our withdrawing. And he who knoweth the ſecrets of all hearts, knoweth that we are moſt ſadly reproached, and falſely blamed as ſchiſmaticks and erroneous, as any unbiaſſed Chriſtian may ſee; and what we do, we do it out of zeal for our Lord and Maſter's work, which is trampled upon by his avowed enemies, and ſlipped from by many profeſſed friends.

And now, we, who are the poor ſuffering people of the Lord, in all humility, and out of the zeal of our hearts, in thirſting for the pure ordinances of God, and to clear ourſelves of the fore-mentioned aſperſions, Do invite you who are the Preſbyterian miniſters of the church of Scotland, and who were as dear to us as our own hearts, while ye continued faithful in delivering your Maſter's embaſſy; we ſay, we invite you in our Maſter's name; if ye have any love to him, to us, and to others, who we hope are the ſheep and lambs of Chriſt's

Chriſt's flock, to come out after your manner, and preach the goſpel, and adminiſter the ſacraments, according to your former entry by the well conſtitute church, as it was eſtabliſhed in the year 1648, which was according to the word of God, reformed in doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline and government, from Popery, Prelacy, and all that hierarchy, according to our ſworn covenants, and according to the acts of our General Aſſemblies,—to preach the goſpel in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon, rightly dividing the word, with application to the public ſins of the times, and particular ſins of the auditory, pariſhes, and country-ſides where ye preach: For we declare unto you, many of you have been guilty, and have ſtumbled many, by your dark and ambiguous ſpeeches, eſpecially ſince Bothwel: you have not declared for the ſworn covenants, nor againſt the ſupremacy of men who have encroached upon, and uſurped over the prerogatives of our Lord and Maſter; and have not teſtified againſt the ſinful bond after the break at Bothwel; we mean that bond that engaged thoſe who took it, not to defend their mother church, according to our covenant-engagements; and that bond that was given in for the miniſters peaceable behaviour. This was the betraying of your truſt, and moſt baſely yielding up the government of Chriſt's houſe into the hands of his ſtated and avowed enemies. This many of you have been guilty of, even unto the weakening of your brethrens hands that durſt not do ſo; and many of you have been ſilent, and have not declared againſt the uſurpers, nor againſt your brethren who have ſtrengthened their hands, but have connived at their miſcarriages, when ye ſhould have been ſtanding upon the watch-tower, according to that ſcripture in Ezek. iii. 17. *Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the houſe of Iſrael, therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me: when I ſay unto the wicked, Thou ſhalt ſurely die, and thou giveſt him not warning, nor ſpeakeſt to warn the wicked from his way, the ſame wicked man ſhall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand.* The apoſtle Paul had that to ſay, Acts xx. 26. *Wherefore I take you to record, that I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not ſhunned to declare all the counſel of God.*

Therefore, dear Friends, ye may poſe your own conſciences, whether or not ye may ſay ſo, that ye are pure from the blood *of all men*, or of many poor ſouls that

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are joining with the courſes of the time this day, for want of faithful warning.

Now, dear Friends, and ſometime highly honoured of the Lord, in carrying his embaſſy, ponder theſe things, and conſider the caſe of the ſcattered flock, and many famiſhing ſouls up and down the land, who are carried aſide with the courſes of the time. Now come forth in the Lord's name, and let no more differences be betwixt us and you: an union in the Lord we deſire, but not elſe. And now we ſhall give you an account of our principles. We adhere to the holy ſcriptures of truth, and to our ſworn Covenants, National and Solemn League, the Confeſſion of Faith, Catechiſms larger and ſhorter, the Acknowledgment of Sins and Engagement to Duties, which are all conſonant to the Scriptures: We likewiſe adhere to the proteſting party, their proteſting againſt the malignant intereſt; the owning of which we think is no ſmall cauſe of the Lord's controverſy with the land: ſo that both you and we have been *filled with our own devices*; which we cannot ſay, but we were guilty of, in ſetting (or conſenting to the ſetting) of the crown upon the head of the chief of malignants, for which the Lord is puniſhing us this day, and we have found the ſad ſmart of their heavy hand, and are eating the fruit of our own doings; ſo that by their hand the precious things of our ſouls are taken away, our ark captivated, the glory removed from our Iſrael, our church laid deſolate and waſte, and nothing leſs determined, than the utter extirpation of the Preſbyterian intereſt. And now, ſeeing the bad effects of the owning of that malignant party, it was thought fit by us, (and ſome now truly honoured martyrs) for juſt grounds to reject the head of the malignants, and all under him, ruling by tyranny and cruel oppreſſion, as many inſtances may be given, what by ſpoiling and robbing, fining and confining, baniſhing, impriſoning, and murdering the Lord's ſervants, only for their adhering to their duty. So we ſay, we thought fit to caſt them off by the teſtimony at Rutherglen, the Sanquhar and Lanerk declarations, to which we deſire to adhere; and whatſoever aſperſions may be caſt upon us and the fore-mentioned renowned martyrs, we have no other deſign (the Lord is our witneſs) but maintaining and carrying on the work of reformation, as it was promoted, and carried on by our worthy anceſtors (as it is aforeſaid) and we deſire

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to have it promoted to poſterity. And O dear Friends, as we ſaid before, ſo we ſay again, Beſeeching you to come out upon thir terms, adhering to what our fathers and we have done, by proteſtations, remonſtrances and declarations, and what our faithful martyrs laid down their lives for; and if you do accept in the terms propoſed, we ſhall through the Lord's ſtrength concur with you in jeoparding our lives and fortunes for your encouragement, in all things we can do: for we declare to you, union in the Lord is the only deſire of our ſouls. And now if ye have any bowels of compaſſion, tender the caſe of your mother-church, preach the word and adminiſter the ſacraments, according to your former entry, and let no more brother be againſt brother, Manaſſeh againſt Ephraim, and Ephraim againſt Manaſſeh: But as we are all embarked in the preſent perſecution, we likewiſe may be of one mind, and of one judgment: Oh how pleaſant would it be; for we may all ſee the ſad fruits of diviſion, every one of us weakening one anothers hands, ſo that many have ſtumbled on all hands, the ſad effects of which are ſeen this day, the generality turning aside to comply with Prelacy upon the one hand, and ſome led to deviliſh errors and deluſions on the other hand*. Let theſe things be pondered, and let you and us in the Lord's ſtrength be ſet a work, in joint ſupplications, one for another, which is the deſire of our ſouls, that the Lord may yet dwell amongſt us.

Now, we have preſented theſe things to your ſerious conſideration: If ye will not come forth when ye ſee the dangerous caſe, and the hazard of the ruining of this poor church, to help us with your advice, and counſel anent our ſouls and bodies, when both are in hazard, it may be the Lord will have compaſſion upon us, and ſend us relief from another airth.

Therefore we the United Societies of the church of Scotland, do enter our Proteſtation againſt you, if ye refuſe this our Call, ſeeing it is conſonant to the ſcriptures and your former engagements; and bears witneſs againſt your ſilence, lukewarmneſs, and neutrality, that it may be a ſtanding witneſs againſt your courſes, and that poſterity may ſee our innocency, and that all may ſee that we have no other deſign, but zeal for the matters of our God. And we declare we cannot join with

* By this *they mean, ſuch as* were drawn away by John Gib.

you, ſince ye refuſe upon thir terms, leſt we give our aſſent, or at leaſt be ſilent at the burial of the work of Reformation, which we pray our eyes may never ſee *.

To return; at the laſt meeting it was deſired that the receipts for the money that was then diſtributed, ſhould be brought to this meeting, which accordingly was done, and they ſatisfied therewith.

It was alſo appointed by the meeting, in caſe any letters came from London, which required an anſwer, that one ſhould be written by Thomas Lining, George MacVey, and Robert Goodwin, and another by friends in Edinburgh, and both to be preſented at next meeting.

The occaſion of this reſolution, was a letter ſent by Mr. Niſbet then at London, and read at this meeting which being darkly written, they could not know well what to ſay to it; only they learned ſo much from it, that there were people there, moſt willing to join the Suffering Remnant in Scotland, and were deſirous to know what they were doing, and that they were to write afterward, by which they would ſhew their mind more fully.

At this time there was a deſign carrying on againſt the preſent evil government, and theſe people mentioned in the letter, being concerned therein were deſirous to know what we were doing, and intended to do. And tho' the letter did not ſignify ſo much, yet it was thought that theſe people who were thus concerned, were of the Independents, or Anabaptiſts, with whom (they ſtanding where they are) we could not join. However it was thought fit to reſolve that if any letters came from them, or concerning them, to write an anſwer thereto. But none coming, this reſolution had no effect.

It was alſo reſolved that no Chriſtian-fellowſhip (in ſocieties) was to be kept with any perſon who joined with John Gib, obſtinately after the return of Mr.

* The effect of this Call was this: theſe miniſters being unwilling to run ſuch an hazard, made their work after this, more than ever before, to repreſent theſe people as perſons of erroneous principles, Gibbites, Republicans, Deſpiſers of the goſpel, Rejecters of lawful authority, laying ſinful reſtrictions, and impoſitions upon Miniſters, Eraſtians, *&c.* In a word, that they were ſuch odious people, as had no right to call miniſters. Whether this was true, and a good ground for rejecting their Call, or not, muſt be left with the Reader to judge.

Mr. Donald Cargill out of England:——And thoſe who ſeparated from the ſaid John Gib, at that time, before they be received into fellowſhip, ought to be examined, and promiſe given by them, to give ſatisfaction to a Church Judicatory (when it ſhall pleaſe the Lord to ſend it) according to the degree of their offence. This concluſion, conſidering the circumſtances of the time, was judged neceſſary, not only from a ſenſe of the hainouſneſs of the ſin, and greatneſs of the ſcandal of theſe who joined with that vile impoſture; but alſo, thereby to endeavour to take off the ODIUM caſt upon us, that we were all of Gib's principles, when they might ſee that we carried ſo toward them who had been involved in that ſhame, and that the perſons themſelves might be the more convinced of the evil of their way.

Moreover it was deſired that every one of the fellowſhips that ſends Commiſſioners to General Meetings, would be conſcientious in chooſing of them orderly, and alſo thoſe who are found to be beſt qualified for judging of matters treated of in theſe meetings. The riſe of this concluſion was, that it was found that ſome ſocieties ſent only ſuch perſons as could have beſt occaſion to come, without reſpect to their qualifications: And therefore to prevent this in time coming the meeting agreed upon this.

In like manner it was appointed by them, that no letters concerning the public, or public declarations or proteſtations, be written, ſpread, or publiſhed, by any perſon, or perſons whatſoever (of our ſocieties) untill the ſame be preſented to the General Meeting, that it may be conſidered by them; whether it were neceſſary to publiſh them, or not. That which occaſioned this reſolution to be made was, not only ſome perſons had publiſhed papers, no ways neceſſary, nor incumbent for them to do, and in which, there were things which could not be juſtified, whereby, others were reproached, and miſrepreſented; but alſo, it was feared others might be publiſhed, that might tend to the prejudice of the cauſe, and the reproach of its owners; to prevent which, this concluſion was fallen upon.

Some of the meeting, having enquired if there were any letters from friends abroad; it was remembred that there was one come lately, but not brought there. However, the ſum of the letter was ſignified to them, which was to this effect: That friends abroad deſired they

ſhould chooſe another young man, to ſend over to the reſt of the ſtudents, who were then at *Groningen*. Upon which, it was enquired whether they thought it ought to be done, or not, if one could be got; all judged it to be duty, and a young man likewiſe was condeſcended upon, *viz.* Thomas Lining, who being called, the Preſes of the meeting deſired of him that he would be free with them, and tell them what he was inclined unto. He anſwered to this purpoſe: friends, ſeeing ye require this at my hand, I ſhall freely tell you, my mind hath been, and yet is, to follow my learning; nevertheleſs, I am at the meetings diſpoſal in ſo far as may tend to the public good. After he had thus ſhewed his mind, it was objected by ſome that he could not be granted, upon ſeveral conſiderations; whereupon after hearing, and weighing the ſame, it was concluded that he ſhould ſtay, till it ſhould be ſeen what became of John Smith, in Glaſgow, who was then upon his death-bed, and in the mean time to wait upon, and learn ſome young men at ſchool, until it was known whether or not Andrew Young returned to them, who had been teaching ſome of them. This Thomas Lining condeſcended to do.

Alſo it was agreed upon, that in regard we heard that there were ſome young men abroad a letter ſhould be written to friends, deſiring them to make trial, concerning any of theſe young men's qualifications, and if found rightly qualified, that he be choſen for the foreſaid end.

At this, and other meetings there were ſeveral things ſpoken unto and conſidered, and alſo ſome reſolutions concerning the ſame, which were occaſionally brought before them, various ways: As when there was any thing that any of the ſocieties reckon faulty, and a grievance, whereof others of the United Societies were guilty, and they deſiring it might be helped, it was thought fit to repreſent the ſame to the General Meeting, that they might fall upon ſome way for the redreſſing thereof; as alſo, when matters fell out among any of them, or concerning particular perſons, which they could not, or knew not how to order among themſelves; in that caſe it was judged fit to repreſent the ſame to the ſaid meeting, that they might get their advice how to carry therein; and in like manner, when any ſociety, or particular perſon of them had any propoſals, one or more, to make, which might tend to the advantage of the cauſe, and of ſome,

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or of the whole of the United Societies; then it was thought requiſite to make it known to the meeting deſiring their judgment of it, and concurrence, if they agreed therewith. Some of theſe matters, as above circumſtantiate, being ſignified to this meeting, they did conſider and give their mind concerning the ſame, as the following relation will ſhew.

It was given in as a grievance by one, to be conſidered by this meeting, that notwithſtanding of reſolutions made by former meetings; yet there was little notice taken, whether they were obſerved in ſome things, as for inſtance, it was reſolved at one of them, that every reſpective Society ſhould provide themſelves in arms, according to their power and ſtation: yet this was not obſerved by ſome, which was a diſregarding of what that meeting did therein. Upon this it was thought fit to enquire at the Commiſſioners, if they and their ſocieties had obſerved it, in providing themſelves with arms; which was done not only at theſe who were ſitting, but at theſe ſtanding by. And there were ſeveral found not to have obſerved the ſaid reſolution; whereupon it was deſired that every Commiſſioner ſhould acquaint theſe of the ſocieties they came from who had not done it, to obſerve the foreſaid reſolution, for neglect of which, they deſerved a rebuke: And if they further ſlighted it, they ſhould be looked upon, as contemners of the meeting's reſolutions; this they all promiſed to do.

It was likewiſe deſired by ſome, that the meeting might ſhow their mind, and give their advice concerning the paying of ſtipends to the Curates, whereof ſome perſons (in ſociety) had at that time the temptation: The Preſes enquired what the meeting thought thereof, and whether they judged it a duty, or a ſin, and ſo a head to ſuffer on. In giving an anſwer there was a diſtinction made, that there might be an indirect, as well as a direct paying thereof. As when a tenant is bound by his tack, to pay his maſter ſo much money for his land he poſſeſſeth, and the way he is to make uſe thereof is not declared by the tack; but only all as the rent of the land; in that caſe the tenant was not to be blamed, tho' his maſter gave as much of his rent as he pleaſed to the Curate: But when a man is bound by his tack to pay to the Curate, or Biſhop, ſo much money, abſtract from the reſt of his maſter's duty, in that caſe, the tenant was blame worthy, and it was agreed unto, by all the meeting,

ing, that they looked upon the ſame to be a ſin, and a head to ſuffer on; but withal they thought that the tenant ſhould not make his own uſe of that money, but give it in, for the public uſe.

Another thing was repreſented at this meeting and their advice ſought, and, that they might endeavour to take it away, which was conerning an engagement made among ſome perſons a few years ago, at a ſeaſon, when there was a tentation of paying ceſs, locallity, and militia-money, in this manner; That if any one, or more of them ſhould ſuffer loſs at the hands of enemies, for not paying of theſe impoſitions; in that caſe, each one of theſe according to their power were to make up their loſs: And the lofers were to bear a proportion in the ſame, that is to ſay, the firſt loſers, were to loſs as much as thoſe who were to make them up.

After this tranſaction, moſt part of theſe that engaged therein, complied with the courſes of the time, and paid the foreſaid impoſitions: which occaſioned debates among them that did not comply, for ſome of them ſuſtaining loſs for refuſing to pay: And as upon the one hand, it was alledged by the loſers, the non-complying party, were only alledged to make up their loſs, ſeeing they had not freedom to ſeek it from thoſe who had complied with the enemy; even ſuppoſe they had been willing to pay it, they having broken their engagement; So, on the other hand, the perſons that complied not, and had ſuffered no loſs, alledged they were obliged to pay only according to what their proportion would have been, if the whole of theſe who entered into the engagement had continued firm.

This buſineſs was ſignified to another meeting, who appointed ſome perſons to endeavour the compoſing thereof, but they not getting it done, it was repreſented to this meeting; to whoſe determination both parties were willing to ſtand: whereupon they having conſidered, whether the non-complying party, or theſe who had complyed, ought to make up the loſs: After deliberation, they concluded (in regard redreſs at the time could not be got from the compliers, but left to a more convenient ſeaſon) theſe who had not complied, ſhould make up the loſs ſuſtained by thoſe who refuſed to pay the foreſaid impoſition; ſeeing if they failed therein, they would alſo be breakers of their engagement.

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It was alſo, propoſed by ſome of the meeting, what would be the duty of the United Societies, if (as was much to be feared) there ſhould be a maſſacre by Papiſts in the land; and whether or not, they ſhould gather themſelves together for the defence and ſafety of their own, their wives and children's lives; this was condeſcended on by all to be duty, if it could be gotten done.

Then it was enquired what would be the moſt probable way to effectuate it. After deliberation, it was judged moſt convenient, that in the caſe foreſaid, every three or four ſocieties lying neareſt together, ſhould appoint a place moſt fit for a meeting; as alſo, that there ſhould be a place for the whole to conveen at; which after conſideration was agreed upon, to be at *Carntable:* And to the end they might be in greater readineſs to come, and fitneſs to defend themſelves when together, it was concluded that ſome ſocieties which were neareſt together, ſhould meet in ſome convenient place, for learning the exerciſe of war, and perſons moſt ſkilled made choice of to teach them, until they come to the public place of meeting, and there choice to be made without partiality, of perſons to teach and conduct the reſt.

It was likewiſe repreſented to the meeting by ſome, that they thought the lively exerciſe of religion was much marred through the not propounding of queſtions, and caſes of conſcience at Society Meetings: which being thought by the whole meeting to have done much hurt, Therefore it was concluded, that every Commiſſioner ſhould ſhow this to their ſociety, that it may be helped in time coming.

It was alſo enquired by ſome, if the oath of ſecrecy ſtood yet, in its binding force; to which was anſwered, it did. However it was thought expedient to alter ſome words therein, *viz.* in place of *indirectly*, to put in *wittingly* and *willingly*. And theſe words *perſons from whom I am commiſſionated*, to be put out, and inſtead thereof, *except it be to friends*. At this time there were ſome perſons taken engaged to the ſaid oath.

Moreover it was propoſed by ſome, that it ſeemed neceſſary to have a word, among all theſe joined in ſociety, if the meeting could condeſcend upon it; to the end that theſe who are wandering through the country, might know one another: And for preventing the making known what was among us, to perſons wandering, but not in ſociety; which being done, tho' not wittingly, might do hurt *in this juncture*. After deliberation this

was

was thought fit to be done. Whereupon it was agreed by the Preſes, and one ſitting next him who told the ſame to another, and ſo it went through the whole perſons in the houſe privately. This being done, the Preſes enquired, if they were all content with the word, (which was REFORMATION) it was anſwered they were. Then every Commiſſioner was deſired to impart it to the ſociety he came from.

Finally it was concluded that the 2d of March, ſhould be kept as a faſt by all our ſocieties, upon the account of our former abuſe and neglect of the goſpel. And alſo to intreat of the Lord that whatſoever miniſters might accept of the call, might do it from a right principle, and alſo have a right end in the ſame.

Likewiſe that the 5th of April may be obſerved as a faſt upon theſe accounts, firſt to mourn for the ſeveral jarrs that have been among us: Alſo to ſeek light and direction how to carry anent matters againſt the next meeting, which was to meet upon the 2d of May at Carntable.

After the meeting was parted and moſt part gone a little diſtance from the place, a young man, who had come out of Edinburgh with letters from friends abroad, met ſome of them; upon which, all that could be gotten together of them, were called together again, before whom the letters were read; and after deliberation concerning the ſame, it was reſolved, that Robert Goodwine, Alexander Gordon, John Smith, William Nairn, and Thomas Lining ſhould anſwer the ſaid letters, and therein deſire Earlſtoun to return to this land againſt the middle of April next; in regard that ſeveral weighty affairs called for his being preſent at the next General Meeting.

THE caſe of the country ſince the laſt meeting was much like as it was before it, enemies went on in proſecuting their wicked deſigns, and cruelly perſecuting all diſſenters, and in particular the Societies. The laſt meeting being got notice of by the enemy, a party of enraged ſoldiers came preſently out and ſpoiled the houſe, where it was kept, and apprehended ſome perſons in the country. But albeit perſecution be unpleaſant to fleſh and blood, yet it would have been eaſier and lighter to the Societies, if they had not, had other things in their cup, which made it more bitter. Upon the one hand they

they wanted the benefit of the gospel, the enjoyment whereof, being an unspeakable advantage, and will be reakoned to be so by every one who have got the blessing thereof, even though it should be with the peril of their lives: And upon the other hand being before hand called Schismatics and Separatists, for their withdrawing in that broken and declining state of the church, from several ministers guilty of defection: And now after the last meeting more misrepresented by some on the account of the call.

ACCORDING to the appointment of the last meeting, a General Meeting met at *Carstable*, upon the 2d day of May, 1683. After prayer, and modelling of the meeting, the resolutions of the former meeting were read and approven: But in regard Earlstoun (according to the desire of the meeting) was to come to this land, and was at the time, at Edinburgh. It was thought most fit and expedient, to go there and keep the meeting, that they might have him with them; whereupon it was agreed that the same should be at Edinburgh, upon the 8th of May at night; and thereafter this meeting parted.

ACCORDING to the conclusion above, the General Meeting met at Edinburgh upon the 8th of May. After prayer, *Alexander Gordon* of *Earlstoun* being present, gave them a full account of his diligence abroad. And they were extraordinarily well satisfied with all his proceedings, as having a manifest tendency to the glory of God, and the good of the Remnant. And in evidence of their satisfaction, he was continued to go further on in his commission. There were several things spoken of, and some resolutions agreed upon, an account of which shall be here related.

1st, It was resolved that a conjunct commission should be drawn, including *Alexander Gordon*, with *Robert Hamilton* that they might go further abroad, to give information of our state and condition to other Protestant churches. And also a particular commission, to each of them, in case it should be needful that they went not together: And one, or both to return when necessity required; providing they received a call from the meeting, for that effect. These commissions being drawn up, were, with some papers, delivered to *Earlstoun*; who presently after the meeting, took journey for *Newcastle*;

and having agreed with the maſter of a ſhip, for his voyage to Holland, juſt as the ſhip was ſetting out from Tyne-mouth, it was accidently ſtopt, and ſome waiters coming aboard, *Earlſtoun* and Edward Aitken (who was along with him) were challenged, by them; and they perceiving themſelves to be in danger, and fearing the ſeizure of the papers which *Earlſtoun* had, threw them over board, to the end they might ſink, but the box in which they were, floating, were ſoon taken up. Among which, were the foreſaid commiſſions. Upon this, they were both apprehended, and carried priſoners to *Newcaſtle*, and put in *Newgate*, and thereafter brought to Scotland.

2*dly*, It was reſolved by the meeting, that *Michael Shields* ſhould ſtay at Edinburgh, and wait for letters from the poſt-houſe, which might be ſent from friends abroad; and write any convenient anſwers to them, that ſhould be requiſite for him to do: And it was reſolved that *Thomas Lining* ſhould wait upon the more public meetings, and tranſlate any letters that ſhould come to them in Latin.

3*dly*, It was reſolved that Mr. John Binning ſhould be deſired to wait upon a ſchool, for teaching ſome young men; and for his pains he was to have twenty-five pounds Scots *per quarter*. Theſe named at the meeting, were John Williamſon, James Bool, John Dick, Benjamin Hall, Gavin Wotherſpoon junr. Edward Aitken, John Dalgleiſh, David Gibſon, John Campbel, and Robert Millar. According to this reſolution, Mr. Binning did teach Latin to ſome of theſe young men for ſome time.

4*thly*, It was in like manner reſolved by them, upon the account of the deſigns of ſome, and the raſhneſs of others, that no perſons (of our ſocieties) ſhould draw together in a public manner of riſing in arms, except it be for neceſſary ſelf-defence, and deliverance of our brethren, becauſe thereby we could do nothing but render ourſelves a prey to the enemy, if not a marr to the Lord's work, and this was alſo the mind of friends both at home, and abroad, until the Lord by his word and Spirit, ſhould give us and them further light therein. The end of this reſolution was to put a ſtop to the raſhneſs to appear in arms, of ſome perſons in our ſocieties, who had ſhown much forwardneſs in that matter before, which would have tended in that juncture, to the expoſing of them and others to the fury of the enemy. As alſo,

alſo, if there had been a public riſing in arms againſt the preſent evil government, as was then expected would be, with which, the ſocieties would have been ſolicited to concur; a ſtop would be put to the raſh appearance of any of them, and to their joining with ſuch with whom we could not aſſociate; of whom there would have been not a few. But as the ſocieties were reſolved to oppoſe the common enemy, ſo in doing of it, it was their deſire that it ſhould be with common conſent, unanimity, and avoiding ſinful aſſociations.

5thly, A paper was agreed unto by this meeting, containing the reaſons of ſeveral of our actions, which was intended to be given in to the Confederators, wherein is ſomewhat of our mind anent, and a proteſtation againſt their ſinful aſſociations. That which gave the riſe, and occaſion to this reſolution, was this; there was a deſign carrying on againſt the preſent tyrannical government, by ſeveral perſons in both kingdoms. And the ſocieties were not againſt the oppoſing, and endeavouring to overturn the ſaid tyranny: Yet they were againſt that promiſcuous aſſociation with men of blood, profanity, and malignancy, as alſo with Sectarians, which was at that time on foot for effectuating thereof. Whereupon knowing that their concurrence would be deſired in the ſaid aſſociation, they thought it neceſſary to draw up this paper, to ſhew their mind concerning, and witneſs againſt ſinful aſſociation*. As likewiſe to take occaſion therein, to vindicate a little, ſome of our former actings which were much condemned. Which paper was given to Earlſtoun, that he might have delivered it to ſome perſons at London, concerned in the aſſociation, that ſo it might have been made public; but when that gentleman was apprehended, it was ſeized among the reſt of the papers: A true copy of which follows.

The reaſons of the ſufferings and actings of the true (though greatly reproached, and perſecuted) Preſbyterian, Anti-Prelatick, Anti-Eraſtian Party in SCOTLAND.

* The Reader may compare this, and what follows, with the principles and practices of the far greateſt number of theſe, five or ſix years thereafter; as they were much blamed, as having relinquiſhed their former principles: it muſt therefore be the duty of every one to *judge, whether* their former, or later principles *and practices be moſt agreeable* to the word of God.

We cannot but ſadly regret in the very entry, the occaſions of ſuch vindications, as we are forced to make in this critical age, wherein for the moſt part, all true principles of government and religion are like to be overturned: And when any are contending for theſe, they are immediately branded as enemies to government and magiſtracy, one of the moſt excellent ordinances of God, when kept within its due bounds and limits ſet down by him in his word; and when made uſe of for the ends propoſed therein. This we ſay we have reaſon to regret, yet it ought not to diſcourage any, or deter them from that which we are bound unto; although many have been whedled out of both reaſon and religion, yet this makes us put pen to paper, that thereby theſe who are honeſtly principled as to both, may be ſtrengthened, and we vindicated: So that when the grounds are laid down, and procedures laid to the rule, it may be ſeen whoſe courſes are moſt aberrant, or differing therefrom.

Therefore we ſhall touch upon ſome of theſe heads which are moſt carped at by our enemies.

1*ſt*, The firſt grand buſineſs is the caſting off the Tyrant's authority, and the power to middle therewith, and what a length we ſtretch that power: As for the manner of the doing thereof, it is narrated in the Lanerk Declaration, ſo we ſhall not touch thereon, but as a preamble ſhall narrate ſomewhat of the grounds upon which we walked. Firſt, it is an undoubted principle amongſt all ſtates-men, that in a general defection, theſe who in that nation adheres cloſeſt to the ancient laws, liberties, and conſtitutions, are the trueſt and moſt free-born ſubjects; for laws being made for the government of the whole nation, every member within the ſame, prince, people are equally obliged thereto, and in all breaches upon either hand recourſe muſt be had to the rule. This is not denied by any ſound ſtates-men, and contradicted by none, Barclay and other court Paraſites excepted: Yea it is ſo clear, that nature-taught Heathens themſelves, from whom we have our civil laws, that they never gave their princes more, yea the princes themſelves required no more, but thought it their greateſt honour to be ſubject to the laws, as can be clearly ſeen in the whole body of the civil law. But why ſhould we go thus far? (if it were not to anſwer ſuch quibblers in their own coin) for if we look to the conſtitutions ſet down by

by God in his word, we will find all alongſt that the laws are to be the ſupreme judge, whereby the actions of both magiſtrates and people are to be judged; and where magiſtrates and rulers walked contrary thereto, the oppoſing of them, and revolting from under them, are approven by God; and where they were not revolted from, nor teſtified againſt, but joined with, and homologate; we find at ſuch times their ſins charged upon the people, and the people plagued therefore *.

This being conſidered, gave ſufficient ground to us in the moſt legal and public way poſſible; (that as our ſin was public, our contrary teſtimony might be alſo public) this, we ſay, gave the occaſion to us to teſtify againſt, reſiſt, and reject the authority, the exerciſe of which was tyranny, oppreſſion and uſurpation, in matters civil and eccleſiaſtic, as we have done by our declarations and teſtimonies. But whereas ſome are pleaſed to ſay that we aſſume the legiſlative power of the nation, and the power of Parliaments to us.——We declare, all that we have done, or are doing in that kind, is but merely to make our teſtimony and procedure againſt the preſent courſe of affairs more legal and ſtrong; that as we have had an eminent and public hand in the ſin, and ſetting up the idol of jealouſy, ſo we may have an eminent and public hand in pulling of it down: And when it ſhall pleaſe the Lord to ſend us well-conſtitute judicatories, we ſhall deſire to have, or aſſume no more but our privileges, in our places and ſtations, as free born ſubjects.

Secondly, As to the grounds of our not joining with miniſters and profeſſors, or others, who have made defection, we have much to ſay, which would be tedious, and rather the work of a volume, than of ſuch a paper; but we think they may be very eaſily reduced to this rule, which was our ancient rule all along, and ought ſtill to continue yet: When joining with perſons in the exerciſe of worſhip or otherwiſe, implies a homologating of, or joining with the public ſins whereof they are guilty, there we ought to foot a ſtand, and not to join, becauſe the joining is tainted with their guilt, and ſo ſinful; for no ſin ought to be joined with, but avoided: But where it does not homologate, nor can no-ways be tainted

* They who would *ſee this proved*, may conſult Hind let *looſe, and others.*

tainted with the guilt, there we have freedom to join. But this we ought to retort upon the heads of our adversaries, for they are the separatists, and not we; for it is the offenders and not the offended, that only best deserve that name.

Thirdly, As to our making the work of Reformation, and particularly our covenants and late public declarations, and martyrs testimonies on scaffolds, a test, or mark whereby we may know one another, we esteem ourselves to have good ground so to do; for the work of reformation, and the several steps thereof, from Popery to this day, are such a linked chain, that there are none that can disown the testimonies of our martyrs, either former or latter, (being considered, every one according to the particular times and seasons when, and dispensations under which they were given) but he must certainly disown the whole; for it hath pleased the Lord to make their strain run all one way, and not cross to one another; whereby it may be evidently seen, that they have been all dictated by one spirit. Always hereby declaring, we own only the true testimonies, excluding some particular testimonies vitiate by Gib and others, since there may be errors on the one hand as well as on the other: Those, we say, being excluded, we know nothing, nor desire to own nothing that is contrary to scripture and sound reason.

Fourthly, We know likewise, that it hath been scrupled at, our refusing to join issue and interest, or in arms with a malignant party, carrying on malignant designs; however under cunningly busked colours and pretexts, which when searched, are, and have been found out to be but meer cheating or betraying the true cause of God in the land, as we have by sad experience found and smarted for; for we never yet took in, or strove to connive at, or palliate that malignant interest, but the Lord shewed evident marks against us: and they are so clearly confuted by the passage of Jehoshaphat, and many other passages in scripture, that we need not take great pains to strike that nail to the head; for our remonstrances, *Mr. Gillespie*, and many others, have redd marches so well, that they have left nothing for us to do, but to put our seals to what they have left on record: Neither are we looking for, or expecting an army all of saints, for there will be tares among the wheat, while the time of reaping come: But if we (after the Lord's

Lord's ſo eminently diſcharging) take in the Canaanites into our boſoms, who have made *thorns in our eyes, and ſcourges in our ſides:* If we (we ſay) ſhall confederate with theſe, and give them places of truſt and office with us, whom he has ſo eminently appeared againſt, we cannot expect but he will whip us with taws of our own making, ſince we will not follow his method. And we deſire to ſhew all the lovers of Zion, that whoſoever confederates with theſe men of blood and bloody practices, we have juſt ground to fear that the helpers and the holpen will fall together; and we deſire to teſtify againſt all ſuch confederacies and aſſociations, in the name of the once glorious church of Scotland, theſe being none of her principles, to take in men againſt whom the ſword of juſtice ſhould have free courſe. Therefore whatever ſhall be acted or done by ſuch confederacies or aſſociations, that no churches, neither foreign nor neighbouring, attribute or aſcribe the ſame to the true church and nation of Scotland, whoſe laws both of church and ſtate being ſo juſt, as that they could not admit them to live, much leſs to rule or officiate, being men of ſuch wicked practices, deſtructive not only to religion, but civil ſociety.

Earlſtoun brought two letters from Mr. William Brackel, directed to the ſocieties, one of them dated, *Feb. 19th,* the other, *March 14th,* 1683. Both which, being written in Latin were tranſlated into Engliſh, and read at this meeting, to which they were acceptable and encouraging; and it was thought fit by them, to write one to him. Which being done, agreed unto, and ſubſcribed, was given to *Earlſtoun,* that he might deliver it to Mr. Brackel, but the ſame was ſeized on, when *Earlſtoun* was apprehended, with ſeveral other papers.

However, a true copy hereof follows; as alſo a part of Mr. Brackel's letter, dated *February 19th,* the ſame being ſuitable to the condition of theſe people to whom he wrote; which I have thought fit firſt to ſet down, and then the letter by the meeting to him.

Moſt loving fathers and brethren in Chriſt Jeſus our glorious King,

IT is not only come to my ears that ye wrote, and ſent to me a letter of anſwer, but alſo a copy of it is come

come to my hand; but where itſelf ſticks, or by whom intercepted, I know not.

It rejoiceth my ſoul greatly to know your affairs both by the foreſaid copy, and alſo by your letters ſent to us; eſpecially the miraculous divine protection of you makes me both greatly to admire and rejoice; who being courageous and buſied in your convention, by taking a care of your church-affairs, did ſee the cruel enemies even threatening death, ſeeking you, even compaſſing about the houſe, ſtricken with a certain *Sodomitiſh* blindneſs that they could not enter.

How admirable are the works of God! how unſearchable is his deep goodneſs! truly we find that he hath favour and mercy towards his ſaints, and perpetual care towards the elect; truly he is a fiery wall about Jeruſalem, and his angels compaſs about thoſe that fear him, and delivers them. He that ſits under the covert of the Moſt High, ſhall lodge under the ſhadow of him that is omnipotent. Let praiſe and glory be ſung to our Lord, by all who hear theſe things, both angels and men. It is needful that this experience of the moſt efficacious preſence of God ſhould ſtrengthen your confidence; that he who delivered you out of the mouth of bear and lion, ſhall alſo in the time to come deliver you from all dangers that ſhall fall in your lot, to the glory of his waited-for divine defence. But if God ſhould ſuffer this or that man, or even many, to fall into the hands of enemies, or rather that he himſelf ſhould give them; by this ye ſhall be taught experience, that that has not fallen out becauſe of the defect of divine protection, but that God has called them out, name by name, for a teſtimony of himſelf; yea, although they ſhould ſeem to die in the eyes of enemies, and their end to be an ignominious affliction, yet they, I ſay, go away in peace, and are crowned with a joyful crown and immortality. Neither are the martyrs of the church of Scotland killed, that it may be extirpate, but that it may be builded; for the blood of the martyrs is the ſeed of the church: the church was founded by blood, and it grew by blood. The more cruelly Pharaoh oppreſſed the people of God, the more fertilely they were multiplied. We are very deſirous of the coming of the Lord; ſaying, we wiſh that *ſalvation may come out of Zion; when the Lord ſhall turn again the captivity of his people, Jacob ſhall be glad, and Iſrael ſhall rejoice.* But let no man caſt down his heart, becauſe God

God is only trying your patience; he is alſo making our way plain, and a way to himſelf, to his greater glory in all lands. Would Iſrael been more happy if he had been delivered out of leſs oppreſſion in Egypt? Was not his deliverance the more glorious, the heavier the perſecution was? Wait therefore for the ſalvation of the Lord: how great ſhall his goodneſs be *which he hath laid up for them that fear him*, which he hath prepared for thoſe that betake themſelves to him, before the ſons of men. Shew yourſelves men in the time of diſtreſs. Let him that is weak in ſtrength, leaning upon his head, ſay, I am a man of excellent valour. He that hath God near unto him (as is made known to you by many, both public and private experiences) from no man would fear either threatenings, ſwords or ropes. Learned men, great men, albeit godly, of great name, err in this matter; but God hath choſen theſe that were fools in the world, as wiſe; thoſe that were weak, as ſtrong; the ignoble, and thoſe of no eſteem, that he might bring to diſgrace thoſe who are in honour. In the mean time, let unanimity, love, fervency of mind, gladneſs in juſtification remain among you; and out of theſe, holineſs, and a perpetual intercourſe of the ſoul with God. This one thing I exhort you, that every one may teach another; the fathers, mothers, aged and more learned, may teach the little ones, and others who are more ignorant of the way of the Lord, the fundamentals of religion; leſt any ſhould periſh thro' lack of knowledge, or leſt any ſhould waver in the true faith.

The three ſtudents choſen by you to the paſtoral office are buſy at their ſtudies; the fourth we are waiting for: By God's grace we hope you ſhall ſee them the next year, and hear them preaching.

Since the time that I have known your eſtate, I have judged it neceſſary that certain men, endued with the Holy Ghoſt, piety, authority and years, ſhould be choſen for tha paſtoral office, and ſhould be ſent unto us, for the ſpace of one or two months, that they might be inſtructed in the method of forming of preachings, and ſome other things. Next that they ſhould be examined in a lawful way by ſome paſtor in an eccleſiaſtic convention, (let not little knowledge deter any man) and in the name of the Lord ſent unto his vineyard, and be confirmed in that office by the impoſition of hands; and ſo return to you in ſuch a ſtate of the church. I care

not much for the knowledge of tongues, and literal inſtruction, although in itſelf, in other circumſtances I think much of it; for not by the defect of learning, but of the Spirit and piety, is the church of Scotland brought into ſo miſerable a condition; and I think it is not to be reſtored by learning, but by the Spirit and piety. I propoſe thir things to you, that you may ſeriouſly conſider that thing of ſo great moment; and that ye may either do or reject that as ye ſhall think fit. The Lord be a ſun and ſhield unto you. And, I am,

Your lover, and promoted miniſter,

FEB. *9th*, 1683.

WILLIAM BRACKEL.

Here follows the letter to MR. BRACKEL.

Right reverend Sir,

THE receipt of your firſt letter did not a little encourage us to ſet about the duties of the day, and to hold on in the way of the Lord. We cannot well excuſe our long ſilence in not writing to you, (unto whom we are ſo much obliged) but when we conſider the firſt part of your letter, which contains ſo much of ſelf-denial, and a commendation put upon us, far above our deſerving, it puts us to a ſtand what to write: And more ſo, when we eſſay to put pen to paper; we ſee ſo much weakneſs in ourſelves, that we fear our letters (when written) be little to the edification of either you or others: But knowing you to be ſuch, as can paſs by the infirmities of the weak, (according to the example of the apoſtle *Paul*) together with your ardent deſire to know our ſtate, makes us (though in weakneſs) write this line to you. We wrote an anſwer to it before, and ſent it by poſt, but we hear the ſame has been intercepted, and not come to your hand, but only a copy; we received alſo another letter of the date *February 19th*, (comfortable and refreſhing to us indeed) and your laſt of the date *March 14th*, from *Earlſtoun*, one of our honourable commiſſioners, whoſe preſence has not been a little refreſhing to us under our preſent diſtreſſes and labyrinths of difficulties; together with the heart-comforting and hand-ſtrengthening account he has given of the Lord's condeſcending to us in our low condition, when we were become

become as ſtrangers, and aliens in our mother's houſe, to raiſe up fathers, brothers and ſiſters to us in a ſtrange land, who give ſuch eminent proofs of their being ſo to us, by their accepting and welcoming of our meſſage; and alſo, by their fatherly care of, and kindneſs to our honourable commiſſioners, and the ſtudents ſent by us; and alſo that worthy lady † and her children, who could not get reſt for the ſole of their feet in their own native country. For which, and the like eminent favours we acknowledge ourſelves altogether out of a capacity to render a recompence, and therefore muſt remain debtors; only we deſire to believe, that our Lord who has conferred ſuch favours upon us, will alſo accompliſh his promiſe, who hath ſaid, *He that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, ſhall receive a righteous man's reward:* This Letter, we ſay, has occaſioned great joy in the hearts of all (eſpecially that part which concerns the coming home of the ſtudents) who are truly longing to hear the ſound of the feet of theſe who bring the glad tidings of ſalvation. This is a ground of encouragement for us to hope that our God is returning to covenanted Scotland, to ride proſperouſly on the white horſe of the goſpel, conquering and to conquer; and to be head and king over his church. We acknowledge the goodneſs and mercy of the Lord in this to be very great, in *remembering us in our low condition*, and in opening a door of hope in this manner *(all praiſe and glory be to him for it)* when all other doors ſeemed to be ſhut, refuges failed us upon the right and left hand, to learn us not to look to the hills and mountains for ſalvation, (which alas! we have too much done) but unto himſelf. O noble exerciſe! to be looking unto, and depending upon the Lord for all things, both ſpiritual and temporal; for what want we but he hath to give? and not only hath to give, but is willing to give to ſuch as ſeek in faith. And alſo we acknowledge the Lord's goodneſs in raiſing you up to be inſtrumental in this great work, (for which ye will not want your reward) and we count ourſelves greatly indebted to you, (much honoured of the Lord) for which, and all other favours conferred by you upon us, we give you and the godly with you, hearty thanks.

† This was lady Earſtoun.

Now we ſhall give you (dear Sir) a ſhort hint of our caſe and condition at the time. Once it might have been ſaid of this church, *that ſhe looked forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the ſun, and terrible as an army with banners:* We had the light of the glorious goſpel: we were *made to drink the pure blood of the grape; and the ſons of the alien were made our plowmen;* we gave away ourſelves in covenant to be the Lords. But alas! we *have left our firſt love;* we that once were the head, are now become the tail, and theſe to whom we were a terror, are become a terror to us; *Our crown is fallen from our head, wo unto us that we have ſinned:* We have fallen by our iniquity; we have ſinned away the precious goſpel, the food of our ſouls; and the bleſſed Comforter that ſhould relieve us, is withdrawn: Our enemies are ſtrong, and increaſing within and without, and on every hand. Theſe things ſhould not only be matter of mourning and lamentation to us before the Lord, but even to all the truly godly who hear of them. Therefore we deſire and invite all the lovers of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, not to be among the number of the paſſers-bye, and of them that care for none of theſe things; but ſincerely to ſympathize with us, and lay out our caſe before the Lord, and plead with him in our behalf, that he would *yet ariſe and have mercy on Zion, and let the time to favour her come.* O noble work! this cauſe has prevailed and will prevail; for all that we have been, are, or may be tryſted with from cruel enemies or pretended friends, yet we have no reaſon to complain; we are puniſhed leſs than our iniquity deſerves; *Why ſhould a living man complain, a man for the puniſhment of his ſins.* Yea we have ground to ſay, *The lines are fallen to us in pleaſant places, we have a goodly heritage:* We are honoured with a noble privilege, to be counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame and reproach, robbing, ſpoiling and martyring for the name of precious CHRIST,—whereas many have ardently deſired to give a proof of their love this way, and have not obtained it: For well is that word made out in our days, *He ſends none a warfare upon their own charges.* Why ſhould we fear, ſince he hath promiſed to be with us both in the fire and in the water? Who would not ſuffer with him that they may reign with him? Since there is a croſs laid down at every one's door by our Lord, why ſhould we not take it up, and bear it for his ſake, and follow him whitherſoever he goes?

goes? for he hath bought a bleſſing to croſſes at a dear rate; *our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory.* O! noble, and weighty crown of glory, that they who endure to the end get! Here is enough though we be under perſecution all our days, and though the yoke of oppreſſion, be wreathed faſter about our necks: it ſets us to be ſilent, and not to quarrel at his diſpenſations, though they ſeem dark: And though he ſhould cauſe us all to fall in the wilderneſs for our murmurings and quarrelings with him; what is the matter, if he be glorified? Let us die in the faith of it, that he will have a Remnant, in whom he will be glorified, and a ſeed to ſerve him in this land, and that he will return, and dwell among them.

This is indeed an evil time, even a time of Jacob's trouble; but here is comfort, he ſhall be ſaved out of it, and the yoke ſhall be broken from off his neck, and his bands will be burſt, and ſtrangers ſhall no more ſerve themſelves of him. And though it be ſaid at this time, that Zion is an out-caſt, whom no man ſeeketh after, yet our Lord has promiſed to reſtore health unto her, and heal her of her wounds. And we may ſay, to the commendation of his grace, he hath not left us comfortleſs, for he is pleaſed to go with us through the fire, and through the waters, ſo that we might (if we could either write, or ſpeak) invite all, to come and behold what wondrons works the Lord hath ſhown to us, and among us, that there need none be afraid to venture upon the like, or worſe ſufferings than theſe which we have ſeen, and are put to, ſince we can ſay it now from experience, that he bears us and our burdens both. And we deſire to put a blank in his hand for the future, and ſay, Amen, to it, if he ſee it fit, for the further manifeſtation of the glory of his free grace, and power, to heat our furnace yet ſeven times hotter, if one, like the Son of man be with us in it, we have enough.

And dear Sir, ſince your letters hitherto, have been ſo refreſhing and comfortable, in our ſorrowful and diſtreſſed caſe; we hope ye will yet be pleaſed to confer that favour upon us, as to write, and let us hear from you, both for counſel, and encouragement, for we are hopeful the more that ye give of this kind, ye ſhall get the more to give.

Thus

Thus recommending you to his grace, who walks among the candlesticks, and holds the stars in his right hand; We remain your, &c.

Subscribed in our name, and at our appointment by &c.

It was appointed by the meeting, that the 22d of May, the 15th of June, and 13th of July, should be kept by our Societies, in prayer; and the next meeting to be at Carntable upon August 1st, to which the collections were to be brought.

Not long after the last meeting, there was a design against the present evil government in England discovered, which had been carried on by many, and was then near to be put in execution, which made a great noise through the three kingdoms, and occasioned several persons to be searched for and apprehended, and some suffered on that account.

About this time fell out the apprehending of *Earlstoun*, which was not a little afflicting to the United Societies, not only upon the account of the loss of such a worthy gentleman, but also for the seizure of the papers that were drawn up, and agreed to, at the last meeting: Whereby enemies came to the knowledge of what was in them, and a stop was put to his going abroad, for the end related above; and though some endeavours were made for his rescue, out of the hands of his enemies, yet it proved unsuccessful, and he continued a prisoner a considerable time*.

According to the apointment of the meeting before, a General Meeting did conveen at *Carntable* upon the 1st of August, 1683. After prayer, and modelling of the meeting, they approved of what was done by the former meeting, and agreed upon some resolutions, as follows.

1. It was resolved by the meeting that a commission should be drawn, subscribed, and sent to *Mr. Robert Hamilton*, then at Leewarden, to the end he might inform Protestant reformed churches abroad of our state and condition. The last meeting agreed upon the like com-

* To wit, till the Revolution.

commiſſion to him, which was ſent with *Earlſtoun*; but he being apprehended, the ſame was ſeized, with other papers: wherefore this meeting (being very deſirous to have the caſe they were contending and ſuffering for, and their ſad and afflicted caſe made known to reformed Proteſtant churches, to the end they might get their ſympathy) thought fit that a new one ſhould be drawn up; which was done and ſent. And it differed nothing from the former, ſave as to time and place *.

Likewiſe they agreed upon a letter to Mr. Hamilton, which was accordingly drawn up, and ſent with Mr. William Nairn. A true copy of which here follows.

Much Honoured and Worthy Sir,

WE are much concerned with you, and have good reaſon to be, becauſe we are ſenſible of your labour and pains, which you have been, and are yet at, in *giving* true information of the ſtate of the Lord's quarrel, which we deſire through God's ſtrength to own. And for the better carrying on of which, we have condeſcended upon a particular commiſſion to you, that thereby, as ye have been eminently active for truth already; ſo the glory of God, and his public (though perſecuted) quarrel, may be further carried on thro' other lands, and you may be employed as a mean in that ſervice; for although it be a heavy burden in itſelf, yet your God, and our God, is able ſufficiently to fit and furniſh you, and all whomſoever by his providence he calls to ſuch a work and ſervice, by giving full expences to all his ſervants, and a back for the burden; ſo we declare that no motives lead us to this, but principally the further propagation of the glory of God. And you are to act, and carry on, whatſoever work of this nature, the Lord ſhall put in your hand, as he ſhall enlighten you, according to his word, and give ſucceſs in all places where ye ſhall travel.

Worthy Sir, the carrying on of this, is unanimouſly deſired by your friends, and you to be employed as an inſtrument therein.

Much honoured Sir, This commiſſion was by the laſt meeting ordained to be drawn up, which accordingly was done, ſubſcribed, and ſent by the hand of your honourable and dear brother, now in bonds for Chriſt. But

* *It is yet extant, in Latin.*

But the Lord who orders all things well, permitted the ſame, with ſeveral other papers, to fall into the hands of his enemies: And as to the giving of a new one, it could not be done until this meeting: ſo they declare their adherence to their former reſolutions, and have ſent you this commiſſion, written and ſubſcribed in parchment; differing nothing from the former.

We received a letter from you, of the date May 24th laſt, wherein we ſee matter of rejoicing, and alſo of ſorrow. As we have reaſon upon this account to rejoice and be glad, yea to ſing, and give praiſe to our God, who is making himſelf known as ſuch, and his glorious attributes of power, faithfulneſs, mercy, *&c.* to ſhine, in carrying on his noble cauſe, over the belly of ſo great difficulties, and owning his people ſo, in the managing thereof: yea the many ſtops that were put in the way of our dear friend's (now Chriſt's ambaſſador's) ordination, makes us hope that he is a poliſhed ſhaft in our Lord's quiver, and a *Joſeph* againſt whom the archers have ſorely ſhot, and have not prevailed, and we hope will not. So, we have alſo reaſon and ground of ſorrow and lamentation, upon the account of the carriage of theſe two young men; but what ſhall we ſay, but ſtand ſtill and behold the woudrous works of our God, who is even ſitting as a refiner and purifier of ſilver, purifying the ſons of *Levi*. It becomes us therefore to be content, though but a third part come through the fire, ſince it is himſelf, who is maſter of the work: it is like they will be *coſtly ſtones*, and *hewed ſtones*, whom our Lord will make uſe of, to lay the foundation of his ſecond temple in this land.

As to that part of your letter, anent writing a proteſtation againſt the Scots church at Rotterdam: the ſame is thought duty: And it is concluded that you are the fitteſt perſon to draw up the ſame; ſo you are humbly deſired to do it, and ſend the ſame over with the bearer to the next meeting, to be by them conſidered. As to other things treated of at this time, the bearer will ſufficiently acquaint you, to whoſe information we refer you.

The meeting has deſired me to acquaint you thus far, in their name. So wiſhing you all happineſs in the Lord, I reſt,

much honoured Sir,
your moſt humble Servant.
MICHAEL SHIELDS.

P. S. FRIENDS in Glaſgow deſired me to write to you, to ſend them notice what is become of the book of Mr. Cargill's, and Mr. Cameron's ſermons; if it be corrected, and put to the preſs. And that they have another book to be ſent, wherein are many choice heads of copied ſermons from Mr. John Welwood's own hand.

From the honourable Mr. Robert Hamilton, *to ſome Friends in* Scotland.

Leewarden, May 24th, 1683.

Right honourable and dear Brethren,

THOUGH, as the Lord knows, I have been often made to deſire and reſolve upon a cottage in the wilderneſs, yet it has ſeemed good in his eyes, to have me otherways employed, and kept up, not only at home, but in all places of my pilgrimage, as a beacon on the top of a mountain, and a witneſs for his precious and honourable cauſe, intereſt and people, againſt all his and their enemies, whether country-men or ſtrangers: and, however, my real inſufficiency and great emptineſs did often terrify and affright me, at firſt ſight, to venture upon ſo great and ſo hot encounters, as I have been tryſted with; yet he, in his great love and infinite condeſcendency, ſpared no pains, (as forſooth, I have been ſomewhat, and could have done ſomething for him) once to allure me, and next, as it were, to give my conſent to the ſervice. And when he did let me find (O! wonder of wonders!) in ſome meaſure what he would do for his own name's ſake, in abundantly furniſhing, wonderfully leading on, and honourably bringing me off; that, O praiſe to his glorious name! he made it often, not only aſtoniſhing myſelf, but admirable to onlookers, and the greateſt of my enemies: for once having entered and got me to a cheerful ſubmiſſion, and rejoicing in his will and way, I may ſay, I had often no more ado, but to *ſtand ſtill, and ſee his ſalvation*: and though he uſed his own way in correcting my untowardneſs and miſbelief; yet, O my friends! in ſuch a way, that the world could never diſcern it. O what am I, ſuch a lump of ſin, that ever was counted worthy to be ſo dealt with, and chaſtiſed with ſuch ſweet, ſugared, and honourable rods;

no leſs than the golden rod wherewith our lovely Lord, heir of the inheritance, was ſtricken with. Courage, my honourable brethren, your chaſings, wanderings fightings, and contendings for matchleſs, O matchleſs Him! cannot but be infinitely more glorious than all the painted, crowned vanities of the world: O they bear their reward with them, that the world knows not of; and no wonder, when dealt out by ſuch a lovely hand, and in the ſight of ſuch a noble General, who deals out to every man his poſt, and his blows, and furniſhes accordingly; and is moſt concerned himſelf in the battle, and in the carriage of his own, that they may be all honourable, and receive the crown, and the noble preparations of eternal glory with himſelf through eternity, which he has laid up and purchaſed with his own blood. O continue, continue to the end; and he and you ſhall once judge the tyrants, and the furious bulls of *Baſhan* here below; keep by him, and ye ſhall get the victory, yea, and be more than conquerors.

Now, my Chriſtian friends, having this ſo noble occaſion; I could not but give you ſome ſmall account, as to the Lord's leading, in and through this great and laſt piece of ſervice, not knowing but it may be the laſt edition of ſervice to you and the land that ever I ſhall be honoured to perform; as alſo, hoping it might be for your encouraging and ſtrengthening, and a mean to endear you to the bearer. And, I hope, through the grace of God, the great Maſter of the aſſemblies, his embaſſage and maſter-like furniture, ſhall be more than able to commend him unto you all. And, I have been made to think, if he might be the firſt ſtone of our new building: and indeed to ſome in this place, his firſt ſermon was to them, as the laying the foundation of the ſecond temple, *weeping and rejoicing*. But however it be, I hope the Lord ſhall get great glory by it, and yet more and more approve, as he hath hitherto done, in a wonderful way. But,

As to the Lord's preparing and leading me on to this work, it was thus: He hath been pleaſed ſometimes (praiſe, O praiſe to his name!) to condeſcend to me a poor worm, to let me ſee ſomething of his ſtately goings and managements in this day, as his working out of his moſt noble and moſt intricate pieces of ſervice, through poor deſpiſed means and feckleſs inſtruments, and that both of the miniſters and others; as alſo, his moſt glorious

rious victories obtained of the enemies, when ſeemingly they were moſt conquering; as alſo, making many as prophets in and for his houſe, giving warning of the trials that were to come, and partly as come, and of the defections, with great bleſſings on them that ſhould faithfully ſtand out; indeed, *Balaam*-like, the moſt of them, and now, all of them in the enemies camp, are ſtating themſelves as head of the rebels, and chief in the rebellion againſt theſe, who through the bleſſing of the Lord, took with the warning, and are to this day ſtanding faithfully to their poſt; as alſo, his making the greateſt of our enemies (even when our *Eliaſes* were taken away) on their death-beds, confirming to the remnant in being their own heralds, denouncing the righteous judgments of God againſt themſelves and their poſterity; and in all, vindicating the poor wreſtling remnant, whom they in their health delighted to butcher, and breathing out their laſt, foretelling the glorious days that ſhould be yet in *Scotland*, with the raiſing that buried-like cauſe again; as alſo, his righteous judgment, and holy juſtice, in taking the diſcipline of his own houſe out of the hands of the perfidious ſhepherds, who, at their beſt, in a terrible manner miſemployed it. O what ſtately goings, doing more as to the diſcovery of jugglers, mockers, and hypocrites, than the wit of man could have done in a generation; and it is obſervable, that in a ſpecial way it reaches theſe who looked upon themſelves, and would have others to do ſo, as above all reproofs and cenſures; ſo that if any poor thing out of a holy zeal and tenderneſs, had but ventured to reprove a miniſter, it was as leſe-majeſty, and no more peace for them. O then the righteouſneſs of God! let us fall in love with it, and his infinite love in managing of that which was ſo grievouſly miſmanaged; and in ſo wealing out our rods, that he that runs may read our ſin in our judgment; for how has he ſtirred up one within ourſelves, blaſphemouſly cloathing himſelf with that ſupremacy, to drive out and puniſh (and he ſhall yet puniſh in another way than ever) for that horrid ſupremacy that did rage in our beſt times amongſt profeſſors, and eſpecially miniſters, and this day doth as faſt cleave to them and the generation as ever. O glorious! O ſtately goings! who notwithſtanding that he hides himſelf, yet abundantly ſhews that he is God and King of *Jacob*, though *riding upon an aſs, and upon a colt the ſole of an*

aſs, yet king of *Zion*, and maſter of rejoicing to all the daughters thereof. O noble ground of rejoicing, when he gives out the order, and tunes the inſtrument for that effect, when it neither can nor will miſgive. And O! unſpeakable love and tenderneſs! in keeping up hitherto a remnant, witneſſing and contending as nobly and valiantly this day as ever; having it to declare before the world, that they have hitherto lacked nothing: and no wonder, I cannot but think, that in a ſpecial way the credit of our Lord, ſo to ſpeak, is engaged for that land, and for you, who have ſo eminently ventured ſoul and body in his hand.

Now, thus as to his preparing of me; next as to his leading of me.

When our worthy friend Mr. *Renwick* came laſt over, I was very inquiſitive (being for a long time greatly weighted with that buſineſs) to know of two things from him. *1ſt*, How it was betwixt him and the Lord, as to his ſtate and intereſt. *2dly*, As to his inward encouragement and call from the Lord as to his undertaking in that great work of the miniſtry. To both which I had great ſatisfaction from him: as alſo, of his lively uptakings of the Lord's way with his church and people in this day, all which were engaging to me. After his parting with me, and going to *Groningen*, I was made to hear, as it were continually in my ears, *By whom ſhall Jacob ariſe, for he is very ſmall?* Wherewith for a time I was greatly weighted, till it pleaſed the Lord, after the ſame manner, to give me the other word, as I thought an anſwer of the former; *Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, ſaith the Lord.* And by this the Lord, as it were, anew again, let me ſee his glorious and ſtately dealings, after the ſame manner as formerly, *viz.* his going by that which the world calls *great parts*, learning, policy, and worldly wiſdom, and the idols of this generation; and not only ſo, but has had them, and to this day has them, all muſtered againſt him; and O the noble foils they have gotten already, and that by the world's fools, from babes and ſucklings trained up in Chriſt's ſchool. While I lay again wonderfully led in, and wondering at theſe things, I received a line from our friend Mr. *Renwick*, with a ſhort account of a notable piece of ſoul exerciſe he was in at that preſent, which was after this manner. "(To the praiſe of his free grace I muſt

"ſpeak

"ſpeak it) when he helps me either to pray or meditate, "he is not wanting; but in other things I do not find "him. However, I think this may be the cauſe of it, "I cannot win to uſe and keep them in their own places: "but there are ſome things good in themſelves, and "good when made a right uſe of; but to me they are as "*Saul's* armour to *David*, I can put them on, but I can-"not walk with them; and I cannot ſay but I could put "them on, unleſs I ſhould lie of the Lord, who, (bleſ-"ſed be his name) hath given me in ſome meaſure, a "diſpoſition."

After the reading over of his letter, I found my heart greatly tyed to him, and was brought into a pleaſant frame and calmneſs of ſpirit. But again, in two or three days, I was brought into great perplexities for the caſe of the church in general, and more eſpecially for my mother-church; but I thought I found always my former ſolution ſounding within me, and that with great power, yet not ſo as perfectly to calm me; till ſome days after Mr. *Renwick* wrote another letter to my ſiſter concerning his ſoul's caſe, which I alſo, as the Lord helped me, returned my thoughts of. And the evening after, going out to walk, I was ſtrongly overpowered with the impreſſion that Mr. *Renwick* was preſently to be ordained, and that I muſt lay out myſelf therein; and as I thought, was to great certainty, that whatever difficulties ſhould be in the way, they ſhould be removed; for he himſelf ſhould concern himſelf in it. While thus, I went to our worthy friend Mr. *Brackel*, and laid out the whole caſe to him; who no ſooner heard of it, but was as one out of himſelf, with the great ſatisfaction and joy he had in it, which helped to my ſtrengthening. Whereupon we reſolved to write preſently to Mr. *Renwick*, anent it, and that without the leaſt thoughts or relation to the other two; and having but ſmall time, we wrote but in ſhort to him; which letter you may ſee from himſelf, as it came to his hands: he ſhewed it to the other two; who, on what grounds I know not, reſolved to concern themſelves alike in the affair as if the letter had been written to all of them. And after ſome days, Mr. *Renwick* ſent us a very ſatisfying and refreſhing letter, for our encouragement to move further in it; as alſo, the other two pretending the ſame clearneſs, wrote to me thereanent, which indeed was both ſurpriſing and weighty to me, on many accounts; for the Lord, from my very

very firſt hearing of them named, led me in a quite contrary way as to them than to the other; and I think I am not, and alas for it, diſappointed by any of them, turn as they will.

Now, as to the difficulties I had to wreſtle with, and our Lord's noble managing of his own cauſe, and poor worms concerned in it, it was thus; *1ſt*, Our friend Mr. *Brackel*, had not only a great inclination, but told me, after the receiving of the letters, that he was fully determined, that they ſhould all of them be ordained at *Embden*; which I durſt not conſent to; for the main man intended to have the management of it was *Cocceian* in his judgment, tho' he ſeemingly pretended otherwiſe, however I could not get him off that. A *ſecond* reaſon, as I told him, of my being againſt it, was that ſince the Lord had moved *Groningen* to own us, and to ſhew kindneſs to us in our low eſtate, we could not paſs by them, without firſt giving them the offer. However, nothing could prevail, and we were like to loſe our friend in it; as alſo, others of my friends at *Leewarden*, who would not condeſcend to let me go from them. Yet I durſt not yield, neither durſt I ſtay, but as I had done formerly, ventured myſelf on my ſweet, rich, and lovely, and O kind Lord's hand, who never failed me; yea, was ay better than his promiſe; when they ſaw I was coming away, Mr. *Brackel* promiſed to follow me within ſome days, and gave me a letter to one of the miniſters, (which was all the recommendation I had from men) deſiring me to deliver it to one of the miniſters at *Groningen*, providing he was any thing acquainted by friends at *Groningen* of my deſign of coming there; and finding them all ſtrangers to it, I reſolved as to my recommendation, to caſt myſelf on the Lord, and not to deliver my letter until Mr. *Brackel* came himſelf, thinking it might be a mean to engage him the more for us. When he came, I told him my reſolutions as to *Embden* were the ſame as formerly, and that I was rather confirmed than altered, having got further notice from one of the profeſſors in the place, that *Embden* was not ſo pure in ſome things, eſpecially as to the magiſtrate's uſurpation, as *Groningen*; and withal begging he might propoſe it to the miniſters in *Groningen*, which he did; who told him, that it might be done well, and with great ſecrecy by the profeſſors of the college, which ſatisfied our friend greatly; who alone laid down the whole way of it with them,

who,

who, after his acquainting me of it, departed out of the town, leaving me to manage what he had propoſed and concluded.

But, before I go further, I ſhall give a ſhort account of Mr. *Flint* and Mr. *Boyd*: So ſoon as I came to the town, I examined all of them ſeverally, but really I could find no ſatisfaction in any of them, ſave in our friend. Mr. *Flint*, I found him floating and unſtable: as for Mr. *Boyd*, Mr. *Flint* informed me and the reſt very ſadly of him, both of his untenderneſs in his walk, and unacquaintedneſs in our caſe; that he was not only ignorant of much of it, but taken up, for the moſt part, with the arguments of the adverſaries, a defending againſt his brethren: tho' indeed I did meet with no great diſappointment, yet on many accounts it was trying, and many were our fears, as to acquainting him with our reſolutions, in not letting him paſs at the time. However, when we wan to be poſitive in it, and ſtated upon ſuch noble grounds, as not daring to lay his houſe with ſuch ſtones, &c. the Lord removed that difficulty wonderfully, and made Mr. *Boyd* not only ſeemingly willing to omit, but alſo, confirmed others as to their duty in what they had done. Now, I ſay, this being done, and our worthy friend Mr. *Brackel* out of town, I went to the chief profeſſor, and confering of our buſineſs with him, I found it could not be done without the concurrence of another brother-profeſſor of his, who was a profeſſed *Cocceian*; and uſing freedom with him, to tell him my ſcruples; he anſwered me, that the other was but to examine, and not lay on hands: I aſked, if it could be done without him; who ſaid, no: then I told him poſitively, that we could not admit of it in ſuch a way; his being preſent, *viz.* a *Cocceian*, was eſſential to the ordination. So parting from them, with this reſolution, to write to Mr. *Brackel* what was next to be done, and acquaint him with the caſe; ſo writing to him; he could ſee no hazard in that way: However, if I could not grant it, there was a neceſſity yet to reſolve upon *Embden*: and there was a ſtrange providence in his letter; for in the end of it, to make me come over my former ſcruple, he tells me, that he could aſſure me, unleſs I had a full teſtimony from all the profeſſors of *Groningen* to the miniſters of *Embden* for the ſtudents, they could not be owned there. This was a mean to clear me the more, that *Embden* was not the place that the Lord ſeemed to be

there

then calling us unto, ſince we could no more accept of the *Cocceian*'s recommendation than ordination, as it was then circumſtantiate. So that matters again ſeemed worſe than ever, being likely to have both *Embden* and the whole profeſſors, and others our friends, againſt us. But our Lord was then at hand, who had determined otherwiſe; that when I went again to Mr. *Johannes a Mark*, the honeſt profeſſor, and to one of the miniſters, and told them our caſe, and the weightineſs of it, and that there was no other thing before our eyes in it, but the glory of God, and durſt do no other way than what we had told. So begging they would lay it to heart, and take it upon them to prevail with the claſſis, that they would take it in hand, which, to the great admiration of ſome of us, they undertook moſt willingly. However the profeſſor called for their teſtimonies, (for they were to have his alſo to the claſſis) and which was obſervable, all were miſſing ſave Mr. *Renwick's*, which was to the fore by a ſpecial providence, having got it in my hand but ſome few days before. When the profeſſor did ſee it, he was willing to take it off our hand, but one of the miniſters being then preſent, told it would never paſs before the claſſis; ſo I told them, that it could not be expected, conſidering the toſſed caſe of our church, that it could be in ſuch a dreſs and order as otherwiſe were to be deſired; and the profeſſor owned me, and backed me in it. So that both ſaid, ſince it was ſo, they thought my teſtimony, with Mr. *Brackel*'s, to the claſſis, ay until another was procured, were ſufficient; which I could not refuſe, and it was of the Lord in a ſpecial way. However, there lay a trial to me in it, which was very great, *viz.* to have a ſpecial hand in Mr. *Flint*'s paſſing, the teſtimony being laid ſo to my door; and conſidering how the Lord had led me, and I thought, by all diſpenſations, was even leading me by him; as alſo, from what I was diſcovering in him, it was to me a ſore ſtrait; for he, on the other hand, was preſſing it violently. Whereupon, I went to him, and ſpake in private to him, anent the buſineſs, with great tenderneſs, ſignifying the weightineſs thereof; as alſo, how the Lord ſeemed every way to diſcountenance his paſſing; for, as to myſelf, I told him, I could give him no encouragement to it; but on the contrary, from the firſt time that I had ſeen him and Mr. *Boyd*, I was made to tremble at their coming o-

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ver upon ſuch a deſign. As alſo, that the letter that Mr. *Brackel* and I wrote to Mr. *Renwick* was no ways deſigned for him: and alſo of the miſſing of his teſtimonial. However, I told him, if he had the Lord's call to it, as he wrote to me, theſe might all be but as trials and ſpurs in his way. However I again begged him, as he loved his own ſoul, that he would not venture on ſuch a weighty work raſhly. Notwithſtanding of all, he ſaid he would go forward: So I, not without great heavineſs of mind, was forced to countenance him; and ſo going firſt to the profeſſor for his teſtimony, I wrote next for our worthy Mr. *Brackel*'s, which he preſently, and moſt chearfully ſent me; after theſe were had, and the day of the claſſis came, being delivered to them, they were ſuſtained valid; and after Mr. *Flint* had a little harangue before them, they were ſent out a little, and the claſſis taking our cauſe into conſideration, after, firſt one of the miniſters riſing up, and laying it openly out, and then another, all of them, with tears, cried out, It is the Lord's cauſe, and coſt what it would, if all the kings of the earth were againſt it, they would go on in it. And, which is obſervable, one of them aſking, How it came we paſſed by the profeſſors, and took not ordination from them? another of themſelves roſe up, and from that took occaſion to lay out the government and diſcipline of our church; and that it was inconſiſtent with our noble order to take ſuch a courſe, and that we were much to be encouraged for it. Another that was a depute of the general ſynod, deſired to be excuſed, for he feared he could not attend, it being at ſuch a diſtance where he lived from the place; the reſt of his brethren, with tears in their eyes, ſtood up, and requeſted that no coſt, pains nor charges might be looked unto in ſuch a noble cauſe; whereupon he confeſſed that it was ſo. It being alſo the cuſtom of that place, that every one that paſſed muſt pay twenty *guilders* for the public uſe of the church; the brethren jointly declared that they would be at all the charge themſelves. O dear friends, praiſe him! praiſe him! who has been ſo mindful of us in our low eſtate. And after all this, calling them in again, they received them in a moſt friendly way, as never hitherto had been; their injunctions our friend himſelf will ſhow you. But what is alſo remarkable, that Mr. *Flint* in his harangue, gave an open teſtimony againſt all the forms and enormities in their church. O wonderful *guiding and leading* of the Lord!

Now, after all theſe wondrous ways of the Lord with us, it might have been expected that we ſhould have been more knit to one another, more ſerious, tender, and zealous than ever. However, on the contrary, Mr. *Flint* ſtrikes in with his old antagoniſt, he had informed ſo againſt, and ſtates himſelf moſt bitterly againſt our friend Mr. *Renwick*, to the great grief of friends, and ſtumbling of ſtrangers, who were witneſſes to it. When it came to my ears, however heavy his carriage was to me, eſpecially conſidering the circumſtances, yet I thought it was not without the ſingular providence of God, who had permitted him to kythe and diſcover himſelf before he came a greater length: as alſo I thought I had now fair grounds to ſtop his going on any further in that ſo great a work; ſo I ſent for our worthy friend *G. H.* (who has been greatly encouraging to me ſince he came over, and a great help to me) and for Mr. *Flint*, and in all tenderneſs to lay it to him what an extraordinary work he was about, and how extraordinary his call to the land was, and the way of his now deſigning to return; and that in all, I thought it required more than an ordinary caſe, frame and walk, of which I could ſee no evidences in him. While I was to go on in my diſcourſe, he interrupted me, falling out in great bitterneſs, declaring he would no more meddle in it; and that he was poſitive, that upon no account he would go on in the work, nor go home with our friend Mr. *Renwick*; giving theſe for his three unreaſonable reaſons; 1. He ſaid, he was ſure he would never agree with him. 2. Becauſe he ſaid, He (*viz.* Mr. *Renwick*) did read too little. 3. Becauſe of his ſpirit of ſupremacy he ſhewed in *Scotland*. I aſked him, why he could not agree with him? He could gave no reaſon. As to the ſecond, I aſked him, if he did not read, I deſired to know how he ſpent his time? If in prayer, or meditating, or any other way? He anſwered, he durſt not but think he was much in that exerciſe. To which I anſwered, theſe were the ſtudies in this day moſt accompliſhing for every work, and eſpecially the work in hand. And for his laſt, he could alſo give no ground for it. After I had got this from his own mouth, I thought we were fairly looſed from doing any more with him, and then we ſent for Mr. *Renwick*, who came; and we gave him before Mr. *Flint*, a relation of what had paſſed; who would have paſſed from ſome things that he aſſerted,

yet

yet adhering to his non-paſſing at that time, but to ſtay a longer time, and another occaſion: ſo having prayed, I again begged him to lay things to heart; how the Lord was provoked; and preſſed, that whether he ſtaid or went, they might be as one heart. However, when he went home, he ſignified to all, his reſolutions to ſtay, and bought books at a ſtrange rate, and ſet himſelf to learn the *Dutch*, and went without advertiſing any of us, to the *Dutch* kirk on the Lord's day, and was preſent at all their forms without the leaſt reſentment; all ſad tokens. And as before he had joined hand in hand with Mr. *Boyd* againſt Mr. *Renwick*, now again his paſſion turned into its old channel againſt Mr. *Boyd*, which is wrath-like.

Now, dear Brethren, I ſtand aſtoniſhed, and wonder how we are now again put to it; for he had received the profeſſor's teſtimony, with Mr. *Brackel's*; as alſo his being before, and haranguing before the claſſis: ſo that it threatened no leſs than a ſad blow to all the beginnings and after expectations in that place; as alſo to the cauſe and whole remnant at home; as alſo to put a ſtop to our friend's paſſing. This coſt ſore fighting and wreſtling, though indeed Mr. *Flint* and Mr. *Boyd* were no more concerned in it than no ſuch thing had been; but on the contrary, evidenced tokens of their ſatisfaction withal; as alſo, in their expecting a ſtop as to our friend's paſſing. At laſt I wrote to Mr. *Brackel*, advertiſing him that we thought Mr. *Flint* could not paſs: and with his anſwer I was yet more diſcouraged than ever, preſſing me by all arguments, that he ſhould paſs; and if he did not, how prejudicial it would be to the cauſe, and ſuch like. Now, (which made our caſe heavier) we durſt not vent ourſelves ſo freely to ſtrangers as we would, fearing the conſequences that might follow. However, travelling in theſe difficulties until time would ſuffer no more delay, the time of ordination being at hand, we reſolved to go to the preſes of the claſſis, and give them notice that M. *Flint* could not paſs. When he firſt heard of it, he was greatly diſcouraged, and had this word which was obſervable; "Sir, he ſaid, if ye had "told me of it but a day ſooner, I could have ſtopped it, "and gotten a delay until Mr. *Flint* was ready, and fully recovered." (for he himſelf pretended a diſtemper of body) I told him, I hoped, he would let it be no hinderance to our friend's paſſing: He objected again,

If that Mr. *Flint* was but able to ſit on a chair before the claſſis, it would be ſufficient, and he might ſtay after in the land until he were recovered. At laſt, I did let ſomewhat fall of his other diſtempers that we feared were raging in him; which, when he perceived, he ſeemed preſently ſatisfied, and undertook moſt Chriſtianly the management of the buſineſs, and that Mr. *Renwick* ſhould be ordained. O wonderful love and condeſcendency! and noble Governor, who can ply, and doth ply the hearts of all as he will! Then I went to another of the miniſters, who had all along been a great agent in the buſineſs, and told him Mr. *Flint* was reſolved not to paſs. He enquired a reaſon; I told him, he pretended his ſickneſs; he told me, that could be none, for he and all the miniſters and profeſſors of the town ſaw him daily on the ſtreets, and but one day before in the public college, (Now the ordination was to be the next day) Seeing it was ſo, I told him the whole account of him, which when he heard, he was ſo far from being offended, that he adhered to all, and approved of our tenderneſs; yet he ſaid, it would greatly reflect upon us, our cauſe, and the whole remnant at home; and preſſed, that if it were poſſible, he might offer himſelf to the ordination, and then we needed not let him go home until we found him accompliſhed. This again began to work new ſtirs upon us; yet after ſome time laying it before the Lord, he was pleaſed to let us ſee that it was but a temptation, and that upon no account were we to offer him a ſacrifice of that we could not take to ourſelves. After this, all our fears and ſcruples were removed, and we fully determined to lay it all on the Lord, and the management of events and conſequents on himſelf. So immediately going to Mr. *Flint*, I deſired to know his mind; which, he ſaid, was the ſame, not to paſs, or go home. After ſome ſpeaking to him, I deſired he might go to the preſes himſelf, and make his own excuſe, but not to pretend that which was not, *viz.* his ſickneſs; which he did, and the preſes accepted of it well. O my dear friends, who is to mean, that has ſuch a God for their God! ſo condeſcending, ſo loving, ſo mighty, and ſo powerful, that he can do in heaven and earth what he will. There is yet one remarkable trial, and honourable outgate that we had, *viz.* before the ordination; the miniſter had told me that it was impoſſible, and could not paſs, without ſubſcribing three things; the

the one was, their catechisms; the other two our friend will give you an account of: I desired to see their confession, and we find that there is in it mention of the forms, and enormities of their church, which we plainly told them we disowned, and were engaged in our solemn vows to the contrary. This was again like to stop all. However, I went to others of them, and gave them an account of our Confession and Catechisms, and that we could subscribe none but these, which, at last, they condescended unto; a practice never before heard of in these lands. O praise and wonder! and wonder and praise! for his yet minding us in our low estate, and concerning himself in us before strangers. I also desired of them to have liberty, with our friend *G. H.* and my brother Mr. *Gordon*, to have access, to be witnesses to the on-laying of the hands of the classis, or presbytery, which likewise they granted, though not used in that place.

Now the day of the ordination being come, Mr. *Renwick*, with my brother Mr. *Gordon*, and *G. H.* came into my chamber, but none of the rest; after prayer we went out to the church, where the classis was to hold; and walking together in an outer-room there, as we had been desired, until our friend was called in, which they did in a most honourable way, not only by the ordinary servant, but by one of the brethren ministers. After he was in, we returned, and spending some time together in prayer, we again returned, and about two in the afternoon, (the examination lasting from ten to two) one of the oldest of the ministers was sent out (as they had promised) to call us in, to be witnesses to the on-laying of the hands: when we came in, the whole of the ministers saluted us most kindly, affectionately, and friendly; after some exhortations, they proposed to him the the subscription, which they jointly declared to be nothing else than the subscribing of our own confession. After their reading it over again and again, Mr. *James* started a scruple in it, which, through the Lord's blessing, was both seasonable, and made acceptable to all, and then he subscribed it. Then with prayer they went about the laying on of the hands, in a most solemn, and a most tender way; and the whole time our friend was upon his knees, the most of the whole meeting were joining with the tears in their eyes. After, he was desired by the preses to take the brethren by the hand which they all gave him in a most affectionate way; and

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after he had done, he (our friend I mean) had a moſt ſerious, grave and taking diſcourſe to the whole claſſis, and ſo was diſmiſſed. When going out of the room, the preſes called me, and deſired that Mr. *Renwick* and I might dine with the claſſis; which we promiſed; and coming in amongſt them, they were as brethren at a ſtrait, every one of them how to expreſs their kindneſs to us. The preſes deſired me to ſit on his right hand at the head of the table; and after a little ſitting, he declared to me the great ſatisfaction the whole brethren had had in Mr. *Renwick*, that they thought, the whole time he was before them he was ſo filled with the Spirit, that his face did ſhine; and that he never had ſeen ſuch evident tokens of the Lord's being with them, as in this affair all alongſt, and ſo bleſſed and praiſed the Lord for what he had ſeen. Then he deſired a relation might be given to the brethren of our cauſe; which I did, both of our ſufferings and wreſtlings; who were all ſo affected, that ye would have thought, they were both weeping and rejoicing; grieving for our caſe, as they ſaid; and rejoicing that the Lord had honoured us in ſuch a noble piece of ſervice; promiſſing to mind us both in public and private; and alſo offered themſelves anew again for the ſame ſervice, whatever might be the hazard. Then the preſes told them, that the magiſtrate was uſurping as much upon them, and there was as great yielding amongſt them as in our land; and if they followed not our practice, the church would be ruined, and they and their poſterity rooted out. There was alſo another miniſter who declared, he had been twenty years a miniſter in that place, but had never ſeen nor found ſo much of the Lord's Spirit, accompanying a work, as that; and declared, he would die and live with us. O tune up your harps, and ſing praiſes unto him, whoſe mercy endureth for ever, and has had yet compaſſion upon us in our low eſtate.

Now, my honourable Brethren, here ye have a ſhort account, yet not the hundred fold of what the Lord hath done for us in this affair; the bearer, with our dear and honoured friend in the Lord, will give you a fuller account of matters than I was able in the time to do, *viz.* *J. H.* But now, when we thought the battle was fought and the ſtorm over, it begun afreſh again upon us from another airth, repreſenting itſelf as terrible as any of the former

former; though, bleſſed be his name, through his rich bleſſing, we were never once ſuffered to be caſt down at the thoughts of it! and O again admire and wonder! The morning after the ordination, as I was lying in my bed, I received a letter from Mr. *Brackel*, wherein he gives me an account of a letter from *Holland* to ſtop the ordination, for he was to receive a lybel againſt us all, ſubſcribed by the church of *Rotterdam*, Mr. *Br.* Mr. *Hog* younger, and Mr. *Thomas Langlands*, accuſing us of many terrible things, and ſent me three or four of the prime of them, which I have ſent with our friend; and withal deſiring me, ſo ſoon as it came to my hands, to ſhow his letters to me to the claſſis, and either to vindicate ourſelves before them, or otherways to ſtop Mr. *Renwick* and Mr. *Flint*'s ordination; (for then he had not known Mr. *Flint*'s determination and ours) and upon that pretence of Mr. *Flint*'s ſickneſs, the letter was ſent by an expreſs to me for its greater haſte, and might have come three days ſooner to my hand than it did, but the Lord in a wonderful way ſtopped it, but what way we could never yet learn. O wonderful Counſellor! for if it had but come a day ſooner, by all probability it had ſtopped our friend's paſſing, for there had been a neceſſity for my ſhewing it to the claſſis; and they could have done no other at leaſt, than to have taken it to conſideration, and to have delayed the diet for that time; but O his wiſdom! infinite wiſdom and power! After I got it, I went to the profeſſors, and miniſters, and others of the godly, and gave them a full account of all, and of all my letters, who were nothing troubled, but juſtified us all in our dealings againſt theſe miniſters, and and promiſed to own us in all, and give us an account of any informations that ſhould came againſt us; for Mr. *Brackel*'s letters told us, they were preſently to write to *Groningen* againſt us, and cauſe print their accuſations againſt us. So the Lord was ſtill gracious unto us, in keeping us in continual exerciſe, that our dependance might be the more on himſelf: for when he had wrought for us and broken the ſnare, we were made to fear Mr. *Brackel* and friends in *Frieſland*; for in his letters, they had promiſed to have their libel ready againſt us at *Amſterdam*, againſt ſuch a day as they named; and Mr. *Brackel*, without acquainting any but one or two, caſts himſelf to be at *Amſterdam* the ſame day, but when he came, the libel was not ready, but they would have been

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at telling it by word of mouth to him, but he refuſed to hear them unleſs in writing; and indeed he was wonderfully helped to own the Lord's cauſe, and poor *Scotland*'s cauſe. When he left them, they promiſed to have the information and libel againſt us at him within four or five days: But now the time is long over, and there is no word of it! And ſo he returned to us all, to the wonder of all, and the joy of many, more our friend, and *Scotland*'s friend than ever. And he told me a ſtrange paſſage, That the day before he went to their meeting, he was walking in his own yard, and there he ſaw a little ſmall bird hotly purſued by a great hawk, and after many toſſings and turnings, the bird at laſt, flies to him for ſhelter, and he relieved it, which was borne in upon him at the time, as a lively emblem of ours and the church's caſe. O praiſe to him! when we had win to good hopes of that ſtorm's being broken, we muſt yet again enter into another, threatening as terrible as the other. That ſame day, in the evening, that I received Mr. *Brackel*'s letter with the apoſtate miniſters libel, arrive *James Ruſſel*, *Patrick Grant* and *David Robertſon*, with full aſſurance to ſtop the ordination; but through the Lord's goodneſs, they came alſo a day too late, and were diſappointed, I think, every way; as to that affair I refer you wholly to the bearer. They are ſtill ſtaying here, I fear their deſign be not good; and I think, in that place they ſhall have none of our two, Mr. *Flint* and Mr. *Boyd*, much againſt them. O Lord, give wiſdom, and come yet and be ſeen. O honourable friends, hath he not been glorioufly ſeen in this buſineſs!———

Now, what can I ſay unto you, our engagements are great, let our thankfulneſs be anſwerable; get you the goſpel, O the precious goſpel again amongſt you; hold it up by prayer amongſt you; be more in tenderneſs, humility, watchfulneſs, crying, and wreſtling than ever; for he is a holy and jealous God. O be much for him, downright and upright for him, coſt what it will; he is more than able to bear your charges, on whoſe ſhoulders the government is laid. And my poor advice would be, That with all haſte you would write to *London*, diſcharging Mr. *Niſbet* to come here, for his baſe ſitting of time, and ſuch ſpecial calls. As alſo to ſend for the two that are here; for now we are keeping fire in our own boſoms, and, if the Lord prevent it not, putting weapons in madmens hands. As alſo, to ſeek the Lord's mind in ordaining

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of more miniſters, and that among yourſelves. My own judgment has been, that providing you can find ſuch qualified with holineſs, tenderneſs, examples, as *Paul* ſays of the believers, in word, in converſation, in ſpirit, in faith and purity; and ſuch as *Acts* i. 21. which accompanied you in your tribulations, and have been witneſſes to your contendings and wreſtlings, and given proof of their conſtancy and faithfulneſs. And indeed that is the way, I think that would bring in moſt glory to our Lord, and which would be much like our caſe, and my ſoul would moſt ply with every way; for I am far from the mind that the Lord will make uſe of learning for the building of his houſe again. It is, and has been ſo much boaſted of amongſt us, ſo truſted to, and improven againſt our Lord, that, I think, for a time, he will put a mark of ignominy upon it, and train up at his own ſchool. O my brethren, it is *Scotland* that muſt make fit for miniſters, elſe here it will never be.——— I think ye ſhould ſend over three of the moſt eminent among you, with the firſt occaſion, in room of theſe ye are to call home, that our cauſe may be kept up in that college, and ſome to witneſs againſt *James Ruſſel*, and the others, who have ſeated there, or any that may oppoſe us. As alſo, letters of thanks ſhould be written to that college, and to the claſſis; as alſo, an approbation of what they have done. As alſo, a joint declaration againſt the church of *Rotterdam*, *firſt*, for their ſetting down to the Lord's table a promiſcuous multitude, men of blood, that have been at *Pentland* and *Bothwel* againſt the Lord; men banded, ceſſed, and what not; as alſo, debarring from it ſuch as were faithful, as worthy *Rathillet*, &c. *Item*, for receiving in amongſt them Mr. *Fleming*, who is rather *Charles Stuart*'s miniſter than Chriſt's. As alſo, their cruel dealing and handling of their countrymen that came there, who are faithful in their day, threatening to ſtarve them out of their conſciences, notwithſtanding of the large ſupply, they have from the magiſtrates of that place, for the effect of the poor. *Item*, Their taking into their ſeſſions, as members thereof, men void of both principles and tenderneſs, and their not exerciſing the diſcipline of our church, nor preaching faithfully againſt the ſins of our time. As alſo, their licenſing all to preach amongſt them, however notour for their open defection, and avowed rebellion againſt Chriſt; ſuch as have devoured the flock at home,

and ſeek to purſue thoſe in a ſtrange land who have eſcaped out of their claws. As alſo, their open and practically diſcovering themſelves this day againſt our mother-church, *&c.*

My advice would be alſo, that your teſtimony would relate of a declaration, that you would ſet out alſo, laying out the rebellion all alongſt it, and how they have now forſaken Chriſt and the poor remnant; ſo that if ye had the ocaaſion, ye durſt not further own them; and lay it out to the churches, that providing any of them come by them, that they or none others be owned without they have a teſtimony and approbation from the ſuffering remnant of the church of Scotland. As alſo, letters of thanks would be ſent to Mr. *Brackel*, for his kindneſs and faithfulneſs in the cauſe of God, and to the ſufferers here.

I can ſay no more, my dear and honourable brethren, but what I omit, I hope the bearers will ſupply it.—— Let me hear more frequently from you all, for your letters are very refreſhing to me; though many times I be but little in caſe to write unto you, yet I deſire that you may find my practical kindneſs, and not miſtake my ſilence.

Now, The bleſſing of Him that dwelt in the buſh, be with you all.

Your ſympathizing Brother,
and real Servant,
ROBT. HAMILTON.

BUT to return: It was reſolved by the meeting that William Nairn ſhould be ſent abroad to Mr. Hamilton with copies of the public papers; and alſo to deſire him to draw up a proteſtation againſt the Scots congregation in Rotterdam; and to ſend it here, that it might be conſidered by the next meeting. Accordingly William Nairn went abroad and took with him all the foreſaid public papers which were copies of thoſe that were ſeized when *Earlſtoun* was apprehended.

That which occaſioned the meeting to mention the proteſtation againſt the Scots congregation at Rotterdam, was the foreſaid letter (read to them that day) from Mr. Hamilton.—Upon which it was thought requiſite that he who was ſo acquaint with theſe things which were to be proteſted againſt in that congregation, that none could be ſo fit as he to draw up the ſaid proteſtation

teſtation.—Yet never any ſuch paper came from him to the ſocieties; and that proteſtation which was afterwards drawn up and publiſhed, was written at home, and ſent abroad to Mr. Hamilton, who put it in print.

It was likewiſe reſolved, That a letter ſhould be wrote to thoſe two young men, Mr. John Flint, and Mr. William Boyd, then at the univerſity of *Groningen*, expreſly calling them home, upon the account of ſome information received againſt them by the foreſaid letter, and the bearer G—— Hill. But though it was delivered to them by Mr. Nairn, yet Mr. Flint did not regard it, but not long after joined with James Ruſſel; neither did Mr. Boyd return till the next year.

It was further reſolved, That a letter of thanks ſhould be written to the Claſſis of Groningen, another to Embden, and a third to Mr. William Brackel; as alſo, a letter to Earlſtoun, and another to his Lady. All which, were to be drawn up by Robert Goodwin, Thomas Lining, William Nairn and Michael Shields, and other friends at Glaſgow.

That which gave occaſion to reſolve upon writing theſe letters, as theſe to Groningen, Embden, and Mr. Brackel, was the foreſaid letter of Mr. Hamilton's (which being read at this meeting, was very encouraging and reviving to them) giving a large account of the ordination of Mr. James Renwick by the Claſſis of Groningen, and of the ſtops and hinderances of it, with the way of outgate from them: In which he ſignified his deſire that letters of thanks ſhould be written to the ſaid Claſſis, and alſo to the College to whom the ſocieties were ſo very much obliged; and likewiſe to the miniſters of Embden, who had offered to ordain the three ſtudents, and had otherwiſe given proof of their ſympathy with the ſocieties; and in like manner to Mr. Brackel, who had ſeveral ways laid out himſelf for their encouragement, particularly in the ordination of Mr. Renwick.

Accordingly the letter to Mr. Brackel was written and ſent to him with William Nairn, as alſo the letter to the *lady Earlſtoun*, (at the time in *Lewarden*) the occaſion of which, and of the letter to her huſband, then priſoner, was letters from them both to the meeting, who thereupon thought it their duty to write again to them, for their encouragement under their preſent lot, and to ſhew their ſympathy with them. But as for the letters to Groningen and Embden, ſo far as I know they

were not wrote at this time, but afterward, as shall be shewn in its place.

It was in like manner appointed by the meeting, that Robert Goodwin, James Wilson, Thomas Lining, R—— S——, A—— R——, and Michael Shields should meet together for looking over and reviſing the reſolutions of all our general meetings, in order to ſee if the ſame were right and ſound, and if found ſo, to put them in a better form and dreſs; And when thus drawn up, the ſocieties in every ſhire to have a copy of the ſame. This reſolution (ſo far as I remember) was never put in practice, the troubles of that time being ſo many.

Finally, it was reſolved by the meeting, that the 5th of *September* ſhould be obſerved by our ſocieties, a day of faſting and prayer; and the next meeting to be at *Darmede*, upon the 3d of *October*, which day was deſired to be kept in prayer, by theſe in our ſocieties remaining at home.

HAVING given a ſhort account of what was done at this meeting, it will not be amiſs to ſubjoin the letter agreed upon by them to be written to Mr. William Brackel. But firſt it is requiſite to ſhew what gave the occaſion to write an anſwer therein to ſome things wherewith the ſocieties were charged. When Mr. Renwick was to be ordained by the Claſſis of Groningen, ſome Scotch miniſters then at Rotterdam *, went to *Mr. Kooleman*, a Dutch miniſter, deſiring him to write to Mr. Brackel, to ſtop the ordination of Mr. Renwick, which *Mr. Kooleman* did, writing ſome accuſations which theſe miniſters and others had againſt the ſocieties. Upon which Mr Brackel wrote to Mr. Hamilton, giving him an account of the ſame. But before this information came, Mr. Renwick was ordained; and if it had come but one day ſooner, by all appearance, the ordination had been ſtopt for a while, until they had cleared themſelves and their friends at home.

As at that time, it was very unpleaſant that any of the godly ſhould have had ſuch miſtakes and miſapprehenſions one of another, and ſo contended with one another; ſo now, it is not deſireable to mention theſe contenten-

* Particularly Mr. George Barclay, Mr. Robert Langlands, and Mr. Thomas Hog younger, whoſe names are not correctly printed in Mr. Hamilton's letter.

tendings: Nevertheleſs, to make this affair more clear and plain, the relating theſe accuſations wherewith the ſocieties were charged by the foreſaid miniſters at Rotterdam cannot be well evited. Wherefore I ſhall firſt inſert the ſame, as they were ſet down in a letter by Mr. Brackel to Mr. Hamilton, which he ſent to this land, and the ſame was read to this meeting; and next I ſhall give a copy of the letter to Mr. Brackel; wherein is a ſhort anſwer to theſe accuſations, which was thought fit to be ſent to him, (in regard theſe accuſations were ſent to him) that thereby they might endeavour to vindicate themſelves of theſe things that they were falſely charged with.

The Accuſations againſt the SOCIETIES.

Firſt, That they had not only caſt off the King, and and all magiſtrates then ruling in Scotland; but moreover, had conſtitute among themſelves all kind of magiſtrates, a chancellor, and preſidents over all great men, *&c.* and orders or lords for a public politic convention, uſurping an imagined power over the commands of thoſe that are in authority, yea ſaying that all are to be cut off as open enemies who do not acknowledge that government.

Secondly, That the Societies were not pure in religion, which they ſaid was manifeſt by queſtions proponed to all who are admitted into their fellowſhip.

Thirdly, That the Societies were only a faction, and not a church, and that they had no power of calling paſtors, or of giving eccleſiaſtic teſtimonies; and that the ſilent men ſaid they were the moſt pure church, and that they had paſtors, preſbyteries and ſynods; and that it was their part to examine ſtudents, and to confirm them in the miniſtry with the impoſition of hands; and that it was not lawful for any *Hollandiſh* Preſbytery to pluck that right out of their hands.

Fourthly, That theſe ſtudents that were at Groningen, were not of an unblameable life, eſpecially John Niſbet, who endeavoured to kill one, for the reaſon in the firſt accuſation.

Here follows the Letter to MR. BRACKEL.

Reverend and worthy Sir,

WE deſire to bleſs the Lord on your behalf, that he hath *made choice* of you to be an inſtrument

ment to appear for your Maſter's wronged cauſe in this perſecuted church, which, through the good hand of God, has proven an effectual mean for raiſing up of Chriſt's fallen banner in this backſlidden land, wherein there are none to appear valiantly for him, according to the command of God, and our ſolemn vows and engagements; but upon the other hand, are homologating with the enemy, and are turned violent reproachers and perſecutors of the poor afflicted ſuffering remnant both of ſuch as are living, and alſo thoſe who are dead, to the humbling, weakning, and turning back of many who were beginning to look after the Lord, and had put their hand to the plough, in witneſſing and teſtifying againſt the abominations of our day and time; which doth clearly appear from theſe their moſt odious, ridiculous calumnies, which the letter ſent to us by our faithful delegates, is a new certification of.

Sir, we ſhall, as in the ſight of an holy God, declare the truth in every point of theſe accuſations ye received from theſe miniſters at Rotterdam againſt us.

As for our caſting off, and rejecting of *Charles Stuart*, and all whom they call magiſtrates ruling under him, we own it, and deſire to mourn for our being ſo long in doing of it: The reaſons of our doing thereof, we hope ye are ſufficiently informed of by our worthy and faithful delegates ſent to you. But,

2*dly*, As to ſetting up of magiſtrates among ourſelves, there is no truth in it. And as to that of killing all who will not adhere to us and are not of our opinion, we declare it to be falſe and calumnious, and a thing deteſted by us.

As to the ſecond accuſation, "That we are not pure "in religion." Alas! we are not as we ought to be in that: But as to the putting any queſtions to thoſe whom we admit to fellowſhip, we declare we put none but ſuch as we have from divine precept, and former engagements to God and one another.

As for the third accuſation, we think it not ſtrange that they calumniate us as a faction, and not a church; for thoſe miniſters and people whom they hold to be the church, did reproach our moſt noble ſuffering miniſters, and martyrs, as erroneous, and of Jeſuitical principles; as witneſs Mr. Kid and Mr. King, Mr. Cameron and Mr. Cargill, who in our declining age, were the only witneſſes, as miniſters, for the cauſe of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt,

Chriſt, againſt all the encroachments made upon the privileges of his church.

As to the ſecond part of the third accuſation, "That "the ſilent miniſters ſay they are the moſt pure church, "and that they have paſtors and preſbyteries:" It is true they ſit in preſbyteries and condemn the innocent, by juſtifying the lawfulneſs of taking the bond and late indulgency; upon which head, among many others, our worthies have ſuffered, teſtifying againſt the ſame; and ſeveral of them hear the teſted Curates themſelves, and adviſe others to do ſo; and the generality of them refuſe either to preach or adminiſter the ſacraments; as witneſs, when ſome have come to them with a teſtificate for the benefit of baptiſm, they refuſe, and adviſe them to go to the teſted Curates. This is a part of the purity of their church.

As to the fourth accuſation, "That the ſtudents are "not of an unblameable life." In anſwer to that, thoſe three who were ſent to you, in order to be educated for the miniſtry, as to their life and converſation while they were with us, they walked blameleſly ſo far as could be diſcerned by us.

Worthy Sir, to conclude, not deſiring to be tedious; we the poor ſuffering remnant of the church of Scotland give you hearty thanks for your faithful pains and diligence anent the ordination of Mr. James Renwick; and are glad, and rejoice to hear that you and your worthy brethren had ſatisfaction in him, and we take it as a token for good, that the Lord will viſit and gather together again his poor ſcattered ſheep in our land; and alſo, that our God and your God, ſhall recompence your labour of love, pains and diligence, ſeven-fold into your boſom. Which is the prayer of your, *&c.*

THE enemies being much encouraged and emboldened by the diſcovery of the deſign (mentioned above) which was carrying on againſt them, advanced in proſecuting their wicked ends, and went on in their cruel perſecution againſt all whom they knew or could hear of, that did not comply with their ſinful impoſitions; and the Societies did not want their large ſhare in theſe ſad afflictions and calamities. In the interval betwixt the laſt and this meeting, Mr. James Renwick came to this land; which was very reviving and refreſhing to the Societies, under all the *ſad things* they were exerciſed with.

with. Though he was ordained *May* 10*th*, and though his desire to be in this land was great; yet he came not to it until *September* thereafter, being hindered by several troubles and difficulties that he met with.

The General Meeting according to appointment met at *Darmede*, upon the third day of *October*, 1683. After prayer, Mr. James Renwick being come there, gave an account of his ordination, and shewed his testificate of the same, subscribed by several ministers, to the meeting; by whom he was called and received as their minister, which he accepted and embraced. Also, Mr. Renwick read to the meeting, a paper which was called his *Testimony* *: wherein was contained his mind and judgment concerning the controversies of the time, both concerning duty and sin; adhering to several duties which were then controverted and opposed, and witnessing against several things which he looked upon to be corruptions and defections, even in many ministers, naming some of them, and mentioning what he testified against in them.

At some things in this paper, especially that which was in it concerning some ministers who were particularly named, some persons were displeased and offended at the time, and afterwards it was much misrepresented, and he reproached upon that account †.

The same day there was a paper read to the meeting concerning the oath of secresy, which had been several ways abused, and was then no-ways needful: Therefore they concluded to lay it aside, and agreed upon the said paper, the tenor whereof follows:

"Although an engagement in these things that are absolutely and abstractedly duty, cannot nor ought not to be rescinded and annulled, because of the objective tie before the engagement, which was only a superadded obligation; yet these things that are not duty simply or absolutely, but in respect of some circumstances of the case, and when engaged unto from special inducements, we say, these inducements failing, or the thing itself becoming burdensome, that same power which laid on the engagement may take it off again, imposing it no further.—So we having entered into an oath of secrecy from some

* This testimony is now printed with his Sermons.

† See Renwick's 25th Letter, P. 64 of the printed volume.

ſome ſpecial inducements, particularly and principally the carrying on of Lanerk declaration, that it ſhould not be diſcovered and the action hindered, and therefore in that reſpect the engagement was requiſite; yet we bringing it and applying it all alongſt, though the nature of it was only concerning the things treated upon at that time; and alſo, ſeeing how it hath been ſadly abuſed; upon the one hand, ſome thereby binding up themſelves from duty, which was far contrary both to the nature of the thing, and alſo to the intention of the impoſers; and upon the other hand, by ſome really involving themſelves in the guilt of perjury by their inconſiderate laxneſs in it.——Therefore we (the ſame power that laid it on) do require that engagement no further to be impoſed, not ſuffering that yoke to lie any longer upon people's necks; yet we hope that none, as they tender the glory of God and the good of his cauſe, will take occaſion hereat to be more lax than was their duty formerly. This we do, really profeſſing our ſincere deſire to be humbled before the Lord for every way of our abuſing that (now laid aſide) *oath of ſecreſy* ‡.

The meeting alſo agreed upon a Letter to be ſent to friends in Dublin in Ireland; a true copy whereof follows:

October 3d, 1683.

Dear Friends and covenanted Brethren,

THE Lord brought us to a high pitch of a glorious and bleſſed reformation, in the ſeveral ſteps thereof, from Popery, Prelacy, and Eraſtian ſupremacy; and took us into covenant with himſelf, to ſerve him after the due order, and to maintain his intereſt with our lives and liberties, as we ſhould anſwer to him at the great day. Whereby our land was made the glory of the nations, and our church terrible to her enemies, *as an army with banners, holineſs to the Lord* being the badge; ſo that we may ſay, our *vine which the Lord brought out of*

‡ Mr. Hamilton, in a letter he ſent home to the Societies, ſhews the unwarrantableneſs of this oath; for this reaſon (amongſt others) becauſe it allowed private perſons to require and impoſe an oath: For which cauſe he refuſed it when it was tendered unto him.

Egypt, did fill the land, and the hills were covered with the ſhadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars. But alas! there are crept in amongſt us little foxes to ſpoil the tender grapes; malignant men diſaffected to the cauſe and people of God, who got footing in judicatories and armies, who ought to have been purged out, that their places might be filled up with men of known integrity, according to the word of God, *Exod.* xviii. 21. 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 3. Yet that duty was not only hindered and condemned by a prevailing company of carnal hearts; but alſo, public reſolutions were fallen upon to bring in known malignants, enemies to God and godlineſs, into places of power and truſt: and commiſſioners authorized to cloſe a treaty with this man *Charles Stuart*, king of malignants, and to give him the crown, upon his ſubſcribing ſuch demands as were ſent to him, after ſo many diſcoveries of his malice againſt God, and of his ſtill perſiſting in the ſame, and notwithſtanding they knew him not to be hearty, but juggling in what he condeſcended to; who no ſooner got footing, but uſed all means to ruin the work of God; and in their firſt parliament took, as it were, the royal diadem off King Chriſt's head, (O horrid blaſphemy!) and ſet it upon their king, whereby they made him an idol in his perſon; who, by virtue of that ſacrilegious robbing of the Son God, commanded our miniſters to leave their flocks, over which the principal and good Shepherd had ſet them, which they almoſt all did, as if they had been hirelings, and ſuffered the wolf to catch and ſcatter the ſheep; ſo that we may ſay, Our pleaſant things were not taken from us, but we give them away with our own hands. We betrayed the intereſt of Chriſt, and gave enemies all their aſking, and made the Lord's pleaſant portion a deſolate wilderneſs. Yet the Lord, becauſe he had compaſſion on his people, and on his dwelling-place, ſtirred up ſome to go to the high places of the fields, and jeopard their lives unto the death, in proclaiming the truths of God; whereby there were great inroads made upon Satan's territories, who finding himſelf at a loſs and diſadvantage, ſpewed out ſinful ſnares amongſt us, to ruin the work of God, and to break us, *viz.* indulgences and indemnities, whereby Chriſt's crown was eſtabliſhed upon a man's head, which ſome men, loving worldly eaſe more than truth, embracing, they betrayed the cauſe of God, and yielded the day to the dragon and his angels;

angels; others who had not the offer, yet gaping after it, ſtruck in with them, to ſtrengthen the devil's ſide; and many who profeſſed to be againſt ſuch courſes themſelves, yet tendered more the credit of diſcreditable men than the honour of God; and inſtead of uſing means for their reclaiming, ſtrengthened their hands in their perverſe ways, and ſided with them againſt thoſe whom the Lord raiſed up to be faithful and free, and (weakly, though not deſignedly I hope, for we deſire to be charitable to them) wrought together to gain the end of the common adverſary; who, as they gained ground, increaſed the perſecution; which now hath diſcovered the thoughts and hidden hypocriſy of many hearts. Yet in all this, (bleſſed be the holy and wiſe Lord) he had ſtill a remnant who kept their ground, and through his aſſiſtance, wreſtled for him, by faithful preaching of his will, appearances, teſtimonies, declarations, and ſufferings; ſo that there is not one ſtep of all our public defection, but that he hath honoured and helped a party to witneſs againſt, and to ſeal their teſtimonies with their blood, both miniſters and people of divers qualities.

And now, we deſire nothing but, the Lord aſſiſting, to follow the good old way, and to ſtand upon the ground whereunto the Lord, by our worthy reformers, brought us, and for which we have been wreſtling and contending: we ſay, we are ſeeking nothing but to take the Lord's part againſt his enemies, to ſtand under *Michael's* banner to fight againſt the dragon, and to have our baniſhed King Chriſt brought back again; and in order to this, ſtudying to ſhake our hands clean of the cauſes of his diſpleaſure at us, which keeps him ſo long away, and to ſet about the duties of Chriſtianity with mourning, humiliation, faſting and prayer.

Therefore, being all engaged in one common cauſe, and bound in covenant together, and having ſome knowledge of your caſe, and alſo of your deſire to know and follow duty; we thought it expedient to write unto you, ye having been, to the grief of our ſouls, led aſide by the cruel, and ſubtle dealing of adverſaries, and the treachery and unfaithfulneſs of theſe who gave themſelves out for your leaders; deſiring, as brethren, that ye would lay to heart the ſad caſe our church is redacted unto by reaſon of our ſin againſt the Lord; and conſider what is called for at your hands, if either you deſire to

ſee his return again to *Britain* and *Ireland*, or to tranſmit his truths to the ſucceeding generation, as to the ſhaking yourſelves clean of the abominations of the times and alſo withdrawing yourſelves from theſe backſlidden miniſters altogether unfaithful to our wronged Lord and Maſter: for as to your meeting-houſes, not knowing what underhand dealing hath been with the wicked powers of the time, neither thinking the caſe to be formally the ſame with our hell-hatched indulgences in *Scotland*: yet the effects are much one. For,

1. The embracing of theſe meeting-houſes was a dividing of themſelves from their more righteous brethren and their ſufferings, expoſing them to be the only butt of the adverſaries malice, and to ſhift for themſelves contrary to our engagements, whereby we were to take one common lot with the common cauſe.

2. It was an embracing of a ſnare, whereby they were were drawn into, not only a ſupine and loathſome formality and neutrality in the Lord's cauſe, but into unfaithfulneſs in the higheſt degree, palliating the ſins, and covering the abominations of the tyrannical powers, leſt they, having the arm of fleſh upon their ſide, ſhould caſt down their meeting-houſes, and caſt out themſelves; and in no meaſure diſcovering the duty of the day to people; ſo that they are ignorant of what theſe cruel adverſaries have done againſt our bleſſed Lord, and of their own ſin in ſtrengthening their hands in their working wickedneſs, and upholding that fabric of rebellion againſt the heavens. Oh! what ſhall we ſay, ſin and duty hath been both hid, and the ſouls of the people not cared for, neither the ſtanding of the intereſt of Jeſus Chriſt which they have palpably betrayed; and have moſt actively given their conſent to the enemies taking and keeping the houſes of God in poſſeſſion. And

3. They have quitted their meeting-houſes at the command and threatning of men; for albeit their entry was hurtſome to the cauſe, and the exerciſe of their miniſtry nothing but a ſelling of truth, and a buying of ſinful liberty to themſelves; yet that does not warrant another ſtep of declining duty, in explicitly and more fully delivering up the privileges of Jeſus Chriſt; yea, one pendule of his crown ſhould not be yielded, though it ſhould coſt us all our lives, and we cry out, *Let it not be heard in Gath, nor publiſhed in the ſtreets of Aſkelon*, that the Covenanters in *Britain* and *Ireland* ſhould be ſtanding with

with their heads upon their necks in that day when King Chriſt's crown was taken from him.

O beloved Friends and Covenanted Brethren, go on in your duty, and follow no men, but them who will follow the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; conſider truth as naked, abſtracting from all perſons, and reſolve firmly in Jehovah's ſtrength to ſtand to it alone, albeit none ſhould ſtand with you; and never take carnal reaſons and arguments to plead yourſelves out of your duty, but conſider ay the caſe, whether it be duty or not, in all its circumſtances; and if found to be ſo, then up and do it upon the greateſt of hazards; and think not to walk ſo as the abuſed laws of man ſhall not reach you, for if they do not, the law of God will; for they are now confronted one againſt another, and the cry is gone forth from the Lord to all that will ſide themſelves with him, to take his part againſt a cruel and treacherous generation. *Say not a confederacy unto them, neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid.* But *ſanctify the Lord of hoſts himſelf, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread; and he ſhall be a ſanctuary unto you,* Iſa. viii. 12, 13, 14. *Wherefore come out from them, and be ye ſeparate, ſaith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and be a father unto you, and ye ſhall be my ſons and daughters, ſaith the Lord Almighty,* 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. *O come out from among them, that ye be not partakers of their ſins, and that ye receive not of their plagues; for their ſins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered their iniquities,* Rev. xviii. 4, 5. O make haſte, and get in under the ſhadow of the Lord's wings, and give up with every falſe and wicked way, that now ye may be hid from the fiery indignation; for he *is coming to ſhake terribly the earth, and to puniſh the inhabitants thereof for their iniquities.* There is *a ſword bathed in heaven to come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of his curſe:* and ſpare whom he will, he will not ſpare miniſters, yea Preſbyterian miniſters, for they have betrayed the intereſt of Jeſus Chriſt; yea, not only conſented unto, but concurred with enemies ſpoiling him of his princely robes, and of the power he hath in his own houſe: They have made ſad the hearts of the righteous, whom the Lord hath not made ſad, and ſtrengthened the hands of the wicked, that he ſhould not return from his wicked way, by promiſing him life, and have ſeduced the people, by ſeeing viſions

of

of peace for them in their backſliding courſes, when there was no peace from the Lord.

O dearly beloved in our bleſſed Lord, follow none further than they follow Chriſt; and ceaſe to hear the inſtruction which cauſeth to err from the words of knowledge; and *mark and avoid them who cauſe diviſions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, for they that are ſuch, ſerve not our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but their own bellies, and by good words and fair ſpeeches deceive the hearts of the ſimple.*

We ſhall trouble you no further at the time, but heartily and fully approving of the carriage of your hearty friend and well-wiſher in the Lord, Mr. *James Renwick*, among you, (who is for us a faithful miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt) in not joining with theſe men-miniſters with you, and in declining them as to the ſeeking and accepting their call to preach, or giving them ſatisfaction as to his ordination; yet, as often he ſaid unto yourſelves, we hold ourſelves obliged in duty to ſatisfy you who have been his hearers; therefore we have ſent unto you a true tranſcript of the teſtificate of his ordination in *Latin*, and the *Engliſh* verſion thereof, with ſome other papers for your clearing and information in the Lord's cauſe; thanking you heartily for the great kindneſs, he reports, that ye ſhewed unto him, taking it as if it had been done to all of us. And deſiring that ye, ſhaking yourſelves clean of the abominations of the time, may embody yourſelves in Chriſtian fellowſhips and ſocieties, with all tenderneſs and brokenneſs of heart, crying mightily to the Lord, that he would return and be reconciled unto the remnant of his heritage, and reclaim his captivate declarative glory out of the hands of the proud enemy; and we ſhall keep a correſpondence with you, and help you with any whom the Lord ſends forth unto us, cloathed with his commiſſion, to proclaim the glad tidings of ſalvation. The Lord, the Lord God, the covenanted God of *Britain* and *Ireland*, be with you.

The meeting likewiſe appointed ſome faſt-days to be kept by the ſocieties, *viz.* It was appointed that the 11th of *October* ſhould be kept a day of public faſting and humiliation for our great and innumerable iniquities which have provoked the Lord for a ſeaſon to deprive us of the unſpeakable privilege of the goſpel, and not endeavouring to order our hearts and converſations thereunto.

It

It was alſo appointed that the 25th of *October* ſhould be publicly kept a day of faſting and prayer to the Lord, who hath given ſome refreſhing pledges of his doing greater things, by his returning again (out of his mere mercy, notwithſtanding of our great tranſgreſſions) with a blink of the bleſſed goſpel; that he would now help us to improve the great mercy beſtowed upon us, and keep us from provoking him again to remove the candle out of our candleſtick.

As alſo, it was appointed that the 15th of *November* be kept a day of public thankſgiving to the Lord for his many and great mercies hitherto beſtowed upon us, in not leaving us altogether in our low condition.

And it was appointed that the next General Meeting ſhall be upon the 28th of *November*, at *Glaſgow*: and that the collections ſhall be brought there by the commiſſioners who come.

The ſtate of the land was ſtill as before, by violent preſſing of the Teſt and hearing of Curates, which were alas! much complied with by not a few: But, through grace, many were kept from both theſe abominations, chooſing rather to ſuffer than to ſin. And though the perſecutions and trials which the ſocieties were tryſted with were not ſmall, nor the reproach from friends who had miſ-conſtructions of them were not few, which indeed was weighty, eſpecially as coming from them; yet one thing did not a little alleviate and lighten the ſame, viz. the home-coming of Mr. James Renwick; whereby they were put in hope of, and did enjoy the goſpel preached, which was very refreſhing and reviving, after ſo long a famine of goſpel-ordinances: And by the bleſſing of the Lord, it proved a mean to keep ſome from running upon, and to recover others from extremes on both hands. It was ſtrengthening in that weary day, comforting in that ſad, and enlightening in that dark and gloomy day. As before the laſt meeting, the ſocieties were much miſrepreſented, ſo after it they were not leſs, but rather more; eſpecially Mr. James Renwick was greatly miſrepreſented and reproached, occaſioned by the reading of his teſtimony at the laſt meeting, which (particularly that part thereof concerning ſome miniſters who were therein named) was very ill taken, and offended ſeveral perſons, yea, from that time ſome of our number fell off from us. But as it was much talked of,

ſo

ſo it was much miſrepreſented, it being reported (which was believed by many) that he had excommunicated ſome of theſe miniſters, which was far from his thoughts and intention; neither did the paper itſelf bear any ſuch thing; for all that is in it concerning theſe miniſters named therein, is his teſtimony againſt what he thought was wrong in their practice, and not one word of excommunication of them or any other.

THE General Meeting conveened at *Woodſide*, near Glaſgow, upon the 28th of *November*, 1683. After prayer, and modelling of the meeting, they approved of all that was done by the former meeting, *October* 3d; and particularly did agree with, and approve of that reſolution concerning the oath of ſecrecy, which was no further to be impoſed.

2*dly*, They agreed unto, and conſented with a Proteſtation againſt the Scotch congregation at Rotterdam, for ſeveral cauſes therein contained; which was thereafter ſent to Mr. Robert Hamilton, who put it in print, and ſent ſome of them to Rotterdam. As this paper hath ſince been much ſpoken againſt, and condemned by many, ſo the ſocieties upon more mature deliberation about it, although they looked upon the cauſes inſerted therein materially conſidered and rightly applied, were true, and ſufficient ground for a proteſtation, and deſired that it might be looked upon as a ſtanding teſtimony (together with what contendings have formerly been by ſome Scotch ſufferers in that land) for the vindication of truth, and againſt the ſad wrongs and abuſes in that congregation, ay, and while the cauſes inſerted were maintained, and the offence and ſcandal given, not removed; yet they were convinced, not only that there was an omiſſion of the due method of going about ſuch an action, when they had not given previous admonition to the perſons proteſted againſt; but alſo ſome words and expreſſions were unſuitable, untender, bitter and offenſive. But in regard the Proteſtation itſelf is in print, and the ſociety's mind concerning it may be ſeen in their *Informatory Vindication*, what is ſaid above may ſuffice here.

3*dly*, The meeting agreed upon two Letters, the one to the claſſis of Groningen, to whom they were very much obliged and indebted for the ordination of Mr. Renwick, and they thought it duty to ſignify their thankfulneſs

fulneſs in a letter; which being tranſlated into Latin was ſent to them: And the other to ſeveral perſons in *Friezland*, and more eſpecially theſe in the city of Leewarden, who had various ways ſhewn their ſympathy with the ſocieties; which letter was likewiſe ſent.

4thly, It was appointed by the meeting that Thomas Lining, William Nairn and Michael Shields ſhould go to Fife, and ſpeak with ſome perſons there, who had withdrawn with James Ruſſel from their brethren, and were continuing in that ſeparation: And out of brotherly love and kindneſs to them, to deſire them to come and hear the goſpel preached by Mr. James Renwick. Accordingly the foreſaid perſons went to Fife, and ſpoke with ſome of theſe people they were ſent to. But to the end it may be the better known what they did there, and what anſwer they received, I ſhall here ſet down the report, ſubſcribed by them all three, and ſhewn to the next meeting as an account of their diligence.

"We, under-ſubſcribers, being commiſſionate by the General Meeting, to go to the ſociety of Fife, and invite them to hear the goſpel faithfully preached by Mr. James Renwick: In obedience whereunto we went; and at Elie, in Fife, upon the 14th of *December*, 1683, got ſome of them conveened together, *viz.* three men and a boy, and about ſeven or eight women. When conveened, before we would impart our commiſſion to them, we thought it duty that one of ourſelves ſhould pray; which when heard by them, they declared they would not join with us: When we ſaw them ſo, we forbare, and delivered our commiſſion after this manner.——The General Meeting hath ſent us to acquaint you, that the Lord out of his free love and infinite mercy hath viſited his poor people in their low condition, in giving us the ſweet and precious goſpel again, in ſtirring up Mr. James Renwick, a miniſter, faithfully to preach the ſame, and freely to teſtify againſt the ſins and abominations of the time, to which we have been witneſs both in private and in public; and conſidering our being bound in covenant together, and out of brotherly love and kindneſs to your ſouls, they earneſtly deſire and invite you to come and hear the ſame, and be partakers of that rich and unſpeakable bleſſing the Lord hath beſtowed.

"After we had thus ſpoken, we deſired an anſwer: Whereupon they declared they would neither hear him, nor join with us, becauſe of the reaſons and grounds they

had ſeparated from us upon, before the ſaid Mr. James went from Scotland. We deſired they would inſtance them: They inſtanced the "paying of cuſtoms at ports, "and in markets;" yet they ſaid "they were clear to "pay them at boats and bridges*." To which we replied, that we were not to juſtify the paying of cuſtoms, yet we could not drive ſo abruptly and inconſiderately to ſuch a height of ſeparation upon that head as they did. But they refuſed to debate any further anent them, becauſe they affirmed that it was fully debated before; which we denied, as to the way that they had taken in ſtating a ſeparation upon that head, eſpecially ſo preſumptuouſly. They ſaid it was, and was to be ſeen in their public papers; which, when we deſired to ſee, they ſaid they had them not. And alſo, they affirmed that the not paying of cuſtoms was enacted at the meeting at Tala-linn, and put as an interrogation to the members thereof: Which we denied, two of us being preſent there. And likewiſe they ſaid, they had other things againſt Mr. Renwick, and us both: We deſired to hear them: They told us they were in their public papers. So all the ground they gave for refuſing to hear the ſaid Mr. James preach, was only this, that he does not as yet ſee the paying of cuſtoms, and joining with thoſe who pay the ſame to be a ground of ſeparation, and of debarring from the privileges of the church. And as for days of the week, and months of the year, they owned the ſame was not a ground of ſeparation, yet adhered to that paper given in by James Ruſſel to the General Meeting anent the ſame; and particularly to that part of it, which ſays,—"Thoſe who own ſuch names, ſerve themſelves heirs to that ſame (if not greater) puniſhment, which God inflicted upon idolaters of old:" which is a real contradiction. This is truth, as witneſs our hands."

Sic Subſcribitur,

THOMAS LINING.
WILLIAM NAIRN.
MICHAEL SHIELDS.

And *laſtly*, the meeting appointed ſome days to be kept by the ſocieties, and condeſcended upon the cauſes as follow. As

1*ſt*,

* By this it is evident that they could not charge them with tolerating the paying of any other public burdens or taxes, otherwiſe they would not have failed to do it.

1*ſt*, It was appointed that the 5th of *December*, ſhould be kept a day of public faſting and prayer unto the Lord, that he would either bridle the rage of enemies againſt our honourable friend and ſufferer, *Earlſtoun*, or carry him honourably through the trial; and alſo, that thoſe moſt concerned in him may be kept by the Lord, and helped rightly to carry under their ſad afflictions. The occaſion of ſetting this day apart for the foreſaid end, was the trials and tentations which they heard Earlſtoun was at that time meeting with.

2*d*, It was appointed that the 27th of *December* ſhould be kept a day of public thankſgiving unto the Lord, for his conveening of us together upon the 23d of *November*, to hear his goſpel preached, and bringing us all ſafely off, notwithſtanding the great fury and diligence of enemies againſt us. This 23d of *November*, Mr. James Renwick preached at *Darmede*, which was the firſt public ſermon he had in the fields; at which time the diligence of enemies was great againſt us, and being delivered from them, it was thought fit to ſet apart a day of thankſgiving for it.

3*d*, It was appointed that the 25th of *January*, 1684, ſhould be kept a day of public faſting and humiliation before the Lord, for our ſinful walking under that (every way) ſadly abuſed engagement unto ſecreſy.

And it was appointed that the next General Meeting ſhould be upon the 21ſt of *February*, 1684, at *Auchengilloch*; to which the Societies were to ſend the collections, and the ſaid day was to be kept in prayer by thoſe remaining at home.

HAVING given ſome relation of what was done at this meeting, I ſhall ſubjoin two letters agreed upon by them. Firſt, the letter to the claſſis of Groningen; the next to the ſociety in Friezland.

November 28, 1683.

Reverendiſſimi Domini vigilantiſſimi Paſtores,

THE Lord having now, to our great joy and encouragement, reſtored unto us our beloved friend and miniſter, Mr. *James Renwick*, and brought him through many imminent dangers; (for which we deſire to rejoice in him, praiſing his holy name) who hath given ſuch an ample and ſavoury accountof your real con-

concernedneſs for our Maſter's cauſe, and affection to and ſympathy with us in *Scotland*, that we muſt burſt out in expreſſing our ſenſibleneſs of, and joy in the ſame, by writing unto you: again and again bleſſing the Lord, and thanking you for the ſingular mercy which we enjoy, by your confirming of our foreſaid beloved friend Mr. *James Renwick* in the work of the miniſtry (for which he was ſent over unto you by us) whereof the Lord gives ſpecial evidences of his own approbation, being ſingularly with him in that great and weighty work, to our great refreſhing and encouragement: and alſo teſtifying and confirming the truth of that faithful Mr. *William Brackel* miniſter at *Leewarden*, witneſſed in his friendly teſtimony of our ſtudent before your Preſbytery, *viz.* That the teſtificates and calls ſubſcribed by us unto them, particularly to the foreſaid Mr. *James Renwick*, were delivered into the hand of the right honourable the laird of *Earlſtoun*. We acknowledge ourſelves many ways your debtors, both in ſpirituals and temporals, and are very ſenſible of your care of the church of God, evidenced ſo many ways unto us in our low caſe and condition, now when the enemies of our Lord in this land have caſten down the Lord's houſe to the ground, and laid his pleaſant portion deſolate, and caſten many of us out of our houſes, being violently perſecute, and that unto death, with all the ſubtilty and cruelty which the powers of hell and earth can deviſe. O! the fury and wickedneſs of enemies is come to a great height, and the malice of backſliders is ſwelled to a great meaſure, not only Chriſtianity but humanity being altogether given up by the moſt part of the nation; ſo that all things ſpeak forth the cup of the *Amorite* and *Edomite* to be near full, and that the Lord is even at the doors with a great deluge of his wrath, to be let looſe upon the generation. But in the midſt of all our diſtreſſes and difficulties (O! bleſſed be the name of the Lord) we have no reaſon to complain, for he ſpeaks comfortably to us in this wilderneſs; he is a preſent help to us in the time of our need, and puts ſongs in our mouths in the midſt of this hot fire; and is wonderfully ſeen in hiding, preſerving and encouraging us; it being no ſmall refreſhment unto us, that he hath put into your hearts to ſtand ſtill and to hear our complaints, and to become companions with us in our tribulations; for which we deſire to praiſe the Lord, and to pray unto him, that he who

who is not unrighteous to forget your labour of love may reward you, for putting to your hands to ſtrengthen and help a wreſtling and bleeding church; and that he may make you ever faithful in his vineyard, following your labours with his rich bleſſing, to the glory of his great name, and the advancement of his kingdom in the earth, and in the ſouls of his people. O! mind the diſtreſſed and afflicted, bleeding caſe of the once glorious church of *Scotland*, as we deſire to mind you, both in public and in private. We remain,

Your aſſured friends and obliged ſervants to our full power in the Lord,

Subſcribed in our name by the clerk of our general meeting,

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

To the right honourable, truly gracious, and really ſympathiſing Brethren and Siſters in Frieſland, *and more eſpecially in the city of* Leewarden.

November 28th, 1683.

THE Lord did vouchſafe ſuch gracious and glorious privileges upon us, that he brought us unto a high pitch of reformation, and many engagements to be for him, beyond many (yea, we may ſay to the praiſe of his free grace, and with reflection upon our preſent ingratitude, beyond any) lands: but he hath been many ways provoked by us to lay us low as at this day, which indeed we muſt confeſs we have deſerved, yea, and more at his hand; but we deſire to take all in love from him, who chaſtneth and loves, and loves in chaſtiſement; and in ſeeking by this hot and fiery furnace to get a remnant purified for himſelf, amongſt whom he may take delight to dwell. And now when the furnace is ſtill growing hotter and hotter, ſhould not we look beyond the outſide of diſpenſations, into the Lord's glorious purpoſes and intentions; who, the more hot he makes the furnace, minds to produce the more pure metal thereby? Alſo when we think upon (of which we are ſure ye are not without the apprehenſions) the ſad and deplorable caſe of all national and other churches, by reaſon of unfaithfulneſs

neſs to the Lord, little eſteem of his precious truths, want of zeal for his glory, and not following him fully as he ought to be; we are indeed perſuaded, that where he hath thoughts of love, and purpoſes of kindneſs, thither he will come, and ſit as a refiner's fire to purge and refine. But, O! ever bleſſed be his holy and exalted name, he who is able to raiſe children unto *Abraham*, out of the ſtones, will not want a teſtimony for himſelf, and a company of living witneſſes: and we may ſay, to the praiſe of his glorious free grace, and gracious condeſcendency to our once glorious, but now bleeding and wounded, yet wreſtling and contending mother-church, that in our land he hath had this; we ſay, a company, a party whom he ſtill honoured, and is yet honouring and helping to burſt out with declarations, proteſtations, teſtimonies, reſiſtances, and that unto blood againſt all the heinous indignities done to him, whom he hath not left helpleſs nor comfortleſs. And among our other refreſhings from himſelf, this is one, and not a ſmall one, that he hath ſtirred you, our right honourable and dearly beloved brethren and ſiſters, to wreſtle ſo diligently, and to contend ſo faithfully, zealouſly. and valiantly for our church; aud to bear burden, and really to ſympathize with us in our afflictions, trials and tribulations, evidenced by your ſincere love, and great kindneſs unto, and ſingular ſympathy with our right honourable friend Mr. *Robert Hamilton*, who hath been much dignified and owned of the Lord, in his many engagements, appearances, contendings and ſufferings at home for the Lord's cauſe; and in his many wreſtlings abroad, which ye are not ignorant of, having given many evidences of his care, diligence, faithfulneſs, and zeal for the Lord: And alſo evidenced by your great love and ſympathy with our right honourable friend *Earlſtoun*, and his perſecuted and caſt-out family, who is the branch of an old ſtanding houſe for the Lord; he himſelf honoured to be greatly active for his cauſe, and now called to be immediately under the enemies laſh upon that account. And, moreover, evidenced by the great charges ye have been at in helping our diſtreſſed and caſt-out families, in collecting ſo liberally for the ſame; for which we deſire to bleſs the Lord, and to thank you, praying earneſtly that he himſelf may reward you, who will not forget your labour of love and compaſſion of us in our bonds. O!

what

what shall we say, we are all members of one body, subject to one glorious head, our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath purchased us to himself: and this is manifested by you indeed. Therefore let us go on in evidencing the strict conjunction of us his members, that when one suffers, all suffer with it: and when one rejoiceth, all rejoice with it. And also making to appear our love to our lovely and blessed Lord, by following him fully; labouring not to be put off our ground by the violent and boisterous winds of persecution which we are tossed with, and which ye may expect to be liable unto. O! have we not a noble and glorious Captain to follow, who hath suffered more for us than we can do for him, *delivering himself for our offences, and rising again for our justification.* O! it is highly desirable to be like him; yea, such a high desire, that lost worm man durst not have attempted it, if the Lord himself had not, out of his infinite and free love, condescended both to provide the means, and call us unto it: and it is highly desirable to be like him in every thing, so also in his suffering, (*who was made perfect thro' suffering*) not being divided from him in his patience. O! shall we not look beyond what is in time, and in this howling but short wilderness, unto what he hath provided for, and promised unto those who overcome? who hath said, *They shall walk with him in white.*

Now, right honourable Friends, we cannot express the love we owe unto you; but we may say, we have our hearts united unto you, as we do not doubt but yours are also unto us, though we be not in the capacity to manifest the same, as you have done many ways: but we desire to be often and much at a throne of grace for you, begging that ye will be so for us, in our contendings and extreme sufferings. So remain,

Your hearty wellwishing, really endeared, and very much obliged brethren, sisters and servants in our ever blessed Lord,

Subscribed in our name, and by our direction, by the clerk of our general meeting,

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

To all and ſundry true Proteſtant Churches to whom thir preſents may come.

November 28th, 1683.

WE do not in the leaſt doubt, but in ſome meaſure it is known unto you, how that our antient and reformed church of *Scotland* did ſometime glorioufly flouriſh with the great and bright ſplendour of the true religion, ſo that her light was viſible to all adjacent churches: but now, deſervedly for our ſinning againſt the Lord, we have occaſioned his vineyard in our land to be overſpread and trodden down with foxes, and devoured with the wild beaſts of the field; we being under various and ſad exigences, great perſecutions and reproaches, which alſo we may be perſuaded are come unto your ear. The weighty conſideration whereof (together with the great hope we have of your concernedneſs with us in our low and deſolate caſe, whereunto, as to the external face of our church, we are redacted; yet dignified and helped, though weakly, but willingly to *contend for the faith once delivered to the ſaints*, and for the privileges of the church of God) moved us to ſend and commiſſionate the right honourable Mr. *Robert Hamilton*, unto all you who are wellwiſhers unto the commonwealth of *Iſrael*, and that upon many deliberate and weighty grounds; knowing that our cauſe and caſe is ſadly miſrepreſented unto you by the ſubtile dealings of our adverſaries and backſliders, who are ſinfully active, but moſt vigilant in giving miſinformation, and falſe relations of what we act and do; as if our principles and proceedings were contrary to the written word of God, the ſupreme judge of all controverſies, and true Proteſtantiſm. Whereas, we jointly and unanimouſly declare, that we neither maintain or hold any thing contrary to the ſcriptures of truth, our ancient laws eccleſiaſtic and civil, and our noble work of reformation; but deſire (yea, and have been helped through the Lord's grace) to ſquare our actions and proceedings according thereunto, for which we this day, and for more than the ſpace of twenty years, are, and have been ſuffering afflictions, perſecutions, outcaſtings, baniſhments, impriſonments, and reproaches, yea, and death itſelf.

We

We therefore, the true Proteſtant, Anti-popiſh, Anti-prelatick, Anti-eraſtian, and perſecuted Preſbyterian church of *Scotland*, do concredit this our Commiſſioner, giving him our full power, conſent and aſſent, faithfully and truly to inform all true Proteſtants and reformed churches, kingdoms and commonwealths, unto which he ſhall or may come, of our preſent caſe, principles, former and later proceedings: and that we are only, through God's grace, labouring to keep ourſelves ſtill clean in the way of the Lord, as it hath been walked in by our predeceſſors, (of truly worthy memory) in their carrying on of our noble and glorious work of reformation, in the ſeveral ſteps thereof, from Popery, Prelacy, and Eraſtian ſupremacy; and it is upon theſe heads that our ſufferings have been and are ſtated. And for the more clear and full knowledge thereof, we recommend you to the information of this our right honourable and faithful Commiſſioner, as being ſeen in all our affairs, and of one judgment, under the ſame ſufferings with us; and alſo, while he was in our land, highly dignified and countenanced of the Lord in his many contendings and wreſtlings, engagements, rencounters and appearances againſt the common adverſary, contendings and wreſtlings againſt defection and backſliding courſes, and great and many ſufferings for truth.

So we humbly intreat and deſire that whatever information ye have gotten, or may get, from any hand whatever, either enemies or backſliders, particularly miniſters who have forſaken the Lord, and deſerted us, of us, our principles and proceedings, contrary to the word of God, our Covenants and engagements unto him, may not be credited nor believed by you, they being only falſe aſperſions and calumnies, through malice, caſt upon us, yea, nor contrary to the information of this our right honourable Truſtee, and faithful Commiſſioner, whom and whoſe information we humbly, but earneſtly deſire and requeſt all churches, kingdoms and commonwealths, whither he may come, to receive and entertain him, as ye would not reject the ſuits and petitions of the once glorious, but now afflicted, toſſed, wounded, and bleeding, yet wreſtling church of *Scotland*: and in receiving of him, it ſhall be as done to all of us. Therefore all ye lovers of *Zion*, do not ſlight, but ponder deeply, the ſad caſe, we, as a ſhare of the Proteſtant Intereſt, are reduced unto, holding up the ſame in your prayers

to the Lord; for God calls all to ſympathize together, and to conſider, that the plottings, conſultations, malchievements and actings of adverſaries, are intended againſt the whole; and when one member ſuffers, all ſuffer with it. And we, for our parts, (which is all the remuneration that at the time we can give) ſhall not ceaſe to pray for your flouriſhing in ſpirituals and temporals.

Subſcribed in our name, and by our direction, by the clerk of our General Meeting.

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

They likewiſe ſent a letter to Mr. William Brackel: The exact copy of which follows.

To the Right Reverend Mr. William a Brackel, *Miniſter of the Goſpel at* Leewarden *in Friezland.*

Right Reverend and Dear Sir,

IN the time of the church her proſperity, there are multitudes that flow unto her, many of them having their eyes upon a worldly kingdom, not taking up rightly wherein the kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt conſiſts, who are no ſooner diſappointed of their carnal and ſenſual expectations, but preſently they ſteer their courſe another way, and turn head-ſtrong againſt what they ſeemed to be zealous for: But in a day of perſecution, when Zion is in diſtreſs, and the adverſary inſulting, (eſpecially in ſuch a caſe as ours) when thoſe who formerly put to their hand to rebuild the walls of fallen Jeruſalem in troublous times; yet the troubles increaſing, they not only left their work, but alſo are pulling down what once they had ſhewn ſo much earneſtneſs in building; We ſay, in ſuch a day, the ſtepping in of any with encouragement to the burden-bearers, and putting to their hands in helping them, makes both the Lord's hand to be the more ſeen in it, and the love of ſuch to be the more manifeſted in it. So we cannot but bleſs and praiſe the *Holy One of Iſrael*, who hath viſited us in our low condition, in putting it in the hearts of any to ſtand ſtill and hear our complaints, and become companions with us in our tribulation; and alſo to be ſenſible of your care *of the* church of God from the many evident tokens thereof,

thereof, which we have clearly seen, by your laying out yourself to the uttermost of your power for the advancement of his kingdom, and encouragement of his followers; and particularly by your being such an instrument to provide for us, both in spirituals and temporals, which we are not in capacity to remunerate: Neither is that the thing (we know) which you have your eye upon; seeking only to approve yourself to your Master, that when he comes, he may say, *Well done, good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* However, we hold ourselves many ways obliged unto you, being content to be your debtors, and withal humbly giving you many hearty thanks for your friendly testimony of our students before the Presbytery of Groningen, we testifying and confirming the truth of what you witnessed, to wit, That their testificates subscribed by us, were delivered by us into the hands of the honourable laird of Earlstonn; and also for your activity and care anent the ordination of Mr. James Renwick, whereof the Lord hath given *Testimonies of his approbation*; and furnishes ground of expecting yet further. O blessed be the name of the Lord, who hath visited us in our low condition, and hath granted us a refreshing, when the virgin daughter of Zion was swooning in the streets for lack of the breasts, and hath given us a new pledge of his returning again; inviting us to the chambers of his protection, and there to hide ourselves until the indignation be overpast.

Now, we shall not speak of your care of, and sympathy with our distressed and cast out families, as to their temporal condition, evidenced by your liberality unto them; knowing that it was more easy for you to shew kindness, than to hear of it again. But it is matter of praise unto us, that among the members of Christ, there is such an evidence of being of that body, that when one suffers, all suffer with it. However, we must be holden excused at your hand, for not mentioning of this, or expressing nothing of our sense thereof in our last letter unto you, because it was neither from our insensibleness of your care, diligence anent, and sympathy with us, nor from an unthankful frame of spirit, but was occasioned only by reason of the absence of our right reverend and beloved friend and faithful minister, Mr. James Renwick, who had all the information with him.

O right reverend and dear Sir, Go on in your care for the church of God. Go on in contending for his noble cauſe; and he who hath honoured you ſo nobly to manage his cauſe and our cauſe, yea amongſt theſe men-miniſters belonging to the nation of Scotland, whoſe tongues and doings are againſt the Lord, to provoke the eyes of his glory, and which have occaſioned the ruin of *Jeruſalem* and the fall of *Judah*, will yet help *and uphold you with the right-hand of his righteouſneſs*, to carry on the ſame againſt all oppoſites; ſo, as ye tender the preſent caſe of our wounded and bleeding church, we jointly, unanimouſly, and earneſtly deſire, that ye would lay yourſelf wholly out to ſtop and hinder the proceedings of that man, James Ruſſel, (whoſe carriage at home was very deſtructive to the cauſe, and offenſive to the church of God, and is now come abroad unto you to make it more ſo) and all aiders, and aſſiſters of, compliers with, and connivers at him and his way, be who they will: We ſay, Go on, and your caſe ſhall be holden up unto the Lord, as he will therein aſſiſt a broken and afflicted church, which is troubled on every ſide; yea perplexed, yet not in deſpair; perſecuted with all the fury of hell, yet not forſaken; caſt down to the ground and covered with duſt, yet not deſtroyed. This is indeed our caſe. For the fury of enemies is come to a great height, and the malice of backſliders is ſwelled into a large meaſure, ſo that the cup of the *Amorite* and *Edomite* is faſt filling up. Our houſes are caſt down, our wives (yea ſome in child-bed) with our young ones caſt out. But what is the matter of all this, for the Lord's holy mountain is laid deſolate, and his houſe thrown down to the ground; and for our parts, (O praiſe him all ye that love him) he ſuffers us not to complain, but puts ſongs in our mouths in the midſt of this hot fire; and though enemies are not only permitted to threaten, but even to execute their threatenings, yet we may ſay in ſome meaſure, The heart of the righteous is bold as a lion, and is by Jehovah's aſſiſtance above the fear of what man can do.

O what ſhall we ſay, all things look as if the Lord were at the doors with heavy wrath and ſad judgments, with an overflowing deluge to make the land deſolate; but bleſſed be his holy name, he *ſhall be as an hiding-place* unto his remnant *from the wind, as a covert from the tempeſt, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the ſhadow of a great*

great rock in a weary land. And he is teſtifying his willingneſs to be ſuch unto any who will come unto him, by ſending forth a call thereunto, which is to us ſuch a cordial as makes many bitter ingredients in our cup not to be felt.

Now the Lord who hath ſtirred you up to be concerned with us, in all the circumſtances of our caſe, reward your pains and labour of love.——Mind Scotland's caſe in public and private, as we deſire to mind you. So we remain,

Your affectionate and obliged friends in the Lord,

Subſcribed by our direction, and in our name, by the Clerk of our General Meeting,

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

GLASGOW, Nov. 28, 1683.

It may not be improper to inſert here, a Letter written by Michael Shields to Mr. Robert Hamilton, from the original letter written with his own hand, altho' it be not in the manuſcript regiſter.

Right Honourable Sir,

ALTHOUGH unacquaint and unfit to write to any, and eſpecially to one in your circumſtances, yet I have taken upon me to write this line to you, deſiring and deſigning thereby to evidence my reſpect unto, and ſympathy with you, (much honoured of the Lord) hoping ye will take in good part what I write. And now what ſhall I ſay, but magnify and praiſe the holy name of the Lord upon your behalf, who hath raiſed and ſtirred you up from among your brethren, to appear ſo eminently, and manage his cauſe ſo nobly both at home and abroad againſt his enemies, yea, againſt thoſe of whom better things were expected; when your mother-church was ſitting as a widow with her tears on her cheeks, and like the woman chaſed into the wilderneſs by the dragon and his angels, and few of her ſons which ſhe hath brought forth to take her by the hand. This calls for great humility, fear, watchfulneſs, love, zeal, and thankfulneſs at your hands.

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May we not ſit down, and wonder and admire at the matchleſs free love and condeſcendency of our bleſſed Lord Jeſus Chriſt, not only in redeeming and ſaving any of the loſt poſterity of Adam from ſin, hell, death, and the grave; but alſo at this, in dignifying and honouring any of theſe redeemed ones, who are weak, unworthy and empty creatures in themſelves, to appear, contend, witneſs and ſuffer for him, his honourable cauſe and precious truths, when he ſees fit to call and ſingle them out. Is not this to make his ſtrength appear in weakneſs, his wiſdom in fooliſhneſs, and that he may get all the glory, to whom only it belongs, and the poor creature laid low in its own ſight? We have gotten proofs of this in our day; and he is yet triumphing in the chariot of free love and matchleſs independency. O! therefore, let us cry out, *Not unto us, not unto us, but unto* his *name be the glory*, the honour and the praiſe.—— What though we, while walking through this howling, but ſhort wilderneſs, be reproached, hunted and purſued, *men wondered at, killed all the day long, and counted as ſheep for the ſlaughter*, and be perſecuted by all the fury of devils, and rage of men? If God be glorified, and his name exalted thereby, what loſe we? It was for this noble end (which is the higheſt end that man could have been created for) that he who is not capable of any additional glory from any of his creatures, created us for: Let us therefore anſwer that noble end of our creation, in whatever ſtation (whether doing or ſuffering) he puts us in, for in doing ſo, all the good redounds to ourſelves. Let us rejoice in tribulation and perſecution for his ſake, ſeeing there is a glorifying of him in the fires. The way to IMMANUEL's land, that ſweet land, afar off, is not ſtrawed with roſes, which our ſoft and ill natures love beſt, but thro' many tribulations we muſt enter. This is but following the footſteps of our Glorious Head, King, and Captain, *who was made perfect through ſuffering*: and of the cloud of witneſſes who *went through great tribulations, and waſhed their robes in the blood of the Lamb*, who are now *ſinging the ſong of Moſes and the Lamb, with crowns on their heads, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands*, in token of their victory over all their enemies.

Much honoured and dear Sir, The poor ſuffering and wreſtling remnant of the bleeding and wounded church *of Scotland* hath matter both of ſorrow and of joy, lamentation

mentation and rejoicing. Their cup is mixed with ſweet and bitter, and bitter and ſweet; yea, they may ſing of mercy and judgment. As upon the one hand, they have cauſe, yea great cauſe to weep, mourn, lament and lie in the duſt before the Lord for their heinous ſteps of defection and great ſins, which have provoked him to make his once glorious church like a deſolate wilderneſs, lay his pleaſant portion deſolate, and give up the dearly beloved of his ſoul into the hand of his proud enemy, yea to hide his face and ſtand aloof from our ſores. O this calls for weeping, mourning and Lamentation! So, upon the other hand, they have cauſe to rejoice in this, That the Lord hath (to the praiſe of his glorious free grace be it ſpoken) kept and preſerved a remnant, (even in the midſt of ſuch horrid backſliding) whom he hath hitherto, and is yet helping and dignifying to witneſs, contend and ſuffer for him, his noble cauſe and ſweet truths, againſt all oppoſers. And now he hath (notwithſtanding of our former abuſe of the ſweet goſpel) viſited us with a glimpſe of the glorious goſpel, in raiſing up a miniſter faithfully to preach the ſame, of which I have been a witneſs. O this calls for great thankfulneſs at our hands! Should not we truſt in him for the future, and take this as a token for good, and that he who hath done this for his own name's ſake, will yet do greater things for us? Ought we not to love him, and delight in him, and walk in humility, fear and trembling before him, leſt we provoke him to leave us? O! let us cry and pray unto him that he would not leave us, but return and be gracious for his own name's ſake, and altogether break our bonds, both ſpiritual and temporal; make his glorious goſpel have a free courſe through the land, build his own houſe again, and bring down the inſolent and proud enemy.

Right honourable Sir, The General Meeting deſired me, in their name, to ſignify to you, their unanimous and earneſt deſire, that as hitherto the Lord hath helped you to be active for his cauſe, ſo alſo, that ye would lay out yourſelf to cauſe theſe two young men, Meſſrs William Boyd and John Flint, to come home.

Thus wiſhing and praying that the Lord God may be with you, comfort, lead, and ſtrengthen you. I remain,

Right Honourable Sir,
Your Humble Servant
MICH. SHIELDS.

Edinburgh, Jan. 15th, 1684.

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THE caſe of the country between the laſt meeting (in *November*) and this, cannot be expreſſed and ſhewn in few words; however a hint thereof may be given in general. The cruelty of enemies was great, and their rage keen; and they were at no ſmall pains to entrap poor people, and to get them made obnoxious to, and brought under the laſh of their wicked laws, by enquiring queſtions about owning the authority, and if Bothwel-bridge was rebellion, *&c.* making the diſowning of the former, and the owning of the latter to be criminal. Sinful impoſitions were many; and alas! the fainting and yielding thereunto of not a few, was very ſad. Public, faithful warning concerning ſins, duties and dangers, was very rare. There being little public preaching, and none in the fields except Mr. James Renwick, that was heard of. And as the condition of the land in general was ſad and deplorable; ſo alſo in particular was that of the United Societies, ſome of them being cruelly murdered on ſcaffolds, ſome impriſoned, and others put to hidings, chaſings, out-caſtings, and weary wanderings. But in the midſt of theſe calamities, one thing was very refreſhing and encouraging to them, which was the enjoyment of the goſpel, which was faithfully and freely preached to them by Mr. James Renwick, and warning given of the ſins and ſnares of the time. And when others were at eaſe, he was at no ſmall pains in travelling and wandering through the country about his Maſter's work, and was oft in danger of enemies, and in diſtreſs by cold and wearineſs, yet chearful under the ſame. But theſe opportunities of the goſpel-ordinances were very encouraging and reviving to the Societies in that ſad time: Yet they had one ingredient in their cup, which in ſome reſpect was more bitter than what they met with from enemies; and that was the contendings they judged they were called to have (and the reproaches caſt on them upon that account) with many of the godly on the left hand, who were guilty of defection, and defended the ſame; and with ſome on the right hand who were running upon extravagancies: the chief of thoſe upon the right hand was James Ruſſel, who with Patrick Grant, *&c.* after they had ſeparated from the Societies, they went abroad; and coming to Groningen immediately after the ordination of Mr. James Renwick, they had ſome contendings with him concerning theſe things upon which they had ſeparate. After

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he was come away, Mr. John Flint joined with them, who was uſeful to them in their learning, which they ſet about; as alſo, for putting in Latin ſome papers for them. They had no ſmall contendings with Mr. Robert Hamilton, whom they much contradicted, vilipended and oppoſed: Likewiſe they miſrepreſented ſeveral of the proceedings of the Societies, which was ſad in itſelf, and it being to, and before ſtrangers, made it more lamentable. At length they gave an information in Latin, ſubſcribed by James Ruſſel and Patrick Grant, unto *John a Mark* Profeſſor of divinity, and miniſter at Groningen; wherein were ſeveral miſrepreſentations of ſome of the proceedings of, and reflections upon the ſocieties, and in particular upon Mr. Renwick; a double whereof Mr. Hamilton ſent home, incloſed in a letter, and deſired that an anſwer might be written to the ſame; which coming but a little before the day that the laſt meeting appointed for the General Meeting, the foreſaid anſwer, and ſome letters which were thought fit to be ſent abroad, could not be ready againſt that time. Whereupon it was delayed till the 20th of *March* thereafter.

WHICH day, A General Meeting did conveen at *Panbreck*. After prayer, and modelling of the meeting, ſome reſolutions were fallen upon; an account whereof followeth.

At former meetings there were ſeveral queſtions enquired at the members thereof, to the end that it might be known that they owned the teſtimony, and were free of public ſcandal; but theſe not being written, it was thought fit for order's ſake, and that they might be the better known andr emembered, to draw up the ſame in a paper; which being done and agreed unto by this meeting, (ſo far as I can remember) and to be made uſe of afterwards. Accordingly for ſome years theſe queſtions were enquired at the members of the General Meetings; which was much ſpoken againſt and condemned, eſpecially the laſt interrogation thereof. But ſomewhat being ſaid concerning theſe queſtions in the account of the meeting at the *Prieſthill, March* 15, 1682. And alſo, the Society's mind being made known thereanent in their Informatory Vindication, I ſhall ſay no more here about them, but inſert a true copy thereof.

Interrogations anent the abounding ſcandals of the time; whereunto all ſuch as are admitted members of our General Meetings are to anſwer.

But in the entry, theſe who are to be interrogate, muſt be known to be blameleſs as to their private walk, in being free of uncleanneſs, profanity, drunkenneſs, theft, ſwearing, lying, or any other thing that goes under the name of ſcandal: And ſo anent the public may be interrogate as followeth.

1. Do ye know the principles and practice of theſe Societies from whom ye have your commiſſion? 2. Do ye and they own our Covenants and engagements, our faithful Declarations and Teſtimonies? 3. Are ye and they free of giving any manner of bond to the enemies? 4. Are ye and they free of paying Ceſs, Locality and Militia-money? 5. Are ye and they free of paying ſtipends to the Curates, or indulged? 6. Are ye and they free of taking the enemies paſs or protection? 7. Are ye and they free of anſwering unto enemies their courts? 8. Are ye and they free of capitulation any manner of way with the enemies, or furniſhing them with commodities? 9. Are ye and they free of counſelling and conſenting to any in their compliance, any of the foreſaid ways, for you, in your name? 10. Are ye and they free of joining with the Curates or indulged, by hearing them preach, accepting the adminiſtration of the ſacraments at their hands, ſubjecting to their diſcipline, or being married by them? 11. Are ye and they free of joining any of the foreſaid ways with the complying, unfaithful, and ſilent miniſters of the time?

There was alſo a long paper read to, and agreed upon by the meeting, directed to Mr. *John a Mark*, profeſſor of divinity of Groningen, and —— *Phelingius*, elder, *&c.* miniſters of the goſpel there, and to all others whom it might concern; containing a reply to an information ſubſcribed by James Ruſſel and Patrick Grant, and given in to the foreſaid miniſters (ſome account whereof is given above) which information being tranſlated into Engliſh, was alſo read to the meeting. The paper of reply was ſubſcribed by the Præſes, and the moſt part, if not the whole meeting, and being tranſlated into Latin, both were ſent to thoſe to whom it was directed; which was very well accepted of, and received

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by them. But in regard the information and reply are both long, the inſerting of them here ſhall be forborne.

The Meeting likewiſe agreed upon a letter to William Gordon, brother to the laird of Earlſtoun, ſtudent of the law at Groningen; which accordingly was ſent to to him, In it they deſire that he would be ſerviceable, ſtrengthening, and encouraging to Mr. Robert Hamilton in that work, wherein he was intruſted by the Societies.

Alſo, the meeting agreed upon a letter to Mr. Boyd, then at the univerſity of Groningen; wherein they deſired him with all expedition to come home, to the end there might be a clear underſtanding between him and the Societies; for by reaſon of ſome jealouſies of him, they could not deſire him to go on in that work for which he was ſent abroad; and therefore it was thought expedient to call him home, that it might be known what was further their duty towards him. This letter was accordingly ſent to him, and he came home about the beginning of June.

In like manner they ſent a letter to Mr. Flint, then at Groningen; wherein they ſhewed, that knowing he had employed his power for a conſiderable time in giving falſe narrations of the contendings and ſufferings of the ſocieties, ſtriking in with ſuch as had groundleſly ſeparate from them, joining hand and iſſue with them, and ſtrengthening them, by ſpreading abroad into foreign churches their reproachful miſinformations in the Latin tongue; and alſo laboured to counteract the pains their Commiſſioner had been at to give foreign friends a true impreſſion of our ſufferings, and the heads whereupon the ſame was ſtated. They having ſent him abroad for the perfecting of his ſtudies, that he might have been ſerviceable to them in the work of the Lord. But finding that he had ſo ſtated himſelf (as is ſaid) againſt them, did deſire him to come home, and anſwer to what was to be laid to his charge for his carriage abroad. This Letter was accordingly ſent to him, but he did not come home upon it, but wrote an anſwer thereto, wherein he juſtifies himſelf, and hath ſeveral uncharitable reflections upon the ſocieties, and refuſes to come home; however, in July or Auguſt thereafter, he came, and in his home-coming he preached, and married two perſons; as alſo, when in this land, he preached, giving out that he had a power and licence ſo to do, from the miniſters

of Groningen. But what power he had from them may appear from a letter subscribed by Mr. John Abringa, minister at Groningen, and written in name of all the ministers there to Mr. Robert Hamilton; a copy of which he sent to this land: The tenor whereof followeth:

Much honoured Sir,

FOR answer to your Letters, take this short narrative of the proceedings of us ministers, in the case of Mr. Flint. He desiring an *Examen*, for the end he might lawfully preach the word of God unto the faithful remnant of the church of Scotland: We knowing before, his fiery wit, and being sufficiently acquainted how he had engaged himself against those in whose name he first came to us, especially against Mr. Renwick: and justly fearing he would but blow up the flames of schism, and rent the bowels of his mother-church, would not give our consent to his petition, lest we should any way act against our general intention, to contribute as much as in us lieth, to the furtherance of the edification of the church of Scotland; or be partakers of another man's sin. He being after this manner frustrate of his purpose, went to famous Professor *Mark*, asking of him a testimony of his demeanour, which is given to him, as is wont commonly to be done to students when they return home from the university; which being done, the said Mr. Flint went therewith, not to all, but to the most of us ministers, from house to house, craving the subscriptions of their names; which they did accordingly without scruple, because containing nothing in it but a testimony of his studies and life, with an express clause of the known contention, and adjoined recommendation of peace and unity with his brethren. This is the whole business faithfully related. If Now Mr. Henderson will take this bare testimony, as if therewere therein a power given to Mr. Flint to do the work of the ministry, his gross mistake may be imputed to his silly ignorance in things of this nature. But if Mr. Flint himself should make a like construction thereof, it would be in him not a misinferring fault, but flatly an impudent untruth; and if so be, he would thereupon assume unto himself any ministerial power whatsoever in that holy ordinance, we would hold it as a desperate attempt, and bold,

bold, irregular intruſion, and the fearful ſin of thoſe who run unſent, before they be lawfully ſent. The bare reading of the ſaid teſtimony will give ſo much light to an underſtanding reader as to confute Mr. Flint's preſumption. Therefore we need not recall any commiſſion or licence given to Mr. Flint, becauſe none was ever given him; he not being examined nor inſtalled into the miniſtry with impoſition of the hands of the Preſbytery: Though we cannot help it, if he will take ſuch liberty of tongue and conſcience as wrongfully to wreſt our actions, altogether free from the leaſt ſhew of what he would draw out of it.

Profeſſor *Mark* takes at preſent his abode at *Franker*; if you be pleaſed, you may find full ſatisfaction of him anent the foreſaid Teſtimony. Thus reſting, we commend you and all the faithful ones unto God and the word of his grace, for bodily and ſpiritual welfare.

Your hearty Well-wiſher,

And in the name of all the miniſters of the Goſpel at Groningen.

JOHANNES ABRINGA, *Ecc—s, Groning.*

Dec. July 10*th*, 1684.

MOREOVER the meeting ſent a letter to James and Thomas Ruſſel's, and Patrick Grant, repreſenting to them their ſinful ways in miſrepreſenting their caſe, and miſinforming ſtrangers, contradicting their faithful commiſſioners, *&c.* Withall deſiring them to come home, and anſwer to what was to be laid to their charge, as they would not declare themſelves to be obſtinate in their unjuſt ſeparation from the ſocieties. This letter was ſent, but they wrote an anſwer thereto, with many bitter expreſſions, and uncharitable reflections, *&c.*

However falling into diſreſpect they left Groningen ſhortly after.

Here, as would appear, there have been ſome ſheets of the manuſcript loſt, before it was bound, (the pages of it not being numbered till of late) as there were two meetings, which are wholly wanting. The firſt was Ju-

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by 31ſt. The ſecond was October 15th. Yet as there are ſeveral letters written by them, the Autographs of which, being yet extant, it will not be improper to inſert ſo many of them as can be found.

The firſt ſhall be an abſtract of a letter of Mr. Hamilton's, in his own hand writing, to the General Meeting, dated May 8th, 1684.

Much honoured of the Lord,

I Received your very ſeaſonable and refreſhing letters, informations, and proteſtations. As to the letters to Friezland, I delivered them, and to my own knowledge, I can ſay, they were greatly bleſſed to ſeverals in this land, putting ſome to ſearch the cauſe more than ever, and others aſhamed that they had done ſo little for it; and putting the more ſerious to bleſs the Lord, and acknowledge his goodneſs in ever letting them know of that church, and honouring them to be companions with any of her children in their tribulation; all which, and much more than I can expreſs, they had ſignified unto you, had it not been for the want of language: However, they laid it jointly upon me, to acquaint you, my very dear and honourable Brethren, of their real love, and great ſympathy toward you, as alſo, their adherence to that Noble Cauſe you are honoured to own and contend for.

As to James Ruſſel his affair, ſo ſoon as the information, with your diligence toward theſe in *Fife*, and your letters calling Flint and them home, were turned into Latin, I went to Groningen and delivered them firſt to profeſſor *Marck*, and then acquainted the miniſters of them; who were all glad to hear of the letters to the Claſſis, and theſe informations. And every one I ſpake with ſignified a greater deſire than another to read them, and declared their great deſire to ſerve you,——as for that ſad miſſive of J. Ruſſel to D. Steel, *&c.* having turned it into Latin, I delivered it to the miniſter whom they alledged did own them, and had been preſent at that conference, who read it in the preſence of Meſſrs. Gordon and Boyd, and me, but with great aſtoniſhment, almoſt at every ſentence crying out, O great and manifeſt untruths! and kept the letter, to challenge them upon it: However, I ſhall omit that affair until another occaſion, when, if the Lord will, I may give you a fuller

ler account of his management in this place: O he, and that whole company have been, and are a proud and cruel enemy: As for what they have done againſt me, I bleſs the Lord, I can forgive them as heartily, as if they had never done it.——Their cauſe and way, hath ever been loathſome to all Groningen, altho' they all told me, that they had bound up their hands from any more acting, ſpeaking, or praying in public for our church, not that they truſted that company, but that they by Flint their mouth, had publiſhed abroad that whatever informations I had given were falſe, and adding moſt dreadful and bloody reproaches, eſpecially upon Mr. Renwick and me, and all who were not for them.

As to the proteſtation againſt the Scots congregation at R———, I am now printing it, which I intend to ſpread in this land; I ſhall alſo ſend ſome of them home. I find they were turning their whole edge againſt me formerly, and by their old ſubtile treacherous way, making ſtrangers believe that there was nothing worth the ſpeaking of, betwixt you and them, ſave ſome little thing in the Sanquhair Declaration, and Queen's-ferry Paper; as if forſooth, they had not both left and betrayed the cauſe, and the wreſtling Remnant long before that.

As to your letters and commiſſion, you have been pleaſed to ſend,—as they were very undeſerved by me; ſo the Lord knows that they often make me to tremble, when I think upon them, being ſenſible of my own inſufficiency and weakneſs, for ſo great a work. However, as I cannot but acknowledge and be ſenſible of your kindneſs towards me; ſo I cannot but accept, and endeavour to improve it, ſo far as may be for the advancing of the Lord's cauſe, and publiſhing, as he ſhall aſſiſt, the great and mighty works that he hath done for us, and our fathers, and for that poor ſpeckled bird, and buſh burning, yet not conſumed, the church of SCOTLAND.

O honoured and very dear Brethren, be not diſcouraged, but encourage yourſelves in the Lord, the KING OF SAINTS: Though few and every way contemptible like, yet it is JEHOVAH's Cauſe, who is the Lord of hoſts: He is engaged for you, and what can Omnipotency not do?

O honoured O greatly honoured Scotland, above all nations, to diſplay Chriſt's ſtandard for the truth, to carry, and keep it up againſt all oppoſition; yea and to

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ſtate the cauſe, and declare war againſt the bloody and whoriſh beaſt, and all his ſupporters, whether right, or left hand enemies. O who could have believed that the that the pooreſt, and moſt contemptible among the nations, poor Scotland, ſhould have been thus honoured, or that ſhe ſhould have maintained ſuch a long and coſtly warfare, againſt ſo bloody, ſo mighty, ſo ſubtile, ſo rich, and numerous armies, recruited again and again, from the very ſtool of Rome, and from all the courts of Antichriſt, yea with all the policy, cruelty and ſubtilty that hell itſelf could invent, a war, not only foreign but inteſtine; maintained, not by nobles, gentry, ſtateſmen, experienced wariours, nor by great and learned miniſters; but by a poor ſilly, feckleſs like company, enabled to do great exploits, and to counter-act the deepeſt counſels that have ever been managed againſt a poor church, and that notwithſtanding of the many treacheries carried on againſt them, by their own miniſters, and pretended brethren amongſt themſelves.

O behold and wonder! O praiſe, praiſe and be encouraged, for great is the Lord our God, *the lion of the tribe of Judah.* O let every ſoul cry out, *not unto us, not unto us, but unto his name belongs the glory, the honour and praiſe.*

Let nothing diſcourage you, or make you lower your top-ſails; hold up the goſpel, coſt what it will; he has often, yea often declared his good pleaſure in that way, in defending, ſheltering, bleſſing and encouraging the followers thereof. And he ſhall yet make the greateſt of his enemies ſtrike ſail thereto.

O honoured and dear Brethren, one field-preachin g this day, (when by a wicked law it is interdicted) is a greater teſtimony for Chriſt, and his cauſe, than all our lives are worth (read Dan. vi. 7,——10.) yea than all the preachings I know of in the world this day. O be much in prayer to God, for our worthy friend Mr. Jaines, who is the miniſter, this day in the world, that I durſt venture my life with, and if it might pleaſe the Lord to call me to that land, if my heart deceive me not greatly, I would count it a greater honour to carry his wallet, than to wear a crown; I hope he is a ſon of many prayers, both at home, and abroad, and one that Satan kythes much malice at, O that he may ſpoil his kingdom, and advance greatly the kingdom of our ſweet Lord Jeſus. I doubt not but ye are looking out for

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ſtorms, for I think there is a chattering of the poor birds here, before the bitter winter come on, a blaſt before the ſtorm. O I think there ſhall be no ſhelter ere it be long, ſave under the ſhadow of the Almighty: and O but that ſhall be made yet ſweeter, and far more refreſhing to ſome, even in time, than either men or angels ſhall ever be able to expreſs, for the life of faith is never half experienced, as long as there is a dry inch without the ark to ſet our foot upon. But now the Lord's people are called to wait upon him, to mind duty, and ſeriouſly to ponder, what the time, the opportunity, and diſpenſations under which they are at preſent call for, waxing ſtrong in the Lord and in the power of his might; for yet a little while, and he that ſhall come, will come, and will not tarry.

Thus wiſhing that the Lord God may lead you as a flock through the wilderneſs, by counſel, protection, and direction, making freſh and living ſprings of comfort, life and conſolation accompany you. I remain,

Much honoured, and my deareſt Brethren, your real ſympathizer and ſervant, in the work of the Lord.

May 8th, 1684. ROBERT HAMILTON.

P. S. I received a ſhort line from my Brother in Groningen, ſhewing that Thomas Ruſſel was lately at profeſſor *Marck*, deſiring a ſight of your anſwer to their accuſation, and of the ſubſcribers names, upon ſeeing of which, he ſaid they were a whine bairns. And as for David Steel, he called him a poor ignorant *body*. John Henderſon is daily expected at Groningen, with a Call from Fife, for him to come home and preach the goſpel. O horrid actings! But I hope God will both diſcover and counter-act them, I think they are of the evil ſpirits that will be beſt thrown down by faith's weapons (faſting and prayer) for their way is (as of all ſectaries) to reproach dreadfully all that oppoſes them: except that, they have no other refuge.

O my dear Brethren, the Lord ſeems to be making a coſtly building in Scotland.—O its ſtrength and beauty ſhall yet be wonderful to the nations about: wait without wearying, and fight without fainting; hold off rocks on all hands; your trials, yea the depth of Jordan is yet to paſs; But the Lord is able to ſave to the uttermoſt;

moſt; and when he ſhall take the coverings off his houſe, bring it above board, ye ſhall be made to ſay that all the charges are well wared.

Now I muſt end, though loth to part; I hope ye will mind me, and lay it upon all to do it. The bleſſing of him that was ſeparated from his brethren be with you all.

ROBERT HAMILTON.

Here follows a Letter from the General Meeting, July 31ſt, 1684.

The contending and ſuffering diſtreſſed Remnant of the Church of Scotland.——*To the Right famous* John a Marck, *Profeſſor of Divinity, in the Univerſity of* Groningen.

Right famous Sir,

IF we ſhould forget you, we ſhould prove altogether ungrateful, for we have had (by the information of our right honourable delegate, and ſuch of our friends as have been with you) held out unto us large proofs of the reſounding of your bowels of ſympathy towards us, of your care and kindneſs many ways manifeſted, which to us, a poor people in the furnace of affliction, is no ſmall encouragement, and refreſhment, conſidering that the Lord hath put you in ſuch an eminent capacity of doing good, not only to us, but to his church throughout the whole world.

O employ (as heretofore you have done) your place and lay out your gifts, which God hath bountifully beſtowed upon you, for himſelf, and the reviving of his church throughout the earth: What is ſo deſireable, as to do for Chriſt, and to ſuffer with him? His croſs is more to be eſteemed than the riches, pomp and gallantry of this world; yea, he who ſpeaks comfortably to his church in the wilderneſs gives ſo much of his company with his croſs, as ſhe is made to cry out, that her lines are fallen to her in pleaſant places; we are ſo convinced of the tender feeling which ye have of our diſtreſſes and perplexities, and confident of the continuance thereof, as that we know we need not now crave the ſame; however we make this humble addreſs unto you, earneſtly *begging*, that ye would recommend (not ours but the Lord's

Lord's cauſe, contended and ſuffered for by us; and our deplorable, and lamentable caſe, unto foreign churches: That ſo the Lord's work may be ſtrengthened, and the ſpirits of ſuch as are in the furnace of affliction revived; and that there may be a right underſtanding amongſt Zion's well-wiſhers, how their common cauſe and intereſt ſtands, for, as the rage of the adverſaries of truth is inſatiable; ſo their purpoſes are not againſt a ſhare of us only, but the whole goſpel intereſt.

We deſire likewiſe a line from your hand unto ourſelves, for you abundantly know what an orphan-condition we are in, and how we get no reſt from grappling with extreme difficulties. And becauſe we look upon you as a *father*. Therefore we make the more bold to deſire you to lay it upon that reverend learned and pious Preſbytery of Groningen to clear themſelves of that foul aſperſion of Eraſtianiſm, and defending of corruption, which they are charged with, by theſe who have made defection from our church. For we may with grief of heart rehearſe it, that theſe miniſters who have ſurrendered up the privileges of Chriſt's houſe, and deſerted his followers, make their malice no more to appear in reproaching us, than in reproaching that famous Preſbytery; yea, their expreſſions are ſuch, as a tender heart would not find freedom to rehearſe them again. And now we clearly ſee, that they oppoſe themſelves not only to us, our wreſtlings, and ſufferings, ſome of them ſaying no leſs, than that they could deliver us up into the hands of the common adverſary, becauſe we deſire to hold faſt what we have received, to quit with all our own things, before we quit with Chriſt. But they put another face upon it, branding us, as if we were the only incendiaries of church and ſtate: Whereas, it is only the kingdom of Satan that we endeavour to give no peace unto: But alſo (we ſay) they oppoſe themſelves to that venerable Preſbytery: yea and all reformed churches whoſe praiſe-worthy ways, are a teſtimony againſt their backſlidings. But ſure we are, that theſe noiſome winds which they raiſe in the air, ſhall tend to the more refining of it; and their continued oppoſition to truth, ſhall make it more clear, and precious, and tend to the vindication of the common goſpel intereſt.

Likewiſe, though we ourſelves be not in the leaſt doubt about it, having ſeen his teſtificate, and heard the ſame by the information of our honourable Delegate,

aud others whom we credit; yet it would be ſtrengthening to us againſt our antagoniſt, if that venerable Preſbytery ſhould in their long longed for letter, inſert that the ordination ot Mr. James Renwick was purely Preſbyterian, and binding him to the word of God, and the reformation of the church of Scotland, and to ſubject himſelf to the diſcipline of this church, according to the ſame.

The Lord's diſpenſations give to obſerve clearly, that ye, and we, are much called to ſtudy to be one in him; for without any difficulty we diſcern that our oppoſites are become your oppoſites, and yours are become ours. Let us therefore flee in unto the Lord by frequent and fervent prayer, that he may lead us in the way of truth and holineſs, where the wayfaring men, though fools, ſhall not err. Let us only ſtudy to deny our own ſtrength, which is but weakneſs, and our own wiſdom, which is but folly, that we may truſt in the Lord with our whole hearts, and ſo be fitted for diſplaying a banner againſt all his adverſaries, with this motto upon it: *The Lord of hoſts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge: our ſowing in tears, doth promiſe a reaping time in joy; for he will give unto ſuch as are mourning in Zion, beauty for aſhes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garments of praiſe for the ſpirit of heavineſs.*——Therefore let us wait upon him, and encourage ourſelves in him; for his appearing for the church is ſtill ſeaſonable.

Now the Lord God be with you, and make you as a brazen wall and an iron pillar againſt all Zion's oppoſers, and give you to fight the good fight of faith, enduring to the end, that ye may get the crown, whoſe motto is, To the Overcomers. In your prayers always mind us, a poor, diſtreſſed, bleeding, and perplexed people. Who remain,

Your really obliged friends, and always obedient Servants in the Lord.

Subſcribed in our name, and by our direction, by the clerk of our General Meeting.

MICHAEL SHIELD *S.*

Given and Subſcribed at ——
JULY 31*ſt*, 1684.

From

From the contending and ſuffering reformed church of Scotland, *to their right honourable and truſty Delegate Mr.* Robert Hamilton.

July 31*ſt*, 1684.

Right hon. and dearly beloved in the Lord,

IT is like, our correſpondence together, by reaſon of the diſtance of place, your intended travels, and the difficulty of tranſmitting letters, may be for a ſeaſon interrupted. However, as we are bound in duty, we ſhall endeavour, through the Lord's gracious aſſiſtance, to keep up a mindfulneſs of you, and that work wherein the Lord hath employed you for us, always praying the Lord may direct you wiſely to manage his cauſe againſt all his oppoſites; (as in a great meaſure he hath done heretofore) may make you a brazen wall and an iron pillar in his houſe; may bleſs your labours and travels; and that, when his holy will is, he (preſerving you in your work) may reſtore you unto us, loaded with the ſpoils of Antichriſt, trophies of the kirk of Chriſt, and the longed-for fruits of your painful labours.

O right honourable and truſty Commiſſioner, Go on in your work, fear not men, the cauſe is the Lord's, and he will glorioufly own it. What ſhall we ſay to his praiſe and to your encouragement, but we are meeting with many proofs of his power and faithfulneſs, even when our furnace is hotteſt; we may ſay, he is ſtill delivering us, either by preventing trials, or ſupporting under trials; he, as it were, lays the bridle upon the mane of adverſaries, and yet lets it be ſeen that in ſome meaſure they cannot get us reached. O! how glorious is he in wiſdom, power, holineſs juſtice, goodneſs and truth; he is laying pledges into our hands that he will do great things for us, whereof we ſhall be glad, and which he ſhall proclaim among the heathen. We are perſuaded he is poſting upon his way to appear for his broken and buried work; he will come at an unexpected time, and in an unexpected manner, and happy ſhall they be whom he will find at their work, and who are not ſleeping with the generality of this generation: But ſure we are, there are ſad days abiding ſuch as are dealing with a ſlack hand this day, and who refuſe to anſwer his call now, when

when he is many ways presenting himself to his people, and testifying his willingness to return again to them. O! we do not doubt but that he will return, and that suddenly; and he hath great mercies abiding these that are waiting for him; but judgments, judgments, judgments we are sure shall usher them in. Let us prepare to wade through judgments toward his mercies; and O! noble way that he takes, for we cannot be otherwise prepared for mercies.

How shall we open up our hearts, or unfold our thoughts unto you? The Lord he is God and the Captain of our salvation, a cleared sight whereof would obscurate all the difficulties that are in the way, and carry the eye over both the long, weary, slimy, and thorny wilderness, and the proud swellings of Jordan, beholding and contemplating the good and promised land. We hope the Lord hath taught you better than to regard opposition in your way of serving and following him, for the more sad your ways be, the more glorious shall be your victory; you will misken yourself, when, instead of a crown of thorns, you get an immortal crown of glory put upon your head, and a cloathing of white raiment, always beholding him who is the wonder and praise of the family of that higher house.

But now, we commit you to the Lord for directing, comforting and supporting grace, praying that he may be with you in your intended travels, and make your pains tend to the up-raising of his work; and for what he hath done by you, we desire to bless him, putting a prize upon all his mercies, especially upon that inestimable benefit of his gospel, which is as reviving from the dead. Let us, if possible, hear from you, ere you depart from the place where you now are, and let us know wherein it lies in our power to be encouraging and strengthening unto you. So again, we leave you upon the good hand of your God and our God, hoping that we need not desire you in prayer to be mindful of us, who are,

Your Honour's obliged and endeared friends, brethren, and Servants in the Lord,

Subscribed in our name, and by our direction, by the clerk of our General Meeting,

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

From

From the contending, wrestling, suffering and distressed, reformed church of Scotland, to the true Protestant and reformed church at Groningen, *particularly the ministers thereof.*

July 31*st*, 1684.

Right reverend and dearly Beloved,

THE sweet experience which we have had of your receiving, and faithfulness in weighing our former addresses, with the circumstances wherein we stand, hath given us abundant encouragement to catch hold of this present opportunity of the unfolding somewhat of our sorrows, which your love and our necessity invites and calls, yea commands us to represent to your sympathy and compassion; however, we are confident, we may commit much to the faithfulness of our right honourable Delegate, to lay open unto you our sad and deplorable condition. And we are assured that the love ye bear to the common cause of all Christians will not suffer you to shut your eyes from the bleeding and lamentable condition of the poor distressed church of *Scotland*. Should we not therefore seek to ease our burdened hearts, by pouring them out into your bosoms? for if we should neglect this, we would seem ungrateful towards you, who have given so large and ample evidences of your readiness to do for us, and suffer with us.

Assuredly, if ever a poor church was battered at by Satan and his instruments, we are that church; if ever a poor people were beset round with right and left hand opposites, we are that people: if ever a poor remnant were the objects of Antichrist's cruelty and apostatical malice, we are that remnant: For the Lord hath called forth and strengthened an enemy against us, *the rod of of his anger, and the staff of his indignation*: a generation of men whose spirits are set on edge by the fury of hell, under whose exasperate cruelties we sigh and mourn, they drawing their furrows upon our backs. Many of us are daily led as lambs to the slaughter; yea, and at the hour of our death are not permitted to commend the free grace of God in Christ, to speak to the loveliness and desirableness of the cross, to exhort others to stedfastness in the cause, nor to proclaim that *the lines*

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are fallen to us in pleaſant places. Some are ſhut up in priſon-houſes, laid in irons, and ſo barbarouſly kept, that thoſe whom they are moſt ſtrictly related unto, either by the bonds of nature or Chriſtianity, can have no acceſs unto them. Others are ſent away to foreign plantations to be ſold as ſlaves; and all of us, we may ſay, put to wander with our lives in our hands, and to eat our bread in the peril of our lives, many of our reſidences being in the wild mountains, dens and caves of the earth, the enraged adverſary ſtill ſearching and purſuing after us, and many ſtill permitted to fall into their hands. But O! we need not expreſs unto you the inveterate and deadly malice of this malignant, profane, and antichriſtian faction; for what true Proteſtant know it not, that the rage of ſtated enemies againſt the church of Chriſt is inſatiable. However, the Lord is our witneſs, that our grief and trouble is not ſo much becauſe of the dangers we are in, and of the miſery which we are liable to; but that which moſt affects our hearts, is the danger which we behold the whole Proteſtant reformed churches are in at this juncture, through the universal conſpiracies and combinations amongſt avowed enemies to religion, their ſtrength, by appearance, ſtill increaſing. If our God will lay our bodies as the ſtreet under our feet, and pour out our blood as duſt before their fury, his holy and wiſe will be done: For, if our blood would be a mean to recover or preſerve the reſt of the true churches of Chriſt from antichriſtian tyranny we are willing to offer it up for the ſervice: But we know their fury is inſatiable, and will not die with us they being armed againſt us, not as men, but as Chriſtians. Yet what ſhall we ſay, we dare not quarrel nor repine at our low caſe, but we ought rather to rejoice in it, ſeeing that it makes for the manifeſtation of the Lord's attributes toward us; for we may ſay, he gets new occaſion to make his power manifeſt, taking hold of our extremity as his opportunity; ſo that we may ſay, we are troubled on every ſide, yet not deſtroyed; we are perplexed, but not in deſpair; perſecuted, but not forſaken; caſt down, but not deſtroyed. For we are not made ſo much to mourn becauſe of the length that enemies are permitted to proceed againſt us, as to wonder that they get not more of their purpoſes accompliſhed, for day and night they weary themſelves purſuing after the guiltleſs. Many times we are delive-

ed out of their hands as a prey plucked out of their teeth, and this we esteem much, not as it is our deliverance, but as it manifests the Lord's power and faithfulness towards us, and encourages us to believe that he shall do great things for us: Wherefore our mouths shall be filled with laughter, our tongue with singing, and we shall be made to proclaim among the heathen, *The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad:* Yea, we are always delivered, for we account it a blessed and happy deliverance, that (though some faint, yet) many are kept faithful unto the death, choosing rather to quit with their heads than any of the precious truths of Christ, they singing in the hot furnace, and crying out, that *their lines are fallen to them in pleasant places.*

Now, Right reverend and dearly beloved in our Lord, we have the more encouragement to lay out our case every way unto you, that your brotherly sympathy and labours of love have been manifest to us all, and throughout the world, by your kindly acceptance of our right honourable and faithful Delegate's informations, your respecting and crediting him whom we owe so much respect and credit unto; by your affectionate kindness unto and ordaining of Mr. *James Renwick*, who is to us a faithful minister of Jesus Christ, which hath furnished us with no small encouragement and refreshment in this day of our distress; the Lord giving evidences that he is his messenger; and also, by your hitherto friendly entertaining of such as have been sent to your colleges: Withal, earnestly, though humbly, begging and intreating, that (if there be any possibility of it) ye would condescend upon some way for the future maintaining of some of our youths at your colleges; for we may say, as we are not able to maintain them abroad, so our schools and colleges at home are so corrupt and ensnaring, that none who will not run with them into the same excess of error and riot, can or dare meddle with the same. However, we seriously desire that none from this land be owned or acknowledged by you, who have not our testificate or the recommendation of our Delegate. And as to these, who without our knowledge or counsel have already crept in amongst you with their errors and calumnies, tending to the weakning of the Protestant interest; we hope we need not again warn you, judging that snare to be already broken. So, in a deeper sense of our case, and with greater confidence of your sym-

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pathy (having had proofs of the ſame) than we can expreſs, we make this humble addreſs unto you, in the bowels of Chriſt, earneſtly imploring your moſt fervent prayers for us to the Lord, who is the hearer of prayer, that he who hides his face from us, may yet return again and lift up the light of his countenance upon us, may reclaim his captivated declarative glory, and ſubdue and ſcatter the enemies thereof.

Now, the Lord proſper you, and preſerve us, that we may all, as one man, ſtand up againſt Antichriſt and all his limbs, and whatever is contrary to ſound doctrine and the power of godlineſs, that ſo the work of theſe latter ages may be carried on, to the honour of God and the Church's joy, through Jeſus Chriſt.——So, we remain,

Your obliged friends, and humble Servants in the Lord,

Subſcribed in our name, and by our direction, by the Clerk of our General Meeting,

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

The contending and wreſtling, ſuffering and diſtreſſed reformed church of Scotland, *to the true reformed church at* Embden.

July 31ſt, 1684.

Right revd. and dearly beloved in the Lord,

OUR long delaying to teſtify our acknowledgment of your kindly ſympathy and friendly commiſeration of us in our diſtreſſed, bleeding and perplexed caſe, may make you apprehend that we are forgetful of the great benefits which we received from your hands, and ungrateful towards yourſelves: but we earneſtly intreat that no ſuch thought may be entertained; for though our tranſmiſſion of letters to you, hath hitherto, by reaſon of ſome providential exigences, been obſtructed, yet the ſenſe of the duty of thankfulneſs which we owe unto you is, and we hope will be, always upon our ſpirits. Albeit we be in ſuch a poor caſe as we are not able, the moſt willing, to manifeſt the ſame by remunerating you

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ıy manner of way, according to your kindneſs ſhown, ıd liberality extended towards us; but we know in what : did, therein ye had your eye upon duty, and not u- ɔn reward. And your charitable frame of ſpirit which ıs evidenced to us by your bounty, and declared by our ght honourable Commiſſioner, was more encouraging d refreſhing to us than all worldly things could be; r we look upon the ſounding of bowels among Chriſ- ıns as a great token of good to the univerſal church, ıich (as we a poor part thereof are in a deplorable ſe) is in a very dangerous condition; the rage of ene- ies being inſatiable, not bended againſt us as men, but Chriſtians, yea as Proteſtants; and the more they evail againſt us, the more courage they take to enter :o univerſal plots and conſpiracies againſt the whole formed churches. Therefore let us account the ſuf- ring of one member as intended againſt all; and ſo let take heed to ourſelves and to our common goſpel in- reſt; for the plots of Satan and his inſtruments are no ɔre deep than univerſal. Let it be our ſtudy to be led the way of truth and holineſs, which is the way of eaſantneſs, and to ſtand up as one man againſt Anti- riſt, and whatever men of antichriſtian and malignant irits would intrude upon the kingdom of our Lord. :t us beware of affronting our noble Captain by yield- g to his enemies one foot of ground, for the cauſe is s, and it is worth the contending for. It is ſo honou- ble and precious that nothing is too coſtly to beſtow up- it. And if the Lord were not letting us ſee that this uſe which we are contending and ſuffering for, is his ɔn cauſe, and the heads of our ſufferings are his crown d the pendicles of it: were it not ſo, we would ſoon ld and give it over: for theſe men who are the rod the Lord's anger againſt us have their ſpirits on edge by the fire of hell: their fury is ſo fiery, eir rage ſo cruel, and their ſnares ſo ſubtle, that our e hath none ſo like it, as was the condition of the dly in the Netherlands, in the time of the Spaniſh in- iſition. But we cannot get time to look upon our mi- ies and dangers, being forced to turn our contempla- n another way, to wit, to behold the wonderful works the Lord in his doing for us in this our low condition, ſtirring up the ſpirits of you and of ſome others to mpathize with us, by bearing up our ſpirits under this ry trial, you drawing out his breaſts of conſolation,

in ſuch a meaſure amongſt us that are burden-bearers i the heat of this our day, that many are made to cry ou Their work is eaſy, *their lines are fallen to them in ple ſant places*; and by wonderfully delivering us out of th claws of this roaring adverſary, and plucking us as a pr out of their teeth, when ſenſe, reaſon and probabili ſaid the contrary; ſo that from his power and faithfu neſs, meeting with many inexpreſſible proofs of the ſam we deſire to believe, that becauſe of the glory of his gre name he will do great things for us, yea work wonder for indeed no leſs can raiſe up his born-down, yea ruin work in Scotland. But though the church's diſeaſe this time be deplorable, yet we dare not look upon it incurable, ſeeing Jeſus Chriſt the faithful phyſici (who meddles only with deſperate diſeaſes, that his ſk fulneſs may the more appear) is engaged to look up it, and to help it. He *will heal* her *backſlidings and w love* her *freely*: and *will turn away* his *anger from* he yea, *and will be as the dew unto* her, ſo that ſhe *ſh grow as the lily, and caſt forth* her *roots as Lebanon*. H *branches ſhall ſpread*, her *beauty ſhall be as the olive-tr and* her *ſmell as Lebanon*. We deſire to wait for th longed-for day, and for the time when judgment ſh return again to righteouſneſs, and when men ſhall di cern between the righteous and the wicked.

So, right reverend, much honoured and dearly bel ved, make many errands to the throne of grace for u praying earneſtly and frequently that the Lord who the great maſter-builder of his own work, may wor and accompliſh his work amongſt us, and perfect th ſame over the belly of all oppoſition; and that we m be ſtrengthened with patience to endure to the en ſtanding out reſolutely againſt our outward and inwa enemies, and no-ways ſtaining the honour of the glorio Captain of our ſalvation.

Now, the Lord God of hoſts be with you, and forti fy your ſpirits againſt all the machinations of Sata making you all good ſoldiers, clothed with his armo of proof, that ye may endure to the end, and enjoy th crown which he hath laid up for all that fear him. W ſhall detain you no further at the time, humbly deſirin (if poſſible) to be dignified with a line from your hand which ſhall be moſt refreſhing and reviving unto

Your moſt obliged and endeared friends, and obedient ſervants in all Chriſtian duty.

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Subscribed in our name, and by our direction, by the Clerk of the General Meeting.

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

THE next General meeting was October 15th, 1684. The state of the country in general, and of the societies in particular, at that time being pretty largely described by Mr. *Alexander Shields*, in his account of the life of Mr. *James Renwick*, from page 47, to 69. The reader must be referred thereto. Only a short hint shall be here given.

September 20th, a most viperous proclamation, with letters of inter-communing was issued out against Mr. Renwick, &c. commanding, and commissionating all subjects, not to harbour nor supply with meat, drink, &c. the wanderers, but to hunt and pursue them out of all their dens, caves, and most retired deserts, and to raise the HUE, and CRY after them; and not to reset, or correspond with them, under the pain of being esteemed art and part with them, and to be prosecute accordingly.

With this wicked mandate many complied, so that the poor persecuted wanderers were reduced to incredible straits, many were taken and murdered, imprisoned, and reduced to great hardships of hunger and cold; occasioned especially by the indefatigable vigilance of some *vagabond villains*, who were suborned, and encouraged to give information, and intelligence of them, wherever they saw, or heard they were seen: Thus they being in such *a pinch of perplexity*, having neither ability to fight, nor possibility to flee, nor probability to hide themselves, nor means of sustentation to preserve themselves alive, by hiding: They were forced to fall upon the only expedient they could think upon, in order to evite their ineluctable ruin, which was to warn intelligencers, and bloody *Doegs*, of the wickedness of their way, and to threaten them, (in case of persisting in malicious shedding of their blood, or instigating thereto, and assisting therein) that they would not be so slack handed in time coming to revenge it; that thus threatening, and warning them of their hazard, they might deter intelligencers, and murders from such a practice; and to vindicate themselves *from false aspersions*, of murdering principles.

ciples caſt upon them by the Counſel, the indulged and their abettors; by an ingenious apologetick repreſentation of their ſentiments, and reſolutions in theſe things, ſhewing how after the example of our reformers, contending with bloody tyrants, in former times, how far they were neceſſitate to contend, and reduce to practice, in their preſent circumſtances, that privilege of extraordinary executing of judgment on murdering beaſts of prey. See the above quotted book.

Wherefore, at the General Meeting October 15th, 1684, they concluded upon the Apologetick Declaration, (which is printed with the Informatory Vindication) which although it made ſome of the intelligencers, ſtand in fear to follow that way ſo avowedly; yet it was made the greateſt handle of by the perſecutors, and of reproach by the miniſters and others, of any thing they had ever done; for ſhortly after the perſecutors framed an oath abjuring the ſaid Declaration, which oath of abjuration, was univerſally preſſed in ſuch an arbitrary manner as was never heard of before, in theſe words. *I do abjure, renounce and diſown a late Declaration*, &c. This oath being preſſed on both men and women, and ſuch as refuſed it impriſoned, and not a few of them execute on that head, although alas! many, yea very many complied, being inſtigate thereto, by the counſel, and example of ſuch as were called ſuffering Preſbyterian miniſters.—— Notwithſtanding Mr. Alexander Shields, hath ſhown the ſinfulneſs of this oath in Hind let Looſe, Part 3d, Head 3d. and in Mr. Renwick's Life, Page 58, &c. Yet it is hoped the inſertion of a letter of Mr. James Renwick's upon that ſubject, will be acceptable to the reader.

A Letter by Mr. James Renwick, concerning the Oath of Abjuration, to ſome Friends.

Loving Friends,

ACCORDING to your deſire, and my promiſe, I ſhall write to you my thoughts (in weakneſs) of this fair faced, though foul hearted, Oath, ſo violently preſſed upon the conſciences of young and old, lad and laſs, by the wicked powers of the land, whereby many ſouls are catched in the ſnare, and fallen in the pit digged by them, not conſidering, or elſe not willing to ſee

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the hook under ſo fair a bait, nor the poiſon in the cup, although all their dainties be deceitful meat. And as this, upon the one hand ought to be matter of deep ſorrow, and mournful lamentation before the Lord, to all ſeriouſly concerned, and tender of the Lord's work and cauſe, againſt the wrongs and injuries done unto him, and that there ſhould be ſo many (and that in a covenanted land) wearying of his ſweet and eaſy yoke, as if he had been a barren wilderneſs, and a land of drought to them, who have now left his colours, and fled from his camp, and run unto Satan's (that great red *dragon*, fighting againſt *Michael* and his angels) and liſted themſelves under his banner, taking on his livery, and wreathing his yoke about their necks: O fooliſh people and unwiſe, have they thus requited the Lord? But as that yoke is a beggarly bondage, and an enſlaving thraldom, ſo their wages (if free mercy prevent not) ſhall be well paid them; even to *drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture, into the cup of his indignation*, Rev. xiv. 10.

So upon the other hand, we have this as a ground of encouragement, and matter of praiſe before the Lord, that notwithſtanding ſo many are *ruſhing, as the horſe into the battle*, into enemies camps, and receiving their mark in their right hand, or forehead, that yet there are many in this land whom the Lord has helped, and honoured by his grace, to follow him, walking in his way, and hath kept them at a diſtance from the pollutions and abominations of the times; and out theſe deſtructive paths yea *to reſiſt unto blood ſtriving againſt ſin*. And I am hopeful he will keep a Remnant, whom neither the wind of temptation ſhall blow away, nor the flame of perſecution burn, nor the fire of judgment conſume; *But they ſhall be a holy ſeed, to do ſervice to him, as a teil tree, or oak, whoſe ſubſtance is in them*, when the carcaſes of thouſands ſhall dung the wilderneſs.

Having premiſed this, I ſhall next unboſom my thoughts of the ſinfulneſs of the Oath (of Abjuration) by producing ſome reaſons againſt the Oath itſelf, earneſtly deſiring any who ſhall be at the pains to look on this line, to read it ſeriouſly, ſingly, and impartially, weighing the ſame in the balance of the ſanctuary. And

1*ſt*, There can no oath be taken rightly, except the perſon taking it, ſwear *in truth*, in judgment and in righte-

ouſneſs. But, O how can any think to take it, the deſigns thereof (as ſhall be ſhown) are ſo evi- y deſtructive to the intereſt of religion, that is now at the ſtake; and alſo, the perſons impoſing it, are red enemies to God, and all righteouſneſs: And are awfully and juſtly diſowned, as having no right to ern for their perjury and murder, for their uſurpa- n in things eccleſiaſtic, and tyranny in things civil.

2*dly*, All who anſwer the enemies demand in takin- is oath, are guilty of complying with their helliſh an- icked deſigns to root out, and raze to the foundatio- he Proteſtant Intereſt (which, alas, is brought low by the already) that they may ſet up in its place their ſuperſtiti- ous idolatry, and build their curſed Babel; for to effe- tuate this, they fall upon this deſign, to have the hand- heads, and hearts of all tied up from doing any thing fo- the preſervation of religion: Is not this evident fro- that oath, wherein they ſwear, not to have war againſ- but peace with theſe whoſe deſigns are ſuch? O drea- ful and monſtrous wickedneſs, to be guilty of rooti- out the work of God, and laying the foundation of th- curſed Babel again.

3*dly*, All the takers of this wretched oath, cannot fr- themſelves of being guilty of condemning all that o- fore-fathers have done in the defence and preſervati- of our glorious work of Reformation, and in defence of themſelves, againſt Papiſts, Prelates, and Malignants.

4*thly*, All the takers of this oath ſwear never to ma- war with theſe who are following their footſteps, yea, a- worſe than theſe who went before them; yea, the taki- thereof ſays, that the enemies oppoſition has been right, a- the Lord's people wrong, and acted as fools, and ſuff- ed as ſuch; which were blaſphemy to aſſert: For t- import and deſign of that declaration, abjured by t- oath, is nothing but to carry on and advance that g- rious work of Reformation, and to defend themſel- againſt all oppoſers, (which nature allows) ſeeing th- enemies had declared war againſt them, and their d- claring war, was but a repelling of violence. O wic- ſin, to be guilty of condemning and burying of ſuc- glorious work.

5*thly*, All who take this oath, ſwear unto a lie, f- ſays that the declaration is for killing all who ſerv- Majeſty in church, ſtate, army, or country; wher- makes a plain diſtinction obvious to all, betwee-

more moderate, and the cruel and blood-thirſty, and to make the degree of puniſhment, according to the degree of their offence. And doth not the taking of God (who is truth itſelf) to witneſs to ſuch a lie, make the ſin greatly heinous, and may not ſuch expect that their hands will be made ſtrong?

6thly, The ſwearers of this oath make themſelves guilty of that blaſphemous ſupremacy, eſtabliſhed by their law, in the perſon of a dying wretched mortal, over all perſons, and in all cauſes, which properly belongs to Chriſt, as being head in and over his own church: And this they have twined into the oath, in theſe words, "all who ſerve his Majeſty, in Church and State." And ſo by this oath, the Prelates, Curates, and other officers of their church are ſaid (not to ſerve or be ſubject to Chriſt) but to him, and he to be their head and fountain, from whence they derive their power, ſo theſe who take this oath, may expect to meet with that ſame meaſure of wrath, if repentance prevent it not, with theſe who are actually guilty of robbing Chriſt of his royal prerogatives, when he ariſes as an incenſed Mediator to reclaim his own rights and declarative glory, thus uſurped and trode upon by the wicked.

7thly, By taking of this oath, they become guilty of perjury: A wicked and epidemick ſin; for in our Solemn League and Covenant, we are bound to the utmoſt of our power, to extirpate popery, prelacy, and malignancy, *&c.* Now, how can any fulfil their engagements to God, when they ſwear not to have war, yea not ſo much as move their tongue (which they will interpret to be a declaring war) againſt the chief ringleaders, and promovers of popery and prelacy. And O can any free this of perjury? Shall they break the covenant and be delivered? No, the Lord who is a ſwift witneſs againſt all falſe ſwearers, will puniſh ſuch.

8thly, By taking this oath they ſwear to have peace with the enemies of God, theſe *Amalekites* againſt whom he will have war, from generation to generation; and we are commanded in Deut. xxiii. 6. not to ſeek their peace nor proſperity all our days for ever. And is not this ſwearing not to have war againſt his enemies, a clear breach of that command given by God to his people? And likewiſe in our baptiſmal vows, we are given away to the Lord, to fight under his banner, againſt the devil, the world, and the fleſh. O let us not break our vows

in making peace with any of them, leſt we provoke him to let us fall as a prey before them, and them to have dominion over us; and ought not this to make a tender hearted Chriſtian ſcar at it, becauſe they have made it a diſcriminating ſign, and token, between the good and the bad, to know who are on their ſide, and who not; and that none are to buy, or ſell, without they have the mark of the beaſt, (the paſs ſhewing they have taken the oath of peace) in their right hand, or fore-head.

9thly, The ſwearing of it is a wronging of juſtice, ſeeing by this oath they are not to have war with any that ſerve his Majeſty, in church, ſtate, army, or country, whereas many of them by their open and avowed murder, perjury, blaſphemy, and idolatry, have forefeited their lives, and made themſelves liable to the ſtroke and ſword of juſtice; for the land that is defiled with blood, cannot be cleanſed, but by the blood of him who ſhed it. Numb. xxxv. 31, 32, 33.

10thly, Theſe who take this wretched oath of peace will not be exempted from the next trial that cometh through; for although they have gone on in the whole ſteps of defection formerly, yet if they anſwer not the preſent demand of the enemies, all that they have done before, will be to no purpoſe; yea what may be expected next, but that the Whore of Rome ſpread her mantle of darkneſs over theſe covenanted lands. O happy ſoul, in that day, who ſhall be found near God, and far from the tents of theſe wicked men; for it is to be feared that theſe who have gone on in the former ſteps of defection, will make but a ſtep of this alſo, ſeeing (it hath been obſerved) that defection in this day, hath grown by degrees, and gone on by little and little, till they have been one with open enemies. Not deſiring to trouble you further, I remain,

Yours at command in the Lord Jeſus.

Sic Subſcribitur, JAMES RENWICK.

THE troubles and trials betwixt the laſt meeting and this, were very many and lamentable. The malice, the deſpite, the rage, the tyranny and cruelty of the enemies were come to a great height, and much of the ſame was exerciſed againſt the Societies, and ſuch as befriended them. The apologetic Declaration, ſpoken of before, being

being affixt on many church doors, it made a great noiſe thro' the whole land. Upon the one hand, it did much deter theſe intelligencers (concerning whom it was eſpecially emitted) from that wicked work they were formerly employed in. And it (with ſomething that fell out at that time) * did not a little damp and fright many malignants in the Weſt, and elſewhere, eſpecially ſuch who had been active in the perſecution of the wanderers; particularly many of the Curates, were ſo terrified, that in ſome places, as in Galloway and Nithſdale, ſcarce one of them durſt ſtay, but went into Edinburgh and other towns: And upon the other hand, the Counſel iſſued out a proclamation, commanding the taking of an oath abjuring the foreſaid Declaration, which thereafter, was vigorouſly and rigorouſly impoſed.——The diſtreſſes, the calamities, and afflictions of the Societies, were many, and of various kinds; ſoldiers were impowered to kill any of them, wherever they could be found with arms, (which they were neceſſitate to have, for their own, and their brethren's defence) accordingly ſome of them were killed in cold blood in the open fields, ſome were dragged to priſons, others were murdered on ſcaffolds. And the toſſings, wanderings, and hardſhips the reſt were redacted to, were very great.

In this ſad time a General Meeting conveened at *Auchengilloch*, upon the 8th day of January, 1685. After prayer, and modelling of the meeting, they approved of what was concluded at the laſt meeting which met at ——— the 15th of October, 1684.

A form of a Commiſſion, being preſented to, and read at this meeting, was agreed to; and it was reſolved, that all theſe who were to be ſent from Societies, to following General Meetings, ſhould have the ſaid form of Commiſſion; without which, they were not to be admitted. Which paper being drawn up, and condeſcended unto, was much for orders ſake afterward made uſe of, for Societies getting copies of it: theſe whom they ſent to General Meetings, had it ordinarily with them, wherein their name was inſert, and alſo the Society they came from, ſome of them ſubſcribing it, in name of the reſt, which was delivered to the perſon who received

* This ſeems to be that which is related by Mr. Renwick in one of his *Letters concerning Major* Wigram's children, ſee *page 81 of Renwick's Letters.*

the whole of theſe commiſſions, at every General Meeting, (*viz.* Mr. Shields). This method was obſerved, that it might be known that theſe who came there, were all ſent from the United Societies, and from what ſociety in particular, every one came: As alſo, to have ſome knowledge of the perſons themſelves that were ſent. The tenor of which paper follows.

WE the Society of ——— do hereby commiſſionate the bearer ——— ———, (being one of our number, and of one judgment and perſuaſion with ourſelves, and not chargeable with any public ſcandal) to this preſent General Meeting of the Commiſſioners of our United Societies, giving him full power, unanimous and free conſent, and aſſent, to vote, and in our name to agree unto every thing that may be concluded by them, according to the word of God, our covenants, and reformation, our former and later honeſt contendings, faithful declarations, proteſtations and ſufferings, and the concluſions of our foregoing General Meetings. Withal faithfully to oppoſe himſelf to whatever may be contrary to the foreſaids.

Given the —— day of ———. Subſcribed in our name, and by our direction, by a member of our Society.

A perſon came to this meeting from a Society in *Newcaſtle*, in *Northumberland*, who correſponded with the United Societies, and gave ſome account of their preſent caſe, and of one particular, which they deſired the meeting's advice in, how they ſhould carry in it: which was this, ſome of their number having been priſoners, their relations had procured their liberty, without their knowledge, by giving bond to preſent them again.

Now it became puzzleing to them, to know what to do in this matter; whether to enter again to priſon, according to the ſaid bond, or to abſent themſelves, by which it would be forfeit: Therefore they deſired this meeting's advice anent it. Who after deliberation, concluded upon writing a Letter, in which is their advice in that particular. Of which letter the tenor followeth——

To

To some Friends in Newcastle.

Jan. 8th, 1685.

Dearly beloved Brethren in the Lord,

WE have heard from *John Scot*, whom we conceive to have had commission from you for that same effect, the difficulty and trials in your present case, which are in no small measure affecting to us. But, O! be not discouraged, but rather rejoice, that the Lord will not give unto you ease, which is very undesirable now when *Zion* is in trouble; neither think your fiery trials strange, for it is but the same in measure with what happens unto your brethren: And though no affliction for the present be joyous but grievous to flesh and blood, yet we cannot but look upon the greatest tribulation, when the work of God is so low, to be the greater testimony of his love.

However, as to our mind and advice anent your present strait, we judge it,

1*st*, Matter of great concernedness, both to you and us, that some of you should be redacted to that intricate extremity, that your sin and suffering is upon the one hand, and the suffering of our nearest and dearest relations upon the other, which we know assuredly, will be more bitter to you than any thing that can be brought upon yourselves in following your duty. But,

2*dly*, Ye, as we hope, not having consented actively or passively, by silence or concurrence, to your relations their purchasing your liberty, by a bond to present you again before the sessions; we judge it cannot be your duty to be either active or passive in presenting yourselves, but that ye ought to make out of the way, seeing ye know assuredly ye will be apprehended. (1.) It would infer your consenting to what your relations have done, in tampering with the adversary. (2.) It would infer your having a hand in your latter sufferings, which surely is both a sin in the sight of God, and very disquieting to the conscience; for though we ought chearfully to embrace suffering when the Lord sends it in our way, yet we ought first to have no hand in it ourselves, as not by omitting our duty in using what lawful means may prevent the same: When we are *persecuted in one city*, we are commanded to *fly to another*. Let all of you that

are at liberty uſe all means to keep yourſelves ſo; for if you ſhall caſt yourſelves into the trial, ye know not what ſnares the Lord may ſubject you unto, as your puniſhments, whereof ye may be made to repent out of time.

But, dear brethren, let not your preſent trials damp or confuſe you, for if the Lord had not ſeen ſuch a caſe for his glory and your good, he had not brought you unto it. Seek not the carving out of your own lot, but put it in the Lord's hand, and ſubſcribe your conſent unto what he ſees meet to do unto you; ſtudy to walk before him in the way of duty, in paths approven by him and well-pleaſing to him; and there, and there only, ye ſhall enjoy the comfortable light of his pleaſant countenance, wherewith he beholdeth the upright: ſeek the upmaking of all your wants in himſelf, who hath promiſed to take you up, *though father and mother ſhould both forſake you.*

Now, if ye incline thereunto, and ſee it fit to come into *Scotland*, and take part and lot with us, know aſſuredly, that ye ſhall be moſt acceptable; and though we can promiſe you nothing but perſecution, yet ye ſhall have our countenance, and all the encouragement that we can beſtow upon you: and we hope that ye ſhall not think your lot hard. So, leaving you upon the Lord, for the light of direction and conſolation, we remain,

Your affectionate brethren, ſympathizing friends, and ſervants in the Lord,

Subſcribed in our name, by our direction, and by the Clerk of our General Meeting,

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

It was alſo concluded by the meeting that a letter ſhould be written to the Laird of Earlſtoun, then a priſoner. Which accordingly after the meeting was drawn up and ſent. The occaſion of this reſolution was the hearing of a letter read, ſent by him to Mr. James Renwick that contained ſome account of his caſe at the time, which was not a little refreſhing and affecting to them.

From

From the ſuffering and wreſtling Remnant of the church of Scotland, *to the right honourable the Laird of* Earlſtoun, *priſoner for the cauſe of Chriſt.*

Jan. 8th, 1685.

Much honoured Sir,

YOUR letter, directed to the right reverend Mr. *James Renwick*, was very refreſhing and encouraging to us all; yea, we may ſay, a little reviving to our ſpirits in our bondage, having not heard from yourſelf, nor particularly of your caſe, for a conſiderable time before, which, together with the many troubles we have been and are tryſted with, hath occaſioned our not writing unto you: and although you have not heard from us after this manner, yet you have not been forgotten by us. But we were and are deſirous to know your caſe, and to keep up that due ſympathy and fellow-feeling with you, in your bonds for precious Chriſt, which we ought. However, we deſire to bleſs the Lord upon your account, who hath brought you for the maſeſting the riches of his free grace, through ſo many and ſo various trials and temptations, from within and without, from malicious enemies and flattering pretended friends; yea, hath brought you again from the gates of death, and ſides of the grave, gaping ready to devour you, thereby diſappointing the fears of his people, and expectations of his enemies, which you ought to look upon as teſtimonies of his love and fatherly chaſtiſements, that before you be unpurged and turn droſs in the furnace, he will take great pains upon you, and take you from one fire to another, till ye be a veſſel fitted for his ſervice; and when enemies think to add ſorrow to your affliction, in making you like an howl in the deſart, or a pelican in the wilderneſs, by ſhutting you up in cloſe priſon, far from the converſe of your friends and relations; that then and there he ſhould viſit you with his loving kindneſs, and fill your ſoul with a ſenſe of his love, and make you ſing in the midſt of theſe hot fires, (O wonderful love, and matchleſs condeſcendency!) and to ſay that heart-raviſhing and ſoul-comforting word, mentioned in your letter, *My Lord*: and not only ſo, but to give you ſuch a lively and ſavoury impreſſion upon your ſpirit of his public work, and noble cauſe in

this

this day, when it is worn off the ſpirits of many, who ſeemingly had it once; and, alas! too much off many of our own. All which, we ſay, as it is ground of encouragement, and matter of praiſe to us before the Lord; ſo you ought, in a ſpecial manner, to praiſe and magnify him for the ſame, and to make the experiences of his former loving kindneſs to your ſoul, as motives to believe, and helps to confide in him for the future; that he, who hath brought you thro' the depths before, remains faithful and cannot change, can and will bring you thro' the like again; yea, tho' he ſhould ſee it fit in his holy wiſdom to make you wade thro' waters deep and broad, and to make you go thro' fires more large and hot; yet, O faint not, truſt in him who hath done ſo great things to your and for you: Remember Chriſt, your Head and Captain, is above the waters; he waded thro' deeper waters, and ran through hotter fires, (and all for the redemption of poor loſt ſinners) than you or any of his people can do: Remember him, *who endured ſuch contradiction of ſinners*, and for ſinners; *who being tempted, knows how to ſuccour theſe that are ſo.* Labour to put a blank in his hand, that you may not quarrel with him, whatever lot he may tryſt you with. O his preſence will make any lot deſireable, for it ſupplies all wants, and makes the creature to rejoice, when robbed and ſpoiled of all other things; it makes afflictions light, and trials eaſy; it makes a priſon a palace, and the threatenings of men to be deſpiſed; yea, it will make the ſoul ſing and rejoice, when *going through the valley and ſhadow of death.*

Much honoured Sir, what ſhall we ſay more for your encouragement but this, Go on, go on, in your ſuffering for precious Chriſt; the cauſe you are ſuffering for is Chriſt's own cauſe, and he will own it in his own due time, and own all who own it ſincerely: He lives and reigns, and will reign; *The crown ſhall flouriſh on his head, and all his enemies be cloathed with ſhame.* And although enemies in this land will not have Chriſt to reign over them, having robbed him of his crown and royal prerogatives; and ſenſe and reaſon would ſay, he would never reign in this land, yet faith, which ſees clearly in the darkeſt night, will ſee him ſitting in his throne, reigning and ruling in and amongſt his people, and over his enemies; coming cloathed with the garments of vengence, and cloak of zeal againſt them, and with the garments

ments of ſalvation and mercy to his people. O happy ſouls that will be found in his way, and about their work when he comes, to whom his coming will only be ſweet. What ſhall we ſay more to his commendation? He is good, and does good, his croſs is eaſy, and his burden is light. He hath done and is doing great things for us; he hath been and is at great pains with us to purge us from our droſs, and make us a holy and cleanly people to himſelf. He hath given us the goſpel, and it ſeems he is countenancing the ſame, and increaſing the followers thereof. And O! he ſeems to be about to do ſome great work in this land, *to bring to paſs his act, his ſtrange act.*

Much honoured Sir, You make mention in your letter, of your reſolution to write at more length to us, when an opportunity offers. That opportunity is longed for by us; for your laſt was ſo refreſhful, that we earneſtly deſire to hear from you again.

So, leaving you upon the God of Jacob for his direction, aſſiſtance, and conſolation in time, and the enjoyment of himſelf throughout eternity: begging that while in the body, you will not be unmindful of us, who are not forgetful of you. We are,

Your Honour's aſſured and ſympathizing Friends, brethren and ſervants in the Lord,

Subſcribed in our name, and by our direction, by the clerk of our General Meeting,

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

This General Meeting being for not joining in family exerciſe with ſcandalous perſons, eſpecially thoſe who were groſly ſcandalous, by their compliance with the abominations of the time, deſired that any of our Societies who had reaſons for it, or ſcruples anent it, ſhould bring them to the next General Meeting, to the end they might be conſidered and anſwered, for their further information. That which gave the riſe to this, was, that ſome who had occaſion ſometimes to join in family worſhip with ſuch perſons as is above mentioned, and having ſcruples anent the ſame, did therefore propoſe it to this meeting, that they might get their advice

how to carry therein. But I do not remember that any thing more concerning this was done at any of our General Meetings after this, or yet before it.

It was further appointed by the meeting, that the 27th of July be obſerved by all our ſocieties as a day of prayer, faſting, mourning and humiliation before the Lord, becauſe of our ſad and ſinful neglect of ſolemn ſetting time apart for acknowledging of God, ſeeking his counſel and countenance with what we ſo ſolemnly went about, being ſenſible that the Lord hath been angry at us thereanent.

And it was appointed that the next meeting ſhould conveen at *Auchengilloch*, upon the 12th of *February*, 1685.

AFTER the laſt Meeting, (as alſo a little before it) the troubles and trials of the country were exceeding great, by the violent preſſing of the oath of Abjuration, which in ſome places was impoſed upon young and old, lad and laſs, wherewith many complied; yet afterwards not a few of thoſe who took it, did ſee the wickedneſs thereof, and publicly acknowledged the ſame, and ſeverals of them joined with the wanderers. But when the preſſing of the ſaid oath was going moſt vigorouſly through the country, unexpectedly a ſtop was put thereto by the death of *Charles II.* at *Whitehall*, *February* ——, not without ſuſpicion of being poiſoned by his brother the Duke of York, whoſe ambition to aſcend the throne was great.

This put a ſtop to the general preſſing of the foreſaid oath, yet the condition of the ſocieties was very lamentable, perſecution went on moſt vigorouſly; the rage, malice and cruelty of enemies was in a peculiar manner manifeſted againſt them. Some of whom, coming to this meeting were diſcovered, and notice ſent to the enemy. About two compaines of foot, commanded by one Buchan, marched out of Glaſgow, to ſearch after them, who (with ſome horſemen, among whom was the laird of *Lee*) having found out theſe poor people *, purſued after

* See Mr. Renwick's 33d letter. It was reported that one mean of their preſervation was, that Gavin Wotherſpoon, who was with them, left his ſhoe, which being found by the enemy, and ſeeing it very large, concluded that he muſt be a ſtrong man whoſe foot filled it; therefore a few might not attack them.

ter them very vigorouſly the moſt part of a day. But though they all, (except one man, who after apprehending was immediately ſhot) eſcaped from theſe bloody men, yet they were thereby hindered from going to the meeting.

HOWEVER, ſome met at the place and time appointed, *viz. February* 12th, near *Auchengilloch*, who agreed upon two days to be obſerved by the ſocieties.

1*ſt*, It was concluded that the 4th of *March* ſhould be kept a day of thankſgiving unto the Lord for the wonderful proofs of his love and goodwill, manifeſted to a ſcattered aud diſtreſſed remnant in this land, by his delivering of them in ſeveral places, from the power and rage of enemies, when they were ready to ſwallow them up.

2*dly*, It was appointed that the 8th of *April* ſhould be ſet apart as a day of faſting, mourning and humiliation before the Lord, for the unwarrantable out-breakings that have been committed by ſome, in ſeveral places, contrary to our Covenant-engagements and Declarations.

3*dly*, It was appointed that the next general meeting ſhall conveen at ——, the firſt Wedneſday of *May*.

As the trials, troubles, ſnares and tentations of the country were many, and of various kinds, before the death of Charles II, that profane perſon; ſo after the ſame, and his brother James Duke of York, a profeſt Papiſt, having uſurped the throne, they were nothing diminiſhed, but in ſome reſpects ſadder and greater. And in particular the perſecution againſt the ſocieties came to its greateſt height; many of whom were cruelly and inhumanely murdered in the open fields, and others hanged, many dragged to priſons, ſome tortured by firematches and thumbkins, and others laid in irons; and their diligence in ſearching and purſuing after them was great; whereby they were reduced to many diſtreſſes, and weary wanderings, and forced to ſeek ſhelter in the wildeſt wilderneſſes and deſarts. In a word, ſuch was the inraged cruelty and furious helliſh zeal of theſe bloody adverſaries againſt theſe poor people, whom they deſigned wholly to cut off, that they ſpared neither the young man for his youth, nor the old man for his grey hairs and ſtooping age; yea, women, and that both old

and young escaped not their bloody and barbarous hands, by whom some were strangely murdered, and many of them carried to prison. But notwithstanding of all this, and much more than can, or is suitable to be related here, several joined with these wanderers, chusing to take one lot with them, though as to the outward it was very hard; and their zeal and courage was nothing abated, but rather increased. For though adversaries were cruel, and their malice insatiable, yet the Lord was gracious and kind, helping them to suffer chearfully, and to wander pleasantly. In these days of distress and tribulation, the enjoyment (sometimes) of the gospel was very encouraging to them, although they got it with the hazard of their life, and were still in danger to have their blood mingled with their sacrifice. And though they had many against them, yet they wanted not some friends; for not a few up and down the country, were very kind, giving them entertainment and reset, (which was very helpful unto them in their desolate and wandering condition) notwithstanding that there were strict commands to the contrary, and the same was oftimes attended with sufferings. Among other means made use of at this time by the enemies to accomplish their wicked designs, the sending for many of the savage and wild Highlanders was one, who coming to the west, were very cruel and vigorous in robbing and spoiling and hunting of poor people, some of whom fell into their hands and were barbarously murdered. And by them (especially) and others ranging up and down the country, severals were hindered from coming to this Meeting.

But some few having met at ——, upon the 6th of *May* 1685. They condescended upon another meeting to conveen at *Blackgannoch*, on *May* 28th.

The case of the land continued still sad and deplorable. Enemies were still hunting these poor people in towns, villages, mountains, woods and deserts, or wherever they heard any of them were seen; whereby many fell into their hands, some of whom they presently sacrificed to satisfy their cruel lust, others they carried to prisons, where they lay languishing in great distress.

But although what they suffered was very pinching, and hard to flesh and blood, and the remembrance thereof

of be now ſad; yet it was, and is ground of comfort, and matter of praiſe, that the Lord helped them (albeit much deſpiſed and reproached) to contend and ſuffer for truth, and honoured many of them to die martyrs for his cauſe, wherein they were countenanced of him, and helped to ſuffer chearfully to the admiration of on-lookers, and the conviction of enemies themſelves.

About the time that the meeting mentioned above ſhould have conveened, it was noiſed abroad that an invaſion was to be in this land, under the conduct of the *Earl of Argyle*; who with ſeveral others had laid down reſolutions abroad to put a ſtop to the preſent wicked courſe that was carrying on. This made enemies prepare to oppoſe them, by raiſing of the militia, heritors, and many of the ſavage Highlanders came ſouth, whereby in the mean time the wanderers were reduced to ſeveral ſtraits, and much of the fury of theſe forces was turned againſt them.

About this time there was a parliament ſitting at Edinburgh, to which *Queenſbery* was commiſſioner. By whom there were ſome acts framed, that for wickedneſs and ſtrangeneſs ſcarce a parallel can be found; againſt which, yea the very conſtitution of this Parliament, and the proclaiming of the Duke of York King; as alſo the in-coming of Popiſh idolatry, which was then apparent, it was thought duty to witneſs and proteſt againſt it, that it might be evident to ſucceeding generations, that ſuch dreadful and monſtrous wickedneſs paſt not without a teſtimony againſt the ſame; and that they might free themſelves from partaking thereof.

WHEREUPON, a paper being written, was brought to this meeting, which conveened at *Blackgannoch*, on *May* 28th, 1685. After prayer, and modelling of the meeting, what was done at the former meeting was approven by them.

Alſo, it was reſolved by all and ſundry the members of this meeting, not to join with malignants, or ſectarians in arms.

This concluſion was made on account of ſome that were already concerned in the expeditions then on foot in both kingdoms, and more that were to be taken into that aſſociation; with theſe that were appearing in this land it was deſired that the ſocieties ſhould join, and they expected to be more ſolicited for that end; where-

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fore it was judged fit to ſpeak of, and deliberate about it at this meeting, whereby they might know one another's minds anent aſſociating with malignants and ſectarians. But though they (deſiring to adhere to the principles of this church concerning ſinful aſſociation) had not freedom to join with ſuch, nor could they eſpouſe *Argyle's* declaration as the ſtate of their quarrel, becauſe it was not concerted according to the ancient plea of the Scotch Covenanters, *&c.*; and becauſe it opened a door for a ſinful confederacy; yet they were willing to do what lay in their power againſt the common enemy.

The meeting likewiſe agreed unto a proteſtation againſt proclaiming *James, Duke of York,* King of Scotland, *&c.* the lawfulneſs of the preſent pretended Parliament, and the apparent inlet of Popery, *&c.*: And it was reſolved that it ſhould be publiſhed the ſame day at the burgh of *Sanquhar.*

According to this concluſion, immediately after the meeting was ended, about 220 men drew up in arms, who went to the ſaid burgh, and at the market croſs, after ſinging a pſalm, and *Mr. James Renwick* having prayed, the ſaid Proteſtation was publiſhed, and a copy left on the croſs; and thereafter the men marched out of the town. But in regard the ſaid paper is in print, and hath been much ſeen, I ſhall not inſert it here.

And it was appointed that the 4th of *June* ſhould be kept by the ſocieties a day of faſting and prayer unto the Lord, that he would direct and guide them in what they ought to do in the then expected exigence.

And it was appointed that the next meeting ſhould meet at ——, upon the 12th of *June.* The end of appointing this meeting was to deliberate upon what would be the duty of the ſocieties, and how to go about it in that juncture when the expedition of Argyle and thoſe with him was going on, for though they were not clear to join in that aſſociation, nor to embody themſelves with that party, yet they were not for diſcouraging of them, but were ready and willing to act againſt the common enemy, ſo far as they were able and had opportunity. And the ſetting of that meeting ſo ſoon, was the expectation of that party (who were then in the Highlands) their coming ſouth about that time, whereby they would know better when, and how to move and act. But

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in regard few came to the place appointed, being ſtopt by reaſon of the Highlanders and others ranging up and down the country, ſo nothing was concluded concerning that affair for which it was chiefly appointed; and a little after that party was broken †, and it was laid aſide.

After the publiſhing the foreſaid declaration at Sanquhar, the enemies, but eſpecially Claverhouſe, that wicked and furious zealot, was very outragious and active; for he with armed men ſearched for them through moſſes and muirs, and the remoteſt places where it was known theſe people frequented; who were glad many times not only to ſeek ſhelter there, but alſo beneath the ground, in dens and caves, when they could get none above it.

About this time there were great commotions, (as aforeſaid) the Highlanders, heritors, militia and forces, riding and running up and down the country.—The defeat of Argyle's party occaſioned no ſmall joy among the enemies, and their cruelty to the Earl and ſeveral others being execute, ſome were tortured, others baniſhed. In the mean time the wanderers were not forgot; the malice of enemies vented itſelf various ways againſt them, and their trials and afflictions were neither few nor ſmall.

Amongſt others that eſcaped of *Argyle's* party, there were two miniſters, *viz.* Mr. George Barclay and Mr. Robert Langlands, who had come out of Holland with the Earl. With theſe ſome of the wanderers falling in, endeavoured (being acquaint in the country) to get them ſhelter from the enemy. By which there was occaſion got of ſome conference with theſe miniſters, concerning the differences that were between them and the United Societies. For though the Societies loved and reverenced them, yet as matters were then circumſtantiate, and the Teſtimony ſtated, they had not freedom to join with them until ſome exceptions they had againſt them were removed. To get this done, and union obtained, there were conferences with them, particularly at two times before, as alſo, at this General Meeting, which conveened at the *Kneyps*, *July* 24th, 1685. To which the two

† See Mr. Renwick's 35th and 36th letters. the firſt is in anſwer to a letter from Mr. *Hamilton*, wherein he ſhews the ſubtilty of *ſome, and the deceit of others* of that party.

two foreſaid miniſters having come, there was ſome conference with them; and likewiſe a propoſal made by the meeting to them, yet no union was attained, but debates and janglings, and the differences rather made more, than either leſſened or removed; which was very lamentable to ſee, and now unpleaſant to remember. Theſe conferences (an account of which is afterward) took up moſt part of the time, ſo that this meeting did little more. However, before they parted,

They agreed that a Letter ſhould be wrote to Mr. Robert Hamilton, ſhewing the receipt of ſome money ſent by him to the ſocieties, and alſo to ſignify the ſame to the perſons who had given it, and that he, in their name, ſhould render them thanks, and ſhew their acknowledgment thereof. Which Letter was drawn up, and ſent.

Alſo, they agreed that the Societies ſhould obſerve a day of faſting and prayer to the Lord. The particular day was not fixed upon, but it was left to the Societies to chuſe what day they thought moſt convenient. However, the cauſes for which it was kept, were condeſcended on.

Andthe next General Meeting was appointed to be at *Blackgannoch*, upon the 1ſt of *October*.

In the interval betwixt the laſt meeting and this, the cruelty and barbarity of the perſecuting enemies againſt thoſe who had been with Argyle, was great; as alſo, againſt the ſociety people, by hanging, torturing, baniſhing, cutting the ears, and impriſoning ſuch as they found, and vigorouſly ſearching after the reſt. Though theſe things were ſad, yet the ſocieties wanted not weighty additions thereto; which were, the differences betwixt others and them, which occaſioned debates among themſelves.

By the conferences mentioned above, union was not attained with Mr. George Barclay and Mr. Robert Langlands, but the difference grew rather greater and the breach wider: ſome of the Societies, eſpecially in Carrick and the ſhire of Galloway, joined with theſe miniſters whom the reſt had not clearneſs to hear, having ſeveral valid exceptions againſt them that were not removed. This afterwards occaſioned debates and contention; and ſome of thoſe who joined with theſe miniſters,

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turned great oppoſers and traducers of their brethren.

ACCORDING to appointment, A General Meeting conveened at *Blackgannoch*, on the firſt of *October*, 1685. It was appointed that Mr. James Renwick, with Colin Aliſon and Michael Shields, ſhould draw up a full and true relation of the conference with the two miniſters (above-named) and preſent the ſame to the next meeting. This was thought neceſſary to be done, to prevent miſtakes and miſrepreſentations of the ſaid conference, *&c.* Accordingly the ſame was drawn up. It was alſo appointed that Colin Aliſon ſhall be ſent abroad to Mr. Robert Hamilton, with the foreſaid relation of the conference, *&c.* and alſo to inform him anent our preſent circumſtances. Accordingly after this meeting Colin went abroad.

And it was agreed that the next meeting ſhould conveen at *Powbeth-burn*, upon the 21ſt of *October*. This meeting was appointed the ſooner upon the account of the foreſaid relation, that it might be done, and ſent abroad.

ACCORDING to the foreſaid appointment, A General Meeting conveened at *Powbeth-burn*, upon the 21ſt of *October*, 1685.

The relation of the conferences with Mr. George Barclay and Mr. Robert Langlands being drawn up by way of a letter to Mr. Robert Hamilton, and brought to this meeting, the ſame was compleated, every particular therein aſſerted and proven by ſufficient witneſſes, and direction given by the meeting to ſubſcribe it in their name †, which was accordingly done. The tenor whereof followeth:

Right Honourable Sir,

THE wiſdom of God hath ſeen it fit to call this poor church in Scotland to travel at this time through the

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† The need of this circumſpection appeared afterwards, as Mr. Robert Langlands wrote an account of this conference, far different from, and in ſome things inconſiſtent with this, but he pretends not to prove his account to be true, but gives his own word for all: which being extant in his own hand write, might be *here inſert, were it not long*, and diſcreditable to his memory.

the deeps, ſo that the faithful members, whether at home or abroad, have the moſt ſingular difficulties and damping diſcouragements to grapple with, whereof you have no ſmall experience; as alſo, we need not be ignorant of either. Nevertheleſs as you have been moſt careful to ſend us from abroad all informations needful for us, we ſhould be moſt ungrateful towards you, and not a little weaken your hands, if we ſhould not be at ſome pains to give you an account of matters, and of our contendings. Wherefore we have jointly concluded to ſend this bearer unto you, with the full and particular relation of what paſt betwixt us and theſe two miniſters, *viz.* Mr. George Barclay and Mr. Robert Langlands, that thereby you may the better know how to carry in it, and inform anent our preſent circumſtances.

The occaſion of our meeting together was on this manner: Some perſons did meet with a company of our friends aſſembled together by providence, and informed them that it was Mr. Barclay's earneſt deſire to meet with us, and that he would ſpare no pains for that effect. In anſwer whereunto, the 22d day of July was appointed for meeting with him, and notice thereof carried to him and to Mr. Langlands. But when we came together, and deſired to hear wherefore he had ſought a meeting with us; he ſaid that he had deſired no ſuch thing; and we ſhewed that our appointment was only to anſwer his deſire, as it was reported to us by ſome then preſent: But then they began to put another face upon it, ſaying, that which he deſired was to this effect, That Mr. George Barclay was not unwilling to meet with us. But paſſing this and other things falling out then not very material, whereof the bearer, for your further ſatisfaction can inform you, we come to the matter itſelf.

In the firſt place, the foreſaid miniſters offered to lay all debates aſide, and go on in the public work. But to this we could not yield; ſaying, that was not the right way to heal the ſore. After which, mention being made by ſome, of the information ſent to Mr. Brackel (at the time of Mr. Renwick's ordination) againſt the ſuffering party. Whereupon a true tranſcript of Mr. Brackel's letter to your Honour was produced and read; the ſum of the heads whereof were as follow:

That they had accuſed us, 1*ſt*, That we had not only caſt all magiſtrates now ruling in Scotland, but more-

over,

over, had constituted among ourselves all kinds of magistrates, a Chancellor and President over all great men, &c. Orders, or Lords for a public politic convention, usurping an imagined power over the commands of those that are in authority; yea saying that all are to be cut off as open enemies, who do not acknowledge that government.

2*dly*, That the Societies are not pure in religion, which, they say, is manifest by questions proponed to all who are admitted to their fellowship, &c.

3*dly*, That the Societies are only a faction, and not a church, and that they have no power of calling pastors, or of giving ecclesiastic testimonies to any man; saying that they themselves are the most pure church, and that they have pastors, presbyteries and synods, and that it is their part to examine students, and to confirm them in the ministry with the imposition of hands, and that it is not lawful for any Hollandish Presbytery to pluck that right out of their hands.

4*thly*, That the students that were at Groningen were not of an unblameable life.

This being read, Mr. Langlands asked Mr. Barclay what he would say thereunto, and his reply was, that *he had no hand in such a letter* *: Then Mr. Langlands began to free Mr. Barclay of it, saying that he was at London at that time. To which we replied, How came it then that his name was insert there? Then they were forced to grant that Mr. Barclay had been at a consultation with James Stuart, Mr. Gordon, and some others, where an information was condescended upon to be sent away against us, and that Mr. Langlands wrote a letter but suspected it was yet in Mr. Gordon's hand; howbeit he affirmed he excerpted all the contents of it out of our public papers; (also it is not to be passed, that these ministers asserted that our Protestation against the Scots congregation in Rotterdam, was previous to Mr. Brackel's letter; and that this letter could give no occasion of drawing up the said Protestation; and also, that the Protestation was drawn up, and printed in Holland, before the suffering party did see it; both which they did maintain, until the contrary was sufficiently and clearly evidenced). As to the foresaid excerption of their letter, &c. it was replied by us, (abstracting from the

* Here is a *lie, and also a self* contradiction.

diſclaiming the malignant intereſt, which we own as our duty) what public paper could he excerpt ſuch things out of? particularly, that we were for killing all that would not acknowledge the government which we are ſaid to have fabricated amongſt us: But he cried out, that that tranſcript was forged and ſtuffed with lies. Our anſwer was, That it was a true tranſcript, and that Mr. Brackel could not, neither would he have forged ſuch things.

Then after ſome unfruitful jangling, Mr. Barclay aſked the reaſon why his miniſtry was rejected before he went out of Scotland? Some anſwered, Becauſe of his condemning Sanquhar Declaration, even as to the matter of it, and not condemning (or allowing) the paying of the locality, which is given for the ſtrengthening and upholding of ſoldiers againſt the work and people of God. But others anſwered, That the queſtion was needly aſked at them; for all that time which he ſpake of, he never came near their bounds, and ſo they had no opportunity either to receive or reject his miniſtry. But a multitude crowding about, they then brake out into loud out-cryings, for our Proteſtation againſt the Scotch congregation at Rotterdam, and inſerting their names therein, and that we had ſent for ordination to the Hollandiſh church, which they aſſerted to be purely Eraſtian: For when the magiſtrate pleaſed, he would ſend the miniſter a pair of ſhoes, and put him away. 2. That they uſed three waſhings in baptiſm: which Mr. Barclay affirmed to be Popiſh. 3. The Formular book. 4. Feſtival days, ſuch as Yule and Paſch. 5. Organs in the kirk. After which they cried out, But paſs all that †. To which ſome replied, That they had reflected ſadly upon the church of Holland: And all Mr. James Renwick ſaid at this time, was, that he had not meddled with the church of Holland, but only the Preſbytery of Groningen; and that they being foreigners and not chargable with defection, came under another conſideration than miniſters of our own church: Howbeit, he told them

† It cannot paſs without a remark, that (as appears by ſome accounts at that time) a little before, theſe gentlemen gave high encomiums to the Hollanders, as being the chief bulwark againſt Popery, a refuge to the oppreſſed, &c. when ſeeking to induce people to join with Argyle; and laboured all they could to give the Dutch a bad impreſſion of Scotch ſufferers. And *here they labour to give the Scots the ſame of the Dutch.*

them his purpoſe to inform the foreſaid venerable Preſbytery how odiouſly ſuch perſons had repreſented them in Scotland, and if they could not clear themſelves, at leaſt of ſome of the groſſeſt of theſe things, he would be willing to acknowledge before ſuch as were competent, that he had offended in taking ordination from ſuch an impure Preſbytery.

This, for that time, did not a little allay the fire. They then ſaid that they were not ſpeaking of the Preſbytery of Groningen, but of the church of Holland, yet they returned again, upon the ſame out-cries, but without particular application to the foreſaid Preſbytery: But it is evident that they intended all theſe things againſt the Preſbytery: for we had meddled with no other, as to the matter of joining with them.

So this heat paſſing a little over; Theſe miniſters ſaid that they were there offering themſelves to concur in carrying on the public work; and that they deſired to know if now the people would call them, or if they had any exceptions againſt them. Whereupon it was thought fit that they ſhould remove a little, till the people knew others minds, that they might orderly give an anſwer. But finding themſelves confuſed with a multitude, they thought fit to ſhew theſe miniſters, that if they would be pleaſed to keep the day, they would appoint it, and nominate eight men from amongſt them, to confer with them upon that, and other things. Howbeit they would not conclude any thing in the name of their brethren, but ſhould preſent it to the General Meeting, which was to be upon the 29th day of the ſame month. Whereupon the 28th day was appointed for this conference.

So being met upon the ſaid day, Mr. Barclay returned again upon his former queſtion, aſking why his miniſtry was rejected while he was in Scotland. To which ſome anſwered, that while he was in Scotland, they were joining with worſe than he was, which they acknowledged to be their ſin, but when the Lord opened their eyes better, they joined with theſe people whom they judged to be moſt at their duty, who at that time were deſerted by all the miniſters that were left, (after Mr. Cargill's death.) But the reſt gave in theſe reaſons: His condemning Sanquhar Declaration, and not the paying of the Ipcality: His not joining with theſe that were at the public work, and countenancing too much the complices of the time: and his not making a difference betwixt the

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clean and the unclean, the precious and the vile (and some of them ſaid that they never had the opportunity of joining with him after the differences fell in among the miniſters, howbeit the information they then had would have kept them back) they ſaid theſe kept them at a diſtance from him. But there being no anſwer (at leaſt not material) given to theſe things, and the going about of the queſtion being marred by theſe miniſters themſelves, Mr. Barclay aſked, will ye now join with us? or have ye any exceptions againſt us? To which this anſwer was given, that if differences could be removed in a right and honeſt way, we would be moſt willing to join with them. Then theſe miniſters deſired to hear what theſe exceptions might be. So they were given in (by Mr. James Renwick, when the queſtion was put particularly to him, to which all agreed who ſided not with theſe miniſters) as followeth.

1ſt, Their not joining with ſuch as were at the public work after Bothwel, *viz.* Mr. Cargil, and Mr. Cameron.

2dly, Leaving the Country and deſerting the work.

3dly, Joining with the corrupt Scotch Congregation at Rotterdam, particularly of Mr. George, his hearing of Mr. Veitch, who was actively indulged at Mauchlin in Scotland.

4thly, Informing abroad, againſt the ſuffering party at home and aſperſing them with ſlanders, ſuch as theſe in the forementioned information, ſent to Mr. Brackel.

5thly, Joining in the aſſociation, and owning the declaration publiſhed by the Earl of Argyle, and that party.

So having given in theſe: They aſked firſt, whether theſe were his *ſcruples* meerly, or grounds that he had laid down for ſtanding at a diſtance? and his anſwer was to this purpoſe, whatever difference be betwixt *ſcruples*, and *grounds*; theſe things were to him ſufficient *reaſons* to ſtand at a diſtance, while they remained. And again they aſked, (granting all theſe things to be true) were they ſufficient for us to ſtand at a diſtance for? To which he replied, That taking them (eſpecially) conjunctly, they were to us ſufficient reaſons to ſtand at a diſtance while they ſtood unremoved. But, ſaid they, even taking them conjunctly they are not.

This put the matter to a cloſe, and put us altogether out of hope of getting differences removed. Notwithſtanding theſe miniſters began to anſwer to theſe things particularly.

And

as to the *first* exception, Mr. Barclay said he ne-
lined to join with the forenamed persons in the
work. It was replied that his practice could not
t it neither, that ever he did seek after it; as also,
was strange how he could meet so often with o-
hat were keeping themselves more close, and were
the public work, and not with the foresaid persons,
ere keeping the fields, and the rumour amongst
weekly spread abroad of their going about the
work. To which Mr. Langland's was silent.
the *second*, *viz.* their leaving the lands, and de-
their work; Mr. Langlands said that he went
t of the country until he had two calls to go abroad.
is needed no answer, he not instructing the suffi-
of these calls. And Mr. Barclay said that he had
, when travelling through a great part of the
y, that if but two persons in a whole shire would
nvited him to preach, he would have staied. To
this duplied, that he would have gotten hundreds
desdale to have heard him. He said also, that he
vrote and came home himself every year. But it
plied, that we neither saw, any of his letters, nor
of his home coming.
to the *third*, *viz.* their joining with the Scotch Con-
ion in Rotterdam, and particularly with Mr Veitch
vas actually indulged. To which he replied, that
contended more against that Congregation than
had done. Yet it was duplied, that while he
with them under the consideration that they are,
ntendings were to little purpose. And as to the
g of Mr. Veitch, he said he was at the head of the
and could not win out, though he desired. But it
plied that severals of the congregation, elders and
did at that time withdraw, whereby the matter
to be more openly stated, which was the greater
him to side with the testimony; and also that his
owing in that circumstance would have conduced
to the matter [illegible] testimony than if he had been
door. But he defended himself, saying that he
not see that, for it would have given great offence
hich was answered, that none could take offence
as were of one judgment with the indulged.
this time was brought in that which included a
son against these ministers, from their expressing
judgment *anent joining with* the joiners with the
in-

indulged, and defending the ſame, for they ſaid that they both would, and ſhould join with ſuch, but they would not make it a rule to others. To which our reply was, that we were againſt joining with ſuch; And if we ſhould join with ſuch, while they defended the ſame, might we not alſo join with the indulged themſelves? Then it was retorted upon us by William Cleland, to which the miniſters did agree, that we joined with a more corrupt church, *viz.* that of Groningen, who had all theſe abuſes formerly mentioned. To which was replied, that there was a difference to be made in joining with miniſters going back, and defending their defections, and with thoſe (though even corrupt in ſome things from which they never were reformed) that were advancing, and groaning under their remaining corruptions. And Mr. James Renwick ſaid he proteſted in the face of the Preſbytery againſt all things he knew among them diſſonant to the reformation of the church of Scotland, which was to him ſufficient, they being under ſuch conſiderations. They ſaid they looked upon this as to no purpoſe ſeeing they continued in them. Alſo Mr. James joining with them being miniſters of a foreign church, came under a general conſideration as Proteſtants, which joining with miniſters of our own church came not under.

Again, it was objected: But could not we have joined with the Scotch Congregation at Rotterdam under that ſame general conſideration. To which it was anſwered, that we could not, becauſe they came under a more ſpecial conſideration, for in joining with miniſters of our church, we ought to know that they keep up the teſtimony againſt the ſins of our own place; but in joining with theſe of a foreign church, if they keep up the teſtimony againſt the ſins in their own place, they are not to be diſcountenanced for not contending againſt our defections. But ſuppoſing we had ſinned therein, this could not have juſtified their practice; for, as was told them, *Recriminatio nulla eſt reſponſio.*

To the *fourth*, *viz.* informing abroad, againſt the ſuffering party at home. To which they anſwered, that there was nothing in their information but what was excerpted out of our public papers. But we replied, that ſuch things could not be excerpted (no ſuch thing being *in them.*) However, they fell out in great outrages *againſt* our declarations, calling Rutherglen Teſtimony

all

an insignificant thing, and inveighing against that in *Sanquhar* Declaration, where the publishers call themselves, the representatives of the church, and covenanted nation of Scotland. And that in Lanerk Declaration, where the historical relation of Sanquhar Declaration expresses these words, done by a convention of Estates, and that itself was published in our name and authority. To which our reply was to this purpose, that we would do so much for procuring a right union, which we were so desirous of, as to condescend so far to them, as not to impose these words upon them, these words not being the matter of the present testimony, if they would approve of, and accord with the matter of these declarations, the actions done, and the testimonies given by them; they being so great and necessary duties, which we could not pass from, else we should condemn many former, and later contendings, and trample upon many noble testimonies: howbeit we could not resile from, nor expunge these forementioned words (as we expressly told them:) Notwithstanding that we condescended so far, they would not consent unto us, but objected even against the matter of them, saying that they could not be owned as they came from us. Howbeit they still reiterated their inveighings against the foresaid declarations, making use of them against us, notwithstanding of what was said before: Crying out also much against the first call to the ministers: And though we told them we had corrected that by a second, yea, though they often granted, that it was well, that it was so corrected, yet they would never cease from their inveighings against the first.

Howbeit it is not to be forgotten how sadly the cause hath been wronged, and how much we have been mistaken by the differing and wrong copies, especially, of our first Declaration published at Sanquhar, June 22d, 1680. spread thro' this, and other lands, from which, many have taken much ground against us. And as for our declaring of war in that declaration, our understanding of it is conform to our apologetic declaration, affixed upon the kirk doors, November, 1684.

To the *fifth*, *viz.* their joining in the association, and agreeing with the declaration of that party: Both which they owned as their duty, and asked what we could say against them. To which we answered, that some of the associators, were guilty of the blood shed at Air's-moss, particularly Sir John Cochran) And as to the declara-

tion, we objected that it did not make mention of the covenants expreſly, nor of preſbyterial government, which was forborne of purpoſe leſt the Sectarians ſhould be irritated, as ſome of themſelves ſaid. 2*dly*, That expreſs mention was made of the ſufferings of ſome, who were a ſtain to the profeſſion of religion, and not of the moſt cruel ſufferings of ſuch of the honeſt party as would have held out the iniquity of their laws far more. This we know to be done of purpoſe to bury our ſufferings, as was evident from their refuſing to inſert the barbarous uſage of valiant *Rathillet*. 3*dly*, That it opened a door to taking in amongſt them, even the greateſt of their enemies.

To which little was anſwered at that time; however at other times, they ſaid to the firſt, That tho' preſbyterial government was not expreſt, it was underſtood. But we ſaid that in declarations to the world, it ought to have been expreſt. And they ſaid the covenants were not mentioned, becauſe of its binding us to defend the king. To which we duplied, to this purpoſe, that the conditional ties of the covenant were looſed, by the firſt breakers of the condition, yet becauſe of its morally obliging articles, it ſhould have been expreſt.

Some of them ſaid, that the expreſs mentioning of our ſufferers particularly of *Rathillet*, was forborne, becauſe the *Declaration being drawn up without theſe; they had engaged before they came from Amſterdam, neither to add, alter, nor diminiſh.* But for the reaſon why Mr. Carſtairs and Mr. Spence's ſufferings were mentioned, Mr. George Barclay *ſaid that that was done after they came to the Highlands.* How to reconcile this, with what they ſaid before, we ſee not.

As to the third, They ſaid they opened no door, as to theſe who were guilty of death. But we objected, that their practice proved the contrary, in that they had, as a leading man amongſt them, *Sir John Cochran of Ochtetree*, who was not free of the blood at Air's-moſs.

This is the ſubſtance of what paſt that day: Only toward evening theſe miniſters declared their willingneſs to lay things in preſent controverſy aſide, until they ſhould be determined by a competent judicatory; which we refuſed to do, becauſe it would be a calling truth into queſtion.

Upon the morrow, being the 29th day, and the day of our General meeting, we went forward into the place appoin

sted, whereunto these ministers came also; and
st thing that was done, there was a relation given
at had past the days preceding. To make it ap-
how fairly we dealt with them, we suffered one
ided with them in the controversies, to give the
d relation, and the rest of us stood by auditors.
er this was done, (having deliberated a little a-
ourselves) we thought it the fittest way, either for
ing of differences (if possible) or for the further
ag of them, or giving us the fairer off-come in the
f the world, to make this proposal to the foresaid
ers, that they together by themselves, would draw
e sins of the times and we together would do the
So then if we would agree anent the public sins
r one taking freely with what is applicable to them-
) we would consequently agree anent the public du-
and so would go on together in the public work:
if we shall not agree anent these, then they would
ore clearly where we stood, and we would see more
r where they stood. But they rejected this pro-

scit they had formerly oftener than once, at a
ng accidentally July 23d, desired that the causes of
liation should be drawn by them and us, separately.
ir proposal had its first rise from them; but now
it was proposed by us, they would not yield there-
except in the mean time, they should be joined
in the exercise of their ministry, which we said we
not do, till once the differences were removed.
which time they went off this head, producing
rotestation against the Scotch Congregation in Rot-
m, and reading that article wherein their names,
some others, was insert, together with some ge-
charges, which they did represent so, as if guilty
ese things they deserved not to live, crying out
would own that article which very few refused to

Yet Mr. Renwick replied thereunto, that the
s of the persons in that article, and these general
es were written in cumulo, and cast in a heap together,
h he counted an oversight, and an injury; but he
ed these things to be understood separately, and so
ffered to make out every word thereof, for there
not one charge there, which was not applicable to
of the persons there named. And he said that
could plead innocent, as to untender dealing with

other; yet with untenderneſs towards us, they would in no wiſe grant, though their charges againſt us were falſe, and far more grievous than what we had laid upon them. So after ſome unfruitful jangling, he cried out that now all the world may ſee that any unwillingneſs to unite in the Lord cannot be laid at our door.

But after we had been parted a little, theſe miniſters ſent ſome with this overture unto us, That they would be content to draw up the cauſes of humiliation, providing Mr. James Renwick would go with them for that effect: And the people would join with them in the mean time: And either prove what was ſaid in that article of the foreſaid proteſtation, or elſe to emit ſomewhat to take it away. To which our reply was, That as to that article of the proteſtation, we ſhould either do the one or the other; however we were not doubtful to prove it.

And as to what in the propoſal concerned Mr. James Renwick to anſwer, he replied thus, That he could not accept of the overture; 1*ſt*, Becauſe they had firſt propoſed our overture, but they refuſed it, when it came from us, at the propoſing whereof, they offered to lay all debates aſide until it was ſeen what that ſhould produce; and when we made the foreſaid propoſal, they brought in the foreſaid article of the foreſaid proteſtation againſt us. 2*dly*, Becauſe he could not join in ſo much with them, while the forementioned exception ſtood in the way. 3*dly*, If they and he, ſo far differing from other, ſhould be together about ſuch a work, they ſhould prove but a hinderance to one another. And as to what concerned the people, they (except ſome few, who ſided with theſe miniſters) replied that they could not join with them while the forementioned differences ſtood.

After which they called the people together, and Mr Langlands gave them a relation of what had paſt in our conference, theſe days before, repreſenting ſtill our declarations and the ordination of Mr. James Renwick in an hideous manner, reading over the foreſaid information ſent to Mr. Brackel againſt us; but paſſing the articles lightly without any ſatisfaction, reading alſo the foreſaid article of the foreſaid proteſtation, interpreting the word *treacherouſly*, to import a deſign to betray the cauſe, aſſerting that if theſe things they were charged with, were true; they were not worthy to live, far leſs to be miniſters.

After

After which, Mr. James began to reſume what Mr. Robert Langlands had ſaid before the people; and as to the foreſaid papers which Mr. Langlands had read in their audience, he deſired that the two might be compared together, and then it would be ſeen who had laid the heavieſt charge upon the other. As to the falſehood of what was informed againſt the ſuffering party, they were all conſcious thereof. And for what was ſaid in that article of the foreſaid Proteſtation, underſtanding it ſeparately, he offered to make it out every word.—— But night being come, and an alarm alſo coming, we were forced to part the more abruptly.

Now, much honoured Sir, We have here given you as full a relation as is needful, of what paſt betwixt theſe miniſters and us, and ſo true, that (though we cannot ſay that every thing is *verbatim*, as it was ſpoken, yet) there is not the leaſt prevarication as to the matter. And we may ſay that the Lord took this affair in his own hand, and did, as it were, hide us in it, that he might the more appear. We uſed all the tenderneſs we could, forbearing to ſay many things, leſt the fire had been hotter, and we reputed a people unwilling to unite upon any terms. But from this you will clearly ſee where both they and we ſtand, and what diſtance is betwixt us. We have not only the fury of the open enemy to abide, who are employing all their might, ſo far as the holy wiſdom of God permits, in impriſoning, ſtigmatizing, lugg-marking, baniſhing and killing: But alſo, fiery and hot contendings with others who pretend more reſpect to the work of God than we dare do. Our difficulties are very many, and it is moſt hard to guide ſuch caſe as ours is; but it hath pleaſed the Lord in infinite wiſdom from eternity to carve out ſuch a lot for us, that he may perfect ſtrength in weakneſs, and wiſdom in folly. We deſire to rejoice in appearing to be nothing, that he may be ſeen to be all things. And as we are reproached, miſtaken, miſrepreſented, wounded, wronged, contemned, yea, a contemptible remnant, as ever had ſuch things among their hands; if God ſhall make our names, our enjoyments, and our all, ſtepping-ſtones for him, whereupon to walk for the advancement of his name and intereſt in the earth, we deſire to be heartily content, to offer them up upon that ſervice.

Pray for us that we faint not in the day of trial; that God may lead us in the good old way, and prevent or

break

he ſnares laid by men for ſubverting of our paths: ...
ig us grace to follow him fully unto the end, to the ...
of the glory of his own name. Remember w...
l to all our dear friends in Chriſt with you, though ...
own by face; the report which we have of thei...
fulneſs, tenderneſs, and zeal for the work of God ...
ry ſavoury and encouraging to their burden-bearing ...
ſympathy manifeſted towards us in the furnace ...
ction, toward yourſelf and your dear brother's fam...
doth bind us greatly to them as their debtors; a...
: know no other way now, how to recompenſe the...
it by being often at the throne of grace on their b...
alf, which is and ſhall be our endeavour: And ſh...
nto them that we forget them not, and we hope th...
hey bear us upon their hearts before the Lord. Th...
we remain,

Much honoured and dear Sir, your friends and ſervants in the Lord Jeſus.

Subſcribed in our name, and by our direction, by the Clerk of our General Meeting,

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

It was alſo concluded by this meeting, that a letter directed to Mr. Hamilton, preſented and read to them, ſhould be ſubſcribed in their name by the clerk of the meeting; which was done.

It was likewiſe concluded, that every ſociety ſhould do their utmoſt to gather up a liſt of the names, and an account of the ſufferings of thoſe within their reſpective bounds, who ſuffered martyrdom and otherwiſe; as alſo of the enemies barbarous dealing and cruelty there, and of any ſignal and remarkable judgments that had been inflicted upon any of theſe enemies: and all expedition was to be uſed herein, that the whole being collected together, might be for the good and comfort of the preſent and ſucceeding generations. Something what of this was done, but not ſo much as was deſired.

It was in like manner concluded, that the 19th *November* ſhould be obſerved by the Societies a day of faſting and prayer; that conſidering our weakneſs

in

ſufficiency either to withſtand ſnares which we may be, d are tryſted with from all hands; that the Lord would graciouſly pleaſed to prevent them or elſe break them, t our ways ſhould be ſubverted, and turned aſide from e ways of God.

Alſo, it was concluded, that the 24th of *December* ould be obſerved by the Societies a day of faſting and ayer, That conſidering the ſuffering of the Lord's name ereby, he would be graciouſly pleaſed to take ſome ay in clearing and vindicating of his cauſe, and re-oving away the miſtakes and reproaches caſt upon his eople: And conſidering the greatneſs and increaſe of he harveſt, that he will ſend forth faithful labou-ers.

And it was appointed that the next General Meeting hould conveen at *Frierminion*, upon the 28th of *January*, 1686.

Follows the foreſaid Letter to Mr. Hamilton.

Honourable Sir,

THERE are many ſtrange obſervations that may be drawn from our caſe, but none more obvious than theſe which are clear to all who have eyes to ſee, to wit, That the Lord is taking all pains to humble his people, and lay them low: But if he ſhall hereby raiſe up his work and prepare them for being exalted, Why not? Let us rejoice therein; and that he is uſing all means for carrying on a work of diſcovery in bringing light and wrong to light, yea, he is ſaying by all his way of dealing, that he will have every one tried, and the righteouſneſs of ſome and the unrighteouſneſs of o-thers brought to light: And if he ſhall by this, bring about the clearing of his cauſe and the making of his truth more precious, let us with all chearfulneſs be content, yea, adore him for ſuch a noble way of work-ing! For ſurely the Lord's work of diſcovery is not ter-rible and damping, but chearing and pleaſing to the ſin-cere and upright. You and we are called to the ſtage of combat and liſts of contending in this our day; and not only to be loaded with heavy and grievous imputations, which ſurely would cruſh any who were not of feared, obdurate and adamantine hearts, were it not that con-ſciouſneſs of ſincerity, integrity and innocency, and the

ſight

ſight of what ſhall be the noble, profitable and pleaſant product of theſe things, *viz.* The advantage of the work of God, the clearing of the owners thereof, and the confounding of evil ſpeakers, who *ſhall not be eſtabliſhed in the earth.* This doth bear up our hearts and cheriſh our ſpirits in travelling thro' ſuch deeps, tho' not the ſhalloweſt, and in bearing ſuch cauſeleſs burdens, though not the lighteſt.

Howbeit, we have thought it fit to ſhew unto your Honour, ſome things which have been reported of you unto us, with no ſmall confidence; hereby deſiring that you would not miſtake, looking upon us as if we were become jealous of you, and receiving ſuch things for truth, as we hope you can prove your innocency of. But our love and reſpect to the Lord's glorious cauſe, which we own, and to your good name, which we are bound ſtill according to verity to defend; we have here written unto you ſome few things, of which we do humbly and earneſtly deſire that you would write unto us the truth, inſtructing your own innocency, that ſo we may have wherewith to ſtop the mouth of ſuch narrators. As,

1*ſt*, You are ſaid to have countenanced the proclamation of the Hamilton declaration with your drawn ſword in your hand.

2*dly*, You are ſaid to have ſubſcribed the petition to the Duke of Monmouth, in your own name, and in the name of the army.

3*dly*, To have received large money from Dutch people for printing the teſtimonies of the martyrs, and not to have improven it for that uſe.

4*thly*, To have received large money from the Dutch, in the name and for the behoof of the ſuffering party in Scotland, of which they never got any account.

Now, Right honourable Sir, All theſe things are reported to you of us, and aſſerted by ſome with no ſmall confidence; all which they offer to prove. But their aſſertion hath not got the place of probation with us. Notwithſtanding, we thought it greatly our duty, upon the foreſaid conſiderations to acquaint you herewith, deſiring you may vindicate yourſelf according to truth, which we both long and hope for: And whatſoever may be found wrong in you, or us, or any other perſon, we deſire to be far from either denying, extenuating or excuſing it.

Moreover, for further clearing and corroborating of *the cauſe*, we deſire that you will ſend with this bearer, a true,

a true, full and exact probation of that proteſtation a-gainſt the Scotch congregation at Rotterdam, eſpecially of that article ſo often mentioned in our information ſent unto you: For tho' many of us be convinced of the truth of all theſe things in that proteſtation, yet it is requiſite that in ſuch a day, when many ſorts of people are lying at the catch, that we have wherewith to ſtop their mouths, leſt ſome who know not ſuch things may be ſtumbled; for many whom we have to do with, will not take with any thing, though never ſo guilty, except it can be ſufficiently proven againſt them.

Alſo, we deſire that it may be tried, and an account ſent unto us, Whether or not Mr. Brackel received a letter written by Mr. Langlands, containing ſuch accuſations againſt us as are mentioned in our information, accordingly as he wrote to you when at Groningen; or if he had theſe accuſations given him by Mr. Kooleman by word of mouth, by virtue of a commiſſion to him for that effect, which was the occaſion whereupon he wrote ſuch things to you; or if Mr. Brackel will own his writing ſuch things, and inſtruct what was the occaſion thereof: For Mr. Langlands did openly aſſert that Mr. Brackel's letter, the true tranſcript whereof we read, is ſtuffed with lies.

Finally, We deſire that you will be at pains in dealing with the preſbytery of Groningen, that they would anſwer to what is laid to their charge by the Scottiſh miniſters, to the end that the ordination of Mr. James Renwick may be rendered odious; according to his humble deſire, as he writeth to them and to you. For though we be not calling in queſtion the lawfulneſs of his ordination, yet it is requiſite to have ſomething from their hands to convince gainſayers.

Now, what ſhall we ſay, it is a hard matter to carry right in ſuch a day. We have all need to take heed to ourſelves, looking both before and behind us; for God's eye is always upon us, and man's eye is moſt intently beholding us; for we may ſay with the Pſalmiſt, *They meet, they lurk, they mark our ſteps.* But let us truſt in the Lord, and do good. Let us delight ourſelves in God, and commit our way to him, and he ſhall bring forth our righteouſneſs as the light, and our judgment as the noon-day: To whom be glory for ever.

Thus leaving you upon his care, and praying that

judgment and righteouſneſs may meet again in the earth. We are,

Dear Sir, Yours as formerly,

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

P. S. Remember us kindly to Thomas Lining, whom we pray the Lord may fit for his intended work, and make him a faithful and painful workman in his vineyard, that we may reap the fruit of his labour, to the praiſe and glory of God. Let us hear what progreſs he makes, and if you think the Lord is fitting him for that work, and if there is any hope of a cleanly ordination.

This Letter, with the relation of the conferences mentioned before, were ſent to Mr. Hamilton with Colin Aliſon ſoon after the meeting, who ſent back with Colin Aliſon, before the next meeting, a long letter in anſwer to theirs: A ſhort abſtract of which ſhall be here given.

To the Anti-popiſh, Anti-prelatick, Anti-eraſtian, Anti-ſectarian, true Preſbyterian remnant of the Church of Scotland.

Much Honoured Fellow-Sufferers, and Companions in tribulation,

NOT knowing if ever I may ſee your face in time, or whether this may be the laſt of my letters to you, through a deep apprehenſion of almoſt unparalelled judgments to be poured out on that land, and on all the churches of Chriſt throughout the world; I have choſen from love to the cauſe of Chriſt, the ſatisfaction of the poor remnant with you, and for the glory of our bleſſed Lord and Maſter, to write to you what I judge moſt ſeaſonable in the preſent juncture, and may be in ſome meaſure ſerviceable to poſterity. And as I have deſired as it were, to take my pen out of the Lord's hand, and to ſet myſelf in his preſence and under his eye, who ſees and knows all things, even the hidden ſecrets of the heart, and before whom ere long I muſt give an account of this in hand, and all other things; ſo it warms my heart

ers not a little, to think to whom I am writing: To e Lord's people, to his poor, perſecuted, deſpiſed, proached remnant, to the children of my dear mo-er-church, and my dear ſympathizing brethren.

O it is not to the Papiſtical, Prelatical, apoſtate, manant uſurpers, by whom for many years I have been der the ſentence of death, for no other cauſe than for holding up of Chriſt's ſtandard, the work of reformation, the laws and liberties of my native country.

Nor am I writing to that company of miniſters, who ling themſelves an Aſſembly, cited before them, and deavoured to thruſt out Mr. Richard Cameron for his thfulneſs to his Maſter; and to excommunicate inſigcant me for my owning, accompanying and aſſiſting him, (though alas! but very weakly).

Neither am I writing to ſuch as theſe at *Dunſcore*, miſters, elders and others, who paſſed a ſentence againſt reat Mr. Cameron; and cited me before them, imagining to threaten and boaſt me out of my conſcience; yet being on the place, and appearing, after diſowning them r an Aſſembly, and adhering to what I did formerly, formally proteſted againſt them, leaving my proteſtaon with them, and left them.

Neither to ſuch an Aſſembly as that at the bridge of en, where the greateſt of the miniſters and elders were ſembled, to inhanſe the whole country of Galloway, ithſdale, Kyle, Carrick, *&c.* to their ordering and overnment, to engage them to call none but thoſe whom ey ſhould name to them; by this ſtratagem intending exclude great Cameron, and ſhut the door on all faithl preaching in theſe parts: Whereof I being advertiſl, accompanied with one or two more, entered a foral proteſtation againſt them, which through the Lord's effing broke their deſign; they threatening to excomunicate me, laid out themſelves as the other Aſſemblies d done, by all means imaginable to load me with the oſt foul and horrid aſperſions.

Neither to ſuch a company of miniſters and others, ho were at Bothwell, who ſought to make my life a rden to me, and hold me in continual vexation and rrow of ſpirit, upon no other account but becauſe of y former and preſent contendings, for diſowning and ſeping out a malignant and craftian intereſt, then inded and carried on amongſt them, which is now diſvered in Argyle's march; and for my labouring to have

a day of fasting observed, wherein the sins of the land might have been disowned and acknowledged.

Neither to such a company, who after the break at Bothwel, sat down in the Old Clachan of Galloway, and plotted and determined to take away my life, for my contending with Mr. John Welch and those gentlemen he brought with him, and my opposing and disowning of Hamilton Declaration; and after the Lord wonderfully disappointed them by discovering their design, met, and wrote a letter to some that were with me, that if they kept my company, they would cause that the country should neither afford them meat, drink, nor any manner of quarters; but if they would disown me, they should be honourably entertained.

Neither to such a company of ministers and others who after I was come to Holland, upon the call of worthy Mr. Cargill, Mr. Brown and Mr. M'Ward, posted a Commissioner against me there, with 20 or 30 articles the most of them criminal; for answer to which I refer you to Mr. M'Ward's own letter,

Neither is it to that company of plotters, ministers and others, who were associate with Monmouth and Argyle, who judged no way more convenient to carry on their designs, than by loading me with heavy and false reproaches, and by employing John Haddow under the mask of zeal and straightness in the cause, to pervert you from it and divide you among yourselves, and to involve you in an engagement with sectaries, malignants and bloody men, contrary to former national sacred engagements. That party, so long as they had any hope of gaining me, did set on me with the greatest insinuations and acclamations (to myself) commenting on my long and great sufferings, zeal, piety, &c. until they saw it was in vain; and then they raged.——I remember this was likewise John Haddow's way at my house in Friezland, a little before he shipped with Argyle; for after he had harangued on my zeal, sufferings, piety, usefulness to the church, &c. I interrupted him, and using freedom against his practice and others with him: Upon which he burst out, saying he had ever hitherto defended me, but now he should give me a cast and make me infamous wherever he went. But, poor man, he was far out in his politics; for when he returned to his associates, he took some of them to witness that he had ever defended me; to which they assented:

But

But now said he, I am resolved to be his enemy where-ever I come.

Finally, Neither am I writing, (I hope) to such a company of strangers who at my first coming to Friezland received me heartily, with my informations of the precious cause, and wrestlings of the church of Scotland, and embodied themselves in societies, and run with great zeal, to contribute unto, and imitate you, in espousing the Lord's cause as stated with us, and for a time there was nothing but fastings and prayers for it, and using means with magistrates and ministers for Scotland's reformation; and the Lord took a noble testimony off their hand, such as scarcely had ever been seen in thir lands, against the magistrates usurpation over the church. Yet upon a small temptation Mr. Brackel first broke off, in accepting his woeful Erastian call to his now church in Rotterdam; And I protesting against it, was then, and still am deserted by the most of them (though blessed be the Lord, not without his signal approbation of my testimony, to the conviction of many) whereupon Mr. Brackel, not without much prejudice at me, fell in with Monmouth's and Argyle's plotters, whereby the Lord's cause is made contemptible, and I loaded with their re-reproaches among strangers, that if the Lord had not graciously kept a small handful standing faithfully in this place, in all probability I had been redacted to the greatest outward straits.

I say, it doth not a little comfort me, that it is to none of all these forementioned persons and parties that I am writing; But unto you, O lovely Remnant, unto you O dear followers of the Lamb: The little flock of Christ in poor Scotland. Unto you, who have not only been honoured to stick to him, against all opposition; but to crown him again and again at Hebron. (O! the blessing of him who was separate from his brethren be upon you, and long may the crown flourish upon his head.) Unto you, O highly honoured, and deareſt fellow sufferers, and sympathizing brethren, to whose sympathy, wrestlings and prayers, not only all the churches of Christ are indebted, but also, poor contemned, and every way persecuted, unworthy, unworthy ROBIN HAMILTON is unspeakably indebted to you.

O beloved, my eyes are running down with tears, my heart is melting within me, I know not how I am both weeping and rejoicing, with the very thoughts that I see

you

you reading my feckleſs line; I think I ſee the tears in your eyes, for my caſe; I think I hear ſecret ſighings and ſobbings, going up before the throne for me: yea, I think I win a little to ſee (*at which I muſt lay by my pen*) your lovely Lord, and my Lord, ſtretching out his ſoft hand to receive, and bottle your tears, and to make them acceptable in your behalf, and my behalf, and to lay them out in another manner than ye or I can.

The ſubject of which your letter ſpeaks, and which I am now upon, in ſo far as it ſtrikes only at me in particular, is made very eaſy unto me, looking on the croſs of Chriſt, this day, as above the world's crown, that in any meaſure he ſhould make me conformable to himſelf and to my poor mother church.——But it is ſore and wounding, when I think that the glorious cauſe of Chriſt, ſhould be queſtioned on my account; or that ye, my companions in tribulation, ſhould ſuffer on my account; O the rage of enemies is cruel, yea more cruel than the *Oſtrich's*. Lord, they perſecute thoſe whom thou haſt ſmitten, and they talk to the grief of thoſe whom thou haſt wounded.

What are theſe biaſſed, prejudicate, politic, and imbittered men ſeeking? whom the Lord has ſo fully diſcovered, and on whom he has rubbed ſhame and confuſion, and who are called to ly in ſackcloth, in duſt and aſhes; Alas! *a generation pure in their own eyes, and yet is not waſhen from their filthineſs. A generation, how lofty are their eyes! and their eye-lids are lifted up. A generation whoſe teeth are as ſwords, and their jaw-teeth as knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men*, Prov. xxx. 12, 13, 14. But O Lord, my eyes are towards thee. Who chargeſt that thou mayſt diſcharge; who woundeſt that thou mayſt heal, and killeſt that thou mayſt make alive. Lord open thou my lips; and my mouth ſhall ſhew forth thy praiſe.

Loving Brethren, I ſhall begin at Hamilton Declaration and the ſupplication to Monmouth, which I have been made to call BEN-ONI. And I ſhall as in the ſight of an all-ſeeing God, give the hiſtorical relation thereof; and next, as the Lord will help to give you my thoughts thereof, and ſhall deſire in all, to take ſhame unto myſelf, that the Lord may be glorified, the truth confirmed, poſterity informed, and enemies on right and left hand confounded.

I ſhall

I ſhall paſs by (which enemies would bury) the many wreſtlings and contendings for Chriſt and his cauſe, that poor I, had at that time, it being more ſuitable for others, than for me, though there be but ſmall probability of a vindication that way, they being for moſt part in glory, who were eye-witneſſes to it, (yet the Lord lives, let the earth rejoice,) neither is it ſo pertinent for the preſent occaſion.

That morning before the proclaiming of Hamiltoun Declaration, there came an alarm to me,* that there was a party of our friends beſet with the enemy, whereupon immediately, I mounted my horſe, (which for moſt part was at my head, in the fields, ſaddled) and came to the muir, where I found that all the officers I had any confidence in, were already out upon ſervice. Yet ſeeing two, or three, that then ſeemed ſomewhat honeſt, A. Turnbull, *&c.* I deſired them to follow me, who all poſitively refuſed, on account of the hazard, alledging the enemies to be far above their number. Whereupon I told them I would go myſelf alone, and went away, without being obeyed by any of them: but finding a company of Teviotdale men, who alledged they wanted a captain, they willingly offered themſelves to me; and a Galloway gentleman, and ſome few with him, about break of day; ſo marching out of the duke's park, (which was my quarters where the foot moſtly lay) old Major Carmichael met me, and told me that Mr. Home in my abſence was going to read the Declaration, I told him to return immediately, and upon his higheſt peril to ſtop him, which he did, though with great difficulty, being neceſſitate with his drawn ſword to drive him away.

As I returned again, being broken and wearied with continual toils, travels, and watchings without the leaſt refreſhment. Mr. Welch, with ſeveral others, came to me, as I lighted in the muir, and ſet upon me for proclaiming their Declaration, (Rathillet being then with me, who ſaid he would proteſt againſt it). I oppoſed it flatly, and told what I had to ſay againſt it, *viz.* Its owning the tyrant's intereſt, and not mentioning

* It appeared afterward that this falſe alarm, was a ſtratagem, of purpoſe deviſed to be quit of him, and all ſuch officers whom they *knew would oppoſe it.* Similar to what they did a Sabbath, *by another falſe* alarm, that there was a body of militia *aſſembled at Campſie, &c.*

ing the ſins of the time. At laſt he, with three or four gray headed old men, begged of me with tears, that might but be proclaimed, and theſe things ſhould be helped in it Whereupon I, (alas) after a long time fighting, yielded that it ſhould be done, providing the Acknowledgment of Sins and Engagement to Duties were put in it, thoſe things helped in it, and that Mr. Thomas Douglas, and Mr. John King ſhould proclaim it, and that it ſhould not be printed untill all theſe things were helped.

Now that which moved me moſt to this, was, that through my broken and confuſed caſe that I was in 1ſt, I thought that the tyrant's intereſt had been caſt off in the Acknowledgement of Sins, &c. as I knew the Eraſtian, and Sectarian intereſt was. 2*dly*, I thought that the letting it be proclaimed with theſe conditions foreſaid, would be nothing for that party's intereſt, but for their ruin, which indeed it did, though was contrary to their intention, and not from any good management of mine. 2*dly*, I thought it would put them off till Mr. Cargill's draught of a declaration, was ready, which he had promiſed to us, and I was waiting with an intention to proclaim it ſo ſoon as it came to my hand.

Thus, my dear friends, I was lamentably inſnared, whereupon, without further deliberation, I went to the croſs, and as I uſed when marching with any company through towns, with my ſword in my hand, expecting to hear it proclaimed as they had engaged, but when coming to the place, and being thronged in, with the crowd, I was made both to ſee and hear other things, as you all know, which ſtruck me ſo dead, that I knew not well where I was, or what I was doing. I then ran up to Sarah Jeans, a change-houſe in Hamiltoun where Mr. Welch, and ſome other of the miniſters came, and ſeeing him and them, I told them that they had dealt treacherouſly with us, and had murdered the Lord's cauſe, and the poor army; at which he was ſo daſhed, that he ſpake not one word.

Whereupon I went out immediately, and called a counſel of war, to diſannul what was done; and when at that buſineſs, the miniſters ſent again to us, to ſee if the counſel of war would adhere to their Declaration, to which we declared we would not. After we had diſannulled the Declaration, we next concluded that the Cauſes of the Lord's Wrath ſhould be drawn up, and that I Hamil-

ton

ton Declaration ſhall be mentioned as one of the cau-
thereof, and that Mr. Cargill, with the aſſiſtance of
ary Hall, Mr. Walter Smith, *&c.* ſhould be employ-
in it, and that in all haſte, they ſhould ſend us the
Declaration that Mr. Cargill was drawing up, and
both ſhould be proclaimed and printed immediately.
his, though concluded, and undertaken, yet alas!
Lord never honoured us publicly to perform it. In
mean time, Mr. Welch, and that party, notwith-
ding of all this, cau.ed ſome horſe-men to ſteal to
ſgow, and print it.

ne thing which made my yielding more weighty to
was, that when I yielded, that noble inſtrument,
great Hero, for Chriſt, Rathillet, ſaid to Mr Welch,
he would proteſt againſt any ſuch thing, which
ughout my confuſion in the time, I little noticed,
afterwards it was bitter, O bitter to me.

s to the petition to Monmouth, it was thus, on the
rday, the day before the defeat, I, and other of-
s hearing that the Galloway gentlemen were come
o join with the army, and being informed that they
e of Mr. Welch's, and Mr. Hume's judgment, we
ed a counſel of war, where we might determine that
e ſhould be admitted to join with us but ſuch as were
d ſtraight in the cauſe as now ſtated amongſt us a-
it the Declaration of Hamiltoun, and for acknow-
ging and diſowning the lands ſins, *&c.* When we
o ſet, theſe Galloway gentlemen came in upon us with
r miniſters, undeſired, and uncalled for, whereupon
n name of the reſt, gave them a ſhort account how
cauſe was ſtated, and how that neither officers nor
liers were to be admitted, without joining with us
rein.

Theſe gentlemen told us poſitively that they would
adhere to ſuch a cauſe, nor join with us therein;
preſſed that the officers might be changed, and new
s brought in, and ſuch a way laid down as all that would
with them, might be brought in; and that all by-
es, ſhould be by-gones, or at leaſt laid aſide, until a
neral Aſſembly, and a Parliament were got. Where-
n I roſe up, and entered my proteſtation againſt
m, being backed with ſome others, and declaring
t I durſt not venture my life, and the life of the
d's people with ſuch a company, and in ſuch a cauſe;
ereupon immediately I parted from them, and ſome

of the officers with me; after I had been an hour or two from them, being outwearied, and almoſt wholly ſpent, I ſat down in the muir alone, and fell in a deep ſleep, and lay ſo, until two commiſſionate gentlemen from Galloway came and awaked me, begging me, with my friends to return, aſſuring us we ſhould have all ſatisfaction, upon which I and my friends did return: They ſaid they had ſomething to propoſe which greatly concerned the army. I anſwered that we were returned the ſame men that we were, when we left them, and were here to adhere to our former proteſtation; then I deſired them to ſay on; They moſt ſubtily waving what I had ſpoken, ſaid that it was their deſire, that in this Council it might be propoſed whether or not a ſupplication might be drawn up, and preſented to the duke of Monmouth.

Thus they dealt deceitfully with us, they having in our abſence, without our knowledge, choſen a new preſes and a new clerk(*viz.* Mr. John Dick, and with unanimous conſent, had concluded on a ſupplication, which their miniſters who were there preſent had before made up amongſt them) which being read, they had all aſſented thereunto. Upon which, I, though wholly ignorant of what had been amongſt them, in the name of friends, proteſted againſt any ſuch thing; Whereupon their new clerk in his precipitant zeal, cried out diſdainfully, that it was already done. We told him ſince it was ſo, it was their deed, and not ours: They finding themſelves mired, ſtood not to deny it. Whereupon we ſhewed the unlawfulneſs of their propoſal, holding out the ſinfulneſs of it. And they finding themſelves ſtraitned in their arguments, one of them ſaid we might hear it, ſo their new clerk brought it forth, and when read, we found it ſtuffed, from end to end, with malignant loyalty, wholly ſubverting the ſtate of our cauſe: Whereupon I, again in the name of the reſt, entered a proteſtation againſt it, and roſe up and left them, imagining that we ſhould have no more been troubled with them. Yet they again ſent after us, deſiring that two gentlemen, and a miniſter of each party ſhould confer a little in the buſineſs. Rathillet, Mr. Cargill and I were to be for our party.——And Mr. Andrew Morton was their miniſter. Mr. Cargil preſt me to it, and at laſt I aſſented.

When

hen we met again, I proteſted againſt all ſupplica-
, and after ſometimes debating, I ſaid if they were
ig to have the duke informed of our judgment of
thers, and his own rebellion blaſphemies and ufur-
ns in matters of church and ſtate, and to deſire him
down his weapons againſt the Lord and his peo-
I ſhould aſſent to that, but to no other thing.
reupon Mr. Andrew Morton anſwered, that was
ey were ſeeking. Which his party, when they
advertiſed of it, raged at him for: But I took
t his word. He alſo propoſed that I might give
writ to them; I anſwered that ſeeing he was in
dgment, that he and worthy Mr. Cargill who was
ed by us, would do it better than me; ſo we part-
egging them to be free and faithful, which Mr.
ll chearfully undertook; this being Saturday's
. Before the break of day, on Sabbath morning,
aſſaulted by the enemy at the bridge, and being
ly engaged, I was running and riding through the
, where I met one of the Carrick Captains running
one of his own men with his drawn ſword to kill
becauſe by inattention he had by a ſhot, ſlightly
him in the breaſt, and with much difficulty I got
topt from killing the poor man. And immediate-
Learmond ſent expreſs to me, in all haſte to come
ſon with three troops of horſe, or companies of
or relief.

the very midſt of all theſe confuſions, came Mr.
am Blackader to me with a paper in one hand,
en and ink in the other, and told me he came
Mr. Cargill with this information to *Monmouth*,
who begged me in all haſte to ſend it over to
I aſked him in haſte if it was Mr. Cargill's work,
d yes. Whereupon I did ſubſcribe it without read-

neſs that they are now*. And though the Lord had been graciouſly pleaſed to employ me for his cauſe and intereſt, ſome years before that, yet it was but like inland voyages, in compariſon of that great deep of Bothwel.——And there being a great difference betwixt the theory and practice of any thing; and more eaſy for a company upon land to ſee more enormities in the conduct of poor mariners at ſea, toſſed betwixt wind and wave; than they themſelves can ſee, though they be no leſs concerned in the ſhip's preſervation. Yea ſhipwreckt mariners look back on their own enormities and in the like caſe afterward may amend them.—And though with boldneſs and confidence I dare to take the Lord to witneſs, that whatever I was left to do, in my miſmanaging theſe two particulars, through confuſion, ſimplicity and inadvertency, it was far from my deſign or intention to alter my former way of acting and contending, which the Lord had been graciouſly pleaſed to honour me in formerly;—ever counting it my greateſt happineſs and ſecurity to ſtand to, contend and ſuffer for my owning his cauſe, as it was then, and now is more clearly ſtated by you, the faithful Remnant of Scotland. I ſay, whatever theſe things might plead for, at the hands of ſympathiſing on-lookers; yet ſo far were they from helping or eaſing me, when for a long time, the Lord's chaſtning hand lay heavily upon me, in diſcovering his diſpleaſure againſt me, and ſuſpending his love and the light of his countenance from me; and outwardly, in a ſtrange land, tryſting me with many ſharp trials, ſo that the ſympathy of friends, would have made me to ſuſpect them, and all ſuch reaſonings of that nature, were rather aggravating than eaſing. So that many thouſand times, I would have coveted the greateſt of tortures, to have but once had the occaſion of giving an open and free teſtimony againſt theſe two particulars, and but an aſſembly of my old companions, the Lord's people in that land, to have acknowledged my ſin, with ſhame, ſorrow, and grief unto them. Neither was there theſe

* For underſtanding of this, it is to be conſidered that although Mr. Hamilton and many others at that time were againſt explicitly eſpouſing the intereſt, and owning the authority of Charles II. yet they had not, nor did not expreſly diſown, and reject his civil authority until the next year, as is evident in their Declaration at Rutherglen, May 29th, wherein they neither own *nor diſown* the ſaid authority, compared with their Declaration at Sanquhar, 1680.

any thing at that time, that more endeared you unto me, than when I heard of your zeal, and reſentment of theſe two things; and as then, ſo no leſs now, I think it my glory to acknowledge it unto you, and throw myſelf at your feet, O pleaſant, faithful and fixed wanderers, priſoners, baniſhed, plundered, wounded and ſtigmatized remnant; to be diſpoſed of, and to give what ſatisfaction ye, or the famous Church of Scotland ſhall judge requiſite, according to the degree of my offence.

O what ſhould I not do, for the ſetting forth of his glory, whom I diſhonoured, and for the ſatisfaction of the generation of the righteous, whom I offended. O! *Who is a God like unto him, that pardoneth iniquity, and paſſeth by the tranſgreſſions of his people, he retaineth not his anger for ever, becauſe he delighteth in mercy:* Who has made that word (Pſalm xxxii. 5.) ſweet to ſome, *I acknowledged my ſin unto thee, and mine iniquities have I not hid: I will confeſs my tranſgreſſions unto the Lord, and thou forgaveſt the iniquity of my ſin, Selah.* It is called *Maſchil*, or a pſalm giving inſtruction; and O that my fallings or failings, conflicts and ſtorms, might but in the leaſt contribute for this unto you; and let me ſay this unto you, O ſympathizing and faithfully witneſſing remnant in Scotland, in the miſmanagements, failings or fallings of any of you, beware of ſeeking to palliate it, or to be ſatisfied if ye win at mens approbation, but ſeek a thorough ſight and ſenſe of it, and to be humbled in the preſence of Him who is the only author and creator of true peace, and in the preſence of his ſaints, whoſe ſympathy is of great worth; and beg alone for your relief, to have a ſhare in the blood of Chriſt, that merits peace. Endeavour to keep up a due ſenſe of all the wrongs that the enemies of Chriſt have done to him and his, whether by right or left hand enemies. Beware of tampering directly or indirectly with any of them, whether miniſters or others, after the Lord has ſet up ſuch beacons before you, and hath made ſo palpable diſcoveries of them and their ways, that any tender conſcience may diſcern it. Beware of truſting to any ſtock of light or experience you have had or may have, for it may ſoon be exhauſted, and without the Lord's new breathing upon it, may rather prove a ſnare than any other thing. Suffer not yourſelves to be hurried or precipitate in going about the Lord's matters; but when you find yourſelves ſo, foot & ſtand until you look about you. Look unto

the

the Lord for counſel, frame and aſſiſtance, until that ye find yourſelves in caſe to lay yourſelves and your affairs deliberately upon him: For, as all the honour we can put upon his Majeſty, is our employing of, conſulting with, and acknowledging of him; ſo nothing, nothing can offend him more than when he is ſlighted herein, and that eſpecially in his own matters. Beware of debating of truths, merely as truths; but as the truths of Chriſt, and the field in which the pearl is hid.

Though I might inſiſt on this, yet knowing to whom I write, I ſhall deſiſt; only what I have written, I have done it as in the ſight of God, for his glory, your vindication, and the information of tender conſciences amongſt you, who might be ſtrangers to theſe things which my ſoul deſires to be tender of, and to lay it upon you to be tender of them; and with no reſpect or deſign to anſwer the foul, lying, proud, malicious libels of the plotters and their confederates, John Haddow and the reſt of them; who thinking they can fall on no better way to palliate their own knavery, ſmother convictions, &c. than under the pretext of zeal, tenderneſs and ſtraightneſs in the cauſe, to ſee if they can give the cauſe a new thurſt, divide and reproach the poor remnant. And as for that poor man John Haddow, if he were as well known to friends at home as to me, I would not be afraid he ſhould be any ſnare; and that you may have a little hint of him, I pray you look on him before Bothwel, and you will find him embodied with Mr. Thomas Hog younger, and another whom I forbear to name, becauſe dead; they pretended great zeal againſt the Indulgence, but alas! that was all, their practice otherwiſe being but very groſs, which I ſhall but hint at in ſhort. When great Cameron and theſe with him, were taking many a cold blaſt and ſtorm in the fields, and among the cott-houſes in Scotland, theſe three had for the moſt part their reſidence in Glaſgow, where they found good quarters and a full table, (which I doubt not but ſome beſtowed upon them from real affection to the Lord's cauſe) and when theſe three were together, their greateſt work was, who ſhould make the fineſt and ſharpeſt roundels, and break the quickeſt jeſts upon one another, and to tell what valiant acts they were to do, and who could laugh loudeſt and moſt heartily among them. And when at any time they came out to the country, whatever

whatever other thing they had, they were careful each of them to have a great flask of Brandy with them; which was very heavy to some, particularly to Mr. Cameron, Mr. Cargill, and Henry Hall: I shall name no more.

Look to him at Bothwel; so far from ever being reckoned as one of the honest party there, that he made there again a party of his own, *viz.* after our first onset at Glasgow, when we called a counsel of war, and examining what might be the cause that we were beat off there, it was condescended on, that one of the causes was our having that unhappy man Thomas Weir of Greenrigg amongst us, who was a trooper at Pentland, under the command of Dalziel against the Lord's people, without giving evidences of his repentance. Whereupon we called him before the council of war, but he after some high words, at last desired to be excused from giving his mind in it before the ministers came up, Whereupon he parted from us and went away to Mr. Barclay, and made his complaint to him, who received him heartily, as his General, and abused us highly for dealing so harshly (as he said) with him. So we standing to our point, Greenrigg, John Haddow, and Mr. Barclay made a party of their own, and declared they would be subject to none *, and he and they reilled through the country all that while, and came to and went from the army as they listed.

Behold

* Mr. Hackstoun of Rathillet in a long letter upon that subject yet extant, shews that this Greenrigg and some of his accomplices were more instrumental in the ruin of the Presbyterian army, than they could have been if they had been avowedly with Monmouth; and that when he and the rest of the companies came up from the bridge he found the army drawn up very well and in good order, and with good courage begun their motion to go to attack those of the enemies who were come past the bridge; (which appears to have been no bad conduct, if they had done it timeously before the whole forces could be in a condition to fight) but immediately a cry arose through the army, that their officers were gone (viz. these gentlemen brought in by Mess. Welch, Home, &c.) which put a stop to their march. Presently Greenrigg, &c. with two troops of horse, left their station in which they were before, and went to the front of the left hand body of the foot;——and on a sudden, (while Mr. Hamilton was reproving him and shewing him the danger of such a position, the enemies firing their cannon mean time) the whole two troops of horse, being about 140 in number, at their full length, turn in a rank, wheeled toward the body of the foot,

Behold him after Bothwel, and you will find him in England amongſt the plotters and ſectaries——a ſectarian. One of his friends coming to Holland, brought with him a letter of recommendation from John as a perſon of great worth, who ſhortly after was detected in adultery, *&c.*

Look to John again at *Utrecht*, how he appears again under the maſk of ſtraightneſs, *&c.* Look to him again at Argyle's counſel table, hearing and applauding their Declaration, *&c.*

Behold him now, and ye will find him belching out his ſtomach againſt your poor perſecuted brethren, and ſtirring his tail to break the pleaſant remnant, and then he and his aſſociates have gained their point; where I leave him †.

Truly all this is extorted out of me, from my ſoul's love to you and the precious cauſe of Chriſt, which I feared might be wronged through his ſubtilty. And what I write in this, as I have deſired to eye the Lord in every ſentence of it; ſo he knoweth that it is not from paſſion or prejudice, neither am I writing at random, being either eye witneſs to it myſelf, or well informed; yea I doubt not but there will be ſome amongſt you who will know all or moſt of it. As I ſaid formerly, had it not been for your vindication and truth's alſo, I had rather deſired to have lien under the reproaches, than to have deigned myſelf to have anſwered ſuch ſtuff; for I think it is long ſince. I got both my own cauſe and of enemies ſo rolled over on the Lord, that ever ſince, I have been ſo far from vindicating of myſelf, or being con-

foot, (ſtanding there intire) and rode through them, treading them down, and forcing the reſt to flee; who, together with the horſemen, brake and diſordered all the troops drawn up behind for a reſerve.——And he adds, whether this was done deſignedly or not, I leave to others to judge, and betwixt God and them.—Thus the whole left hand was broken, not by the enemy, but by theſe who profeſſed to be friends, which inevitably occaſioned the ruin of the whole army.—I think any who were witneſſes might ſee the hand of God in making theſe who oppoſed the confeſſing the ſins of the land, to be chiefly inſtrumental in the ruin of the whole army, &c. [This Letter was written in anſwer to a falſe information given by one of chief note, and ſent to Mr. Robert M'Ward in Holland.]

† This John Haddow was formerly a merchant in Douglas. He got little entertainment amongſt the ſocieties while Mr. Renwick lived; but after his death, he by fair pretences came into favour with many, and was a Captain in Angus's regiment.

concerned with them, that their belchings are no trouble to me; aud what wonder? ſeeing the Lord is ſo palpably taking his own cauſe, people and intereſt in his own hand, and vindicating all better than all the ſcribblings, vindications and defences of the whole world could have done it, (at the writing of this I deſired again to lay myſelf before him, and again to proteſt before him, that this one attempt, which he knows was undertaken by me merely for his glory, the vindication of his cauſe and remnant, might not make him change his way with me).

O dear brethren, the work of the day is to be taking with guilt, to be cleanſing our ways, to be clearing our accounts, to be laying our hands upon our mouth, lying, and living in the duſt, valiantly keeping our ground, and employing the Lord to vindicate his own glory, cauſe and followers, and to wait on him who waits to be gracious; not ſeeking, but trembling to be delivered, until truth be delivered; not fearing enemies, but endeavouring to get them put in his hand: Their day is coming, and ſore will it be. Thus I have given ingenuouſly a true relation of theſe two particulars relating to Bothwel.

As for that accuſation they bring againſt me, of killing that poor man (as they call him) at Drumclog; I may eaſily gueſs that my accuſers can be other but ſome of the houſe of *Saul* or *Shemei*, or ſome ſuch riſen again to eſpouſe that poor gentleman's (*Saul*) his quarrel againſt honeſt *Samuel*, for his offering to kill that poor man *Agag*, after the king's giving him quarters. But, I being called to command that day, gave out the word, that no quarter ſhould be given; and returning from purſuing Claverhouſe, one or two of theſe fellows were ſtanding in the midſt of a company of our friends, and ſome were debating for quarters, others againſt it. None could blame me to decide the controverſy, and I bleſs the Lord for it to this day. There were five more, that without my knowledge got quarters, who were brought to me after we were a mile from the place, as having got quarters,—which I reckoned among the firſt ſteppings aſide; and ſeeing that ſpirit amongſt us at that time, I then told it to ſome that were with me (to my beſt remembrance it was honeſt old John Niſbet, That I feared the Lord would not honour us to do much for him. I ſhall only ſay this,—I deſire to bleſs his holy

name, that ſince ever he helped me to ſet my face to his work, I never had, nor would take a favour from enemies, either on right or left hand, and deſired to give as few.

As for the conſiderable ſums of money they alledge I received for the uſe of the ſuffering remnant in Scotland, not yet come to your hands.—As I cannot but pity that poor company's impudence and malice; ſo I cannot but admire the wonderful goodneſs of God in leading ſuch a poor witleſs thing as me, in ſuch a way as my innocency may be ſo eaſily vindicated, tender conſciences ſo fully ſatisfied, and the reproaches of enemies ſo palpably diſcovered.

After I was diſowned and deſerted by all my countrymen in Holland, and all puſhing at me as a peſt in the place and a troubler of their peace, foreſeeing what was brewing amongſt them, I was made to look about me, and to lay to heart, that in all theſe the Lord might be calling me to another place. So after ſome deliberation, I reſolved to go to Hungary, to Talkie then in arms for the Proteſtant Intereſt; and though I found no liberty to join with them, yet my love to that intereſt was great. So I went to *Utrecht*, and amongſt others to that great profeſſor *Witſius*, for a recommendation, who diſſuaded me much from it upon ſeveral conſiderations. Afterwards going to the *Hague*, through the advice of ſeveral perſons of quality, I converſed with the ambaſſadors of the Duke of Brandenburgh, Sweden, &c. But when I told how our cauſe was ſtated, and what was the diſcipline of our army in Scotland, and that if I went with them I behoved to have the ſame liberty over ſuch as I might command, ſo that the laws of God might not be broken unpuniſhed, &c. But they told me if I ſerved their maſters, I would be neceſſitated to leave my conſcience behind me and take the cauſe as I found it; which if I would do they promiſed me great encouragement, &c.——Upon which ſeveral perſons of honour, and ſome of them I believe truly godly, diſſuaded me likewiſe from meddling with them. So after ſome toſſing in my own mind, I retired, and deſired to lay my caſe before the Lord, who I found did much countenance me in the time; and when coming out of the chamber, *Friezland* was caſt in my mind, which I noticed little at firſt, till again and again it was borne in upon me; yet having no knowledge of the place, nor of any one in it, I could

I could not understand what it might be. So I came into the house, and taking the occasion with some friends then present, to give them a more full information of Scotland's cause and wrestlings, yet I found *Friezland* still working in my breast, till I was forced to tell them of it, which with some amazement, looking upon one another, they all cried out, that was the place I behoved to go to, and they hoped it was of the Lord: So other friends of quality coming in, they all applauded the motion, and they promised to write letters of recommendation; which they did.

So returning to *Utrecht*, I gave an account of what had passed at the *Hague* to Professor *Witsius*, which he approved of, and told me that Friezland was the place. —Thus seeing so much of the Lord's hand in it, I embraced the occasion, and he immediately wrote a letter to the *Prince* of *Friezland* in my favour, and gave me another to Mr. *Brackel*.—So I came to *Amsterdam* to Mr. *Kooleman*, who told me he had received the letters from the *Hague*; and when I desired him to read the directions of them, he told me they were all, save one, to *Coccians* *, which although he made no scruple of, yet after parting with him, and taking ship for *Friezland*, there arose a storm in my spirit, that I should be carrying letters to such as were disaffected to the cause of God. —And after some tossings of this nature, I was made to take the Lord to witness, that as formerly he had made me ever averse from taking favours from any that were not of his way, and to bless his Majesty, that to this day I was so far from rueing it, that I desired still to be led in the same way, and that it was not myself, ease or livelihood in the world that I was seeking, but his glory and the good of his cause; so I desired that he might still keep me as a witness for him in all places he took me unto, and particularly to this place I was going to, whatever hardships, straits or difficulties I might be exposed unto. So I made a new surrender of myself unto him with my desolate case and all the ingredients of my cup, as forsaken of friends, acquaintances and countrymen, weakness of body through long and heavy sickness, and soul-exercise with my present straits, I not having

* This is a sect, so called, whose followers of one Coccius, who denyed the moral obligation of the fourth command upon Christians under the new Testament.

[*This appears to have been in the year 1681.*]

to maintain me eight days longer, &c. Yet notwithstanding of all these, I desired to bless his great name, for holding me up and carrying me through so honourably, and that I was willing to serve him in the meanest employment, to beg, yea to die for him; and my desire was only that I might be for him and not for another, and to be kept from offending him, from sin, and from snares. I must say to his praise, I had a sweet time of it.

So coming to land in *Vanderwayn's* principality, who was Prince of Friezland, who was a great Cocceian, past by *Franicker*, (to whom the most of my letters recommendatory were) and went directly to Leewarden to Mr. Brackel, who I heard was an opposer of the Cocceians; who, when I came to his house was not at home, but I with the little Dutch I then had, shewed her that I had letters to her husband, and left her, (and as he told me afterward, when he came home, his wife informed him of the above-said matter, and he going to his closet alone, it was strongly borne in upon him that he should receive me into his house, and that I was one the Lord had sent to the place, and that he should be kind to me. So he returning from his closet, desired his wife to retain me still if I came again when he was absent. When I returned again, I found him within, and I met with unspeakable kindness from him, pressing me to lodge with them, which I did for the space of six weeks. After some conference alone, concerning the cause and case of the church of Scotland; he also gave an account of the case of their church, and of the great differences betwixt *Vanderwayn* and him, and the rest of the *Cocceians*. So I was made, not only to bless the Lord for directing me first to Mr. Brackel, but also to see myself engaged in conscience to witness against *Vanderwayn* and that party, as occasion should offer, cost me what it would. So I told Mr. Brackel of my design, and of my having letters to *Vanderwayn*: He approved of it, but withal told me, that it would not only cut me off from all expectations which friends had of my preferment in this court in Friezland; but might also contribute to render my abode in this place dangerous. I told him it was neither livelihood, life, security nor preferment that I so much looked after, providing I might but be honoured through grace to be a witness in my generation for Christ and his cause.——The next day I went to *Francker*, not only that I might exoner myself

at

my friends hands at the *Hague*, but alſo exoner my
n conſcience. So coming to *Vanderwayn*, he ſent for
: early in the morning, taking me to a room alone,
told me of his greatneſs and moyen, and how he
ild advance me to great preferment, (which was true)
t withal he ſaid, that Mr. Kopleman was dealing very
prudently in oppoſing him in a great reformation;
ich I looked upon as a fair door to diſcover my mind.
aid, I looked upon Mr. Kooleman as a faithful wit-
ſs for Chriſt, againſt the errors and defections that
re like to overwhelm the church of the *Netherlands*:
ich I found made him inſtantly weary of me; yet he
miſed to be my friend. Whereupon I left him, with-
t ſeeking his favours.

The week following, Mr. Braekel tryſted to his houſe
eral friends of the beſt note, and beſt affected in the
ce, to come and ſee me, to whom I gave an account
Latin (Mr. Brackel mean time turning it into Dutch
them) of the cauſe and caſe of the church of Scot-
d, which affected them much. At laſt they pro-
ed a way how I ſhould be maintained amongſt them,
l to give me cloaths and all things neceſſary, (of which
nfeſs I was very bare) and that for the honour of the
ſe they would have me clad in the moſt faſhionable
de, and a ſervant or two to attend me. I told them,
ir zeal for the Lord's cauſe, and ſympathy with me
: very encouraging, but I could not aſſent to their
poſals; for as I was a witneſs and a ſufferer (though
ſt unworthy) for Chriſt; and as I had ever, ſo yet I
nted it my greateſt honour and glory, and moſt ad-
tageous for his cauſe, to be like the condition my
r mother church and her children were in, who were
far from having ſuperfluities, that they were reduced
the greateſt ſtraits,; ſo I got them with difficulty diſ-
ded from it, and wholly to lay aſide any ſervants for
, and only to take off ſuch cloaths whoſe gravity and
riety might ſpeak forth my coming from a perſecuted
rch: But I told them, that what they had been de-
mining for me of that nature, they might have occa-
n to employ it much better on my poor perſecuted
thren; and alſo, that it had ever been my deſire to
witneſs and contender for the Lord againſt all the
s of the place where I was, whether at home or abroad,
ich if the Lord helped me to do, (as it was my great
ire he might) they would have enough to do to main-

tain

tain me ſparingly, (which they then thought impoſſible, yet ſince they have often found it true) for as I heard there were many Coccians in the land, and alſo multitudes of ſectaries, againſt whom I deſired through the Lord's grace to teſtify, in my ſtation and capacity upon all occaſions, and deſired them to take nothing from any of them for my ſupply, otherwiſe, if I knew of it, it would neceſſitate me to caſt myſelf again upon God's providence, and to wander through the reſt of the world, before any out of God's way ſhould have it to ſay, that they did me, or the perſecuted people and cauſe of God a favour,

Vanderwayn coming afterward to Leewarden, enquired for me,—and ſaid to Mr. Brackel, though he could not as yet advance me ſo creditably as he intended, yet he would liberally contribute for my honourable ſtaying among them. Whereupon Mr. Brackel, as I had deſired, told him my unfreeneſs to take any thing from Coccians, looking upon it as the only teſtimony that I could for the preſent give againſt them. Which ye may think, he took not very well, and after that he nor none of that party ever owned me. As for the other ſectaries I never had the temptation from them, they hearing what is related above,

After I was ſettled in Mr. Brackel's houſe, I laid out myſelf to the utmoſt of my power to inform them of the caſe of my poor mother church; and finding what acceptance it had amongſt them, I ſent home letters to you my deareſt brethren, of all that the Lord had done for me, that ſo I might have your advice how to move moſt advantageouſly for your behoofs, though, as ye know, I had formerly but very ſmall encouragement from that land. So all the ſix weeks I lodged with Mr. Brackel, I received not one ſtiver from him nor any other, all the money that was collected being brought in to Mr. Brackel, who bought cloths and other neceſſaries with it, as he did ever after, ſo long as he ſtaid in this place: And when I went to Holland upon ſome buſineſs once, he gave me only ſo much money as he thought would bear my charges; of which I ſaved as much as I could out of my own belly, to give it to a ſuffering family then at *Utrecht*, (K——'s) who were little my friends then. My friends in Leewarden providing for me a private chamber, I ſtaid there three months, and Mr. Brakel [illegible] my friends appointment, paid the charges out of the collected

collected money, which I managed so sparingly that I cast myself into sickness, &c.

My worthy brother Earlstoun's family coming over to Rotterdam, I was sent by friends with so much money as to bear their charges to Leewarden. When we came there, an house was provided for us; all the money for our maintainance was given in to Mr. Brackel, who gave it monthly, or quarterly to my dear sister Earlstoun, as he judged might soberly maintain us as sufferers indeed; and though, blessed be the Lord, there was enough of it, yet we had nothing to spare; as for me I meddled nothing with their money, neither got I any either from Mr. Brackel or any other. Thus we lived until my brother Earlstoun went to Scotland.

Shortly after, worthy Mr. Renwick's ordination falling in, and Mr. Brackel giving me a letter of recommendation to *Groningen*, and *Embden*, so I left *Leewarden*, and the poor family amongst strangers. Mr. Brackel giving me as much money as he thought would carry me to *Embden*, yet upon the account of my differing with him in the way of the ordination of Mr. Renwick, (as I wrote to you formerly) his allowance was so little at this time, that a friend in Leewarden sent after me a little more to help me; this was all the money I got from any soul in Friesland, except as I have told you from Mr. Brackel, coming to Groningen, and making ready for worthy Mr. Renwick's ordination.

In my way to Embden, having the occasion to speak with two ministers, (though strangers to me, yet laying out the case of our church to them) when I was gone they made a collection, and sent it to the minister *Philippius*, in Groningen, and he sent it to Mr. Brackel.

When I came to Embden I laid out the church of Scotland's reformation, cause, and sufferings, unto them, all which they most affectionately accepted, offering to lay out themselves for your relief;—they desired that I, in company with one of the ministers would go to the country to their friends and lay out our case to them, that so every one of them might deliver the money severally to myself. Which overture I refused, telling them that if the cause itself moved them not, my presence would never do it. But I proposed that the ministers might lay it out before the people, and then that every one, as the Lord should move them, should bring it

it in to Mr. *Allerdain*, the eldeſt miniſter, and that he ſhould ſend it ſealed to Mr. *Brackel*, or to me at Groningen; to which they condeſcended. At the ſame time alſo Mr. *Allerdain* wrote to his acquaintances in Rotterdam, to make a collection for you, and to ſend it to me, which they did, collecting three hundred Gilders, and not having a direction to ſend it to me, they went to one of the Scots miniſters in the town, to get a direction, who deſired that they might give it to him, and he ſhould diſpoſe upon it to ſufferers: as for me, they ſaid, and that party I was agenting for we were but a pack of murderers, and erroneous perſons, &c. So this is another of the good turns, ye had by the plotters; alſo, the ſaid Mr Allderdain wrote to a miniſter of his acquaintance at *Bremia*, who ſent eighty Ducatoons to Mr. Brackel for you, which indeed I never ſaw, nor knew of it, until Mr. Brackel was gone to Rotterdam, neither did it ever come to your hand. This was all the money that ever was ſent to you or me from any foreign church, or perſon in the world, ſave *Embden* and *Frieſland*.

So returning to Groningen, (the time of Mr. Renwick's ordination drawing near) after ſome days there the money came from Embden as they had promiſed by the poſt, ſealed: whereupon I took Mr. Montandam who had the overſight of our ſtudents, and cauſed him to tell it, and I brought the money again ſealed to Mr Brackel, who told me that ſeverals in Frieſland had collected, and that all the money was to be brought in to him: and after all was got, it was told and ſealed, and delivered over to Mr. Renwick and our friend George Hill.——Thus parting with Mr. Renwick, I thought to have reſted my wearied toſſed body with my dear ſiſters and the family at Leewarden, but in a little time the news of my dear brother Earlſtoun's being taken came to my ears, which neceſſitated my ſiſter Earlſtoun and me to part for want of money, being loath to put friends to unneceſſary charges, and my other ſiſter Jean took the charge of the family†, &c.

After

† Here he gives a relation of the way they loſt the friendſhip of Mr. Brackel; which in ſhort was thus. A congregation in Rotterdam being vacant, the miniſters and people according to cuſtom, nominated three godly miniſters. out of which one was to be choſen, but the magiſtrates call all the three, and influenced by the Prince of Orange, they without the conſent of moſt part of miniſters and people, gave a Call to Mr. Brackel, which the

After Mr. Brackel was gone to Rotterdam, the few who remained firm friends to you, the poor family and me (notwithſtanding of all the efforts of him and others to prevent it) brought in what they collected for the family to a worthy old gentlewoman's hand (as before to Mr. Brackel's) who hath taken the management of our family, and ſhe gives it to my ſiſter. And although, they be but few, yet are willing to contribute to their own ſtraitening for maintaining us: But bleſſed be the Lord, who deals well with us, not only helping us to be witneſſes for him in a ſtrange land; but alſo in this, that we have no more friends than his cauſe and our dear brethren at home have; and that we are not obliged to any, but ſuch as count it their honour both to ſuffer and ſympathize with us, upon the Cauſe's account. As an evidence of which, when I was to print the Proteſtation againſt the Scotch Congregation in Rotterdam, I not having ſo much money in the world to pay it, yet I reſolved it ſhould be done; hoping the Lord would ſend me ſome little part of my dear ſiſter Jean's patrimony, but one of our friends getting notice of it, begged of me but to have the honour to have ſo much hand in that teſtimony as to pay the Printer, which was ten or twelve Gilders; and afterward when I gave that perſon two or three copies of it, they immediately tranſlated it into Dutch, and cauſed bind the hiſtory of the Indulgence, the Cauſes of the Lord's Wrath, and the ſaid Proteſtation in one volume, calling it their *Vade Mecum*.

D d Thus

the miniſters of Leewarden refuſed to comply with, or to looſe Mr Brackel. But the Prince of Orange interpoſing his authority, at laſt they yielded; mean time, the people of Leewarden inſtigated Mr. Hamilton to deal for them with Mr. Brackel to diſwade him; which he accordingly did, both by word and writ, ſhewing by many arguments the evil of accepting of ſuch a Call; which greatly incenſed him againſt Mr. Hamilton, and for which cauſe, he ſet himſelf afterwards, to oppoſe both him and the Societies in Scotland to the uttermoſt of his power, and aſſociating with the Plotters, (*viz.* Monmouth and Argyle) he warmly received, and entertained all their reproaches of the Societies, *&c.* and giving to them and their friends the money that had been collected in Brema, and Frieſland, which was depoſited in his hand, for the behoof of the ſuffering Remnant in Scotland, and the ſupport of Earlſtoun's family, &c. whereby Mr. Hamilton, and that family were reduced to ſtraits, and alſo thoſe who continued their firm friends. So dangerous a thing is it to oppoſe many men in ſuch things wherein their worldly ſelf-intereſt is concerned.

Thus you have an account of all the money that ever I had for printing either teſtimonies, or any other book, from any living; yea it is ſo far falſe, that I ſhould have received money for printing the teſtimonies, that I think beſide yourſelves, I never ſpoke to any in the world of printing them, finding myſelf every way unfit for it, ſuppoſe I had money.

And when I went laſt to *Embden* upon your account, and having but a ſparing allowance, I went moſt of the way on foot, about forty or fifty miles, carrying bread and cheeſe with me for my ſupport, leſt I ſhould ſpend any of the money collected for Scotch ſufferers; and when Mr. *Alerdain* ſent the laſt collection ſealed for me, to Leewarden by the poſt, and with it, he ſent to me ten Gilders unſealed, which alſo, together with the ſum that was ſealed, and the two hundred and fifty Gilders from ſix friends in Leewarden, I ſent all home to you with our friend Robert ———, this I mention only to let you ſee what care the Lord hath had of poor me in that affair, he knowing well that I was to be reproached on this account.

In the mean time while I was waiting at *Leewarden* for the money from *Embden*, &c. the old Tyrant Charles wrote to the ſtates of Holland, that they might ſend me, and ſome others over to him, which greatly troubled the land; yet amongſt all my relations, and country men in Holland, there was not one wrote to me of my hazard, though it was public a long time, before I heard of it. Yet the Lord moved a great perſon in Leewarden to ſend me notice privately of my hazard, deſiring me to retire out of the provinces, whereupon I reſolved to keep myſelf privately in my own houſe, till I had got the money foreſaid, gathered. But immediately I was again advertiſed by another perſon of quality in the place, that there were ſeveral Engliſh men in the town, and in the provinces, waiting to catch me, which greatly alarmed our friends, not knowing where to adviſe me to go, yet there was one perſon adventured to harbour me, in whoſe houſe I abode ſix weeks, in the cold winter, without fire, and often without light for ſecrecy, the one half of the family not knowing I was there. Thus I abode until the news of the Tyrant's death came, which made the enemies pack away, and I, through the Lord's goodneſs was liberate.

Now

Now, much honoured of the Lord, I have given you as in his presence a faithful account of all the money that ever I received, either upon my own, or your account since I came to *Friesland*: And as I desire to praise the Lord, and to rejoice that ever I was honoured to serve the meanest of you, in so honourable a cause; so all the reproaches that Satan and his instruments can cast upon me, (though alas, it is you, and the cause of Christ, through me they thrust at) I hope shall not make me repent, or hinder me for the future to serve you in the Lord's cause to the utmost of my capacity. I desire to bless and praise him for the way he has led worthless witless me in hitherto, and although now in a very poor and desolate case, yet I would not exchange my lot for the best of my enemies; but I look on persecutions and reproaches, my clouted shoes, and clouted coat, mean diet, and bare purse, which I bear for Christ's cause, as more honourable than all the rich buff, embroidered gold, and silver laced coats, with the vast sums of money, procured by Monmouth's and Argyle's men from sectaries, papists, malignants, and the indulged, and other enemies of the Lord's cause, at home, and abroad: with which (since their defeat) the limbs of Antichrist are now making themselves merry; Whereas, the little portion that the Lord honoured me to have a hand in collecting for you, every sixpence whereof (praise to his name) did bear a testimony for Christ upon it, and was made useful for his poor, little, naked, contemned, and persecuted flock; and, as I have told you, such was my desire to have the sympathy of the givers, proclaimed amongst you, and to have them included in your prayers, that I would never take a sixpence of it, for my own expences, yea though it might have been counted no wrong done to either you, or them, if I had sent dear brother *Earlstoun*, now so long a prisoner for Christ, and my dear sister, his bed-fellow, somewhat of it, without your allowance; yet to this day I was never able to send them a doit of my own; so I did never take the liberty to send to them a turner, nor the worth of it of yours, but left that to yourselves.

My dearest brethren, and fellow-sufferers for Christ, though I be loth to make a blowing-horn of my straits, lest enemies rejoice thereat, and blessed be the name of the Lord, I am far from repining, but rather rejoicing in my lot, yet to *use a little freedom* with you; the thing

that made us desire our friend Robert Spiers over, was that he might both hold in somewhat to us, and win something for our maintainance; for friends with the tears in their eyes have oft told us what straits they were in with us, and that they had with great difficulty got some a'oaths for us, but were not able to make them; so that Robert came seasonably to us, and is mending and sewing to us, ever since he came. Within these two days my sister was with our friends who told her the bitterness of all against you and us, and also the cause of Christ; and that the plotters since they came over to Holland are spreading the report, that the sufferings of Scotland now are nothing and that ye are in fulness of all things, and that I get great sums of money from you, and that thereby our family wanted for nothing which our dear friends said was so well believed in their lands that they knew not what would become of us, and that it was very grieving to them, to see and hear it.

O loving brethren this is not to discourage you, not that I and the poor family are regreting our lot: no, Israel's portion is yet to the fore, a large and broad inheritance: But rather desire to glory therein, and to lay it on you to praise him for it, that thereby you, and we may be brought thereby to depend upon him the more closely, and may be kept humble under our honourable difficulties, this poor family having as many to own us as ye have, and both as many to own us as are owning the noble cause of our blessed Lord Jesus; O love the Lord all ye his saints, for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer. Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your hearts, all ye that hope in the Lord.

Dear Brethren just at my writing the last paragraph I cannot but tell you of a strange providence shewing the Lord's kindness to, and care of you, and his cause. The day after friends had been speaking to my sister, as I have told you,—I being met with them in a meeting that we keep every Tuesday, where I perceived them all to be much discouraged, and after the meeting they desired to speak with me, none knowing what was the matter save one of them, whereupon I desired to be excused, till I went home—I supposing that it might be some new plot against my person that they had heard, but I trysted to meet them at eight o'clock at night.

When

When I met them again, I found them all together, and more chearful than before, after ſitting down, one of them with tears and joy, told me and the reſt, what a wonderful providence of the Lord they had met with that day, wherein they could not but read much of the Lord's love as to themſelves, ſo alſo to the poor Remnant in Scotland, in that the Lord in a wonderful way had ſent them (not of their own ordinary rent, yet) for their own uſe, far beyond their expectation, a little ſum of money, which they had dedicated, and would now propine the faithful Remnant in Scotland with it; which they ſaid the very thoughts of had refreſhed their ſoul that they could not expreſs it, and deſired that you might praiſe the Lord in their behalf for it, (this is the little portion you have now ſent to you) although it be a ſmall, yet it is a bleſſed and a great portion, every thing conſidered, the giver is a very young, yet a worthy zealous perſon. O mind them before the Lord, it is their deſire and alſo mine they engaged me to keep their name ſecret. O how good is it to wait on the Lord in his own way, who waiteth to be gracious.

As to the Rotterdam Proteſtation, I deſire to bleſs the Lord that ever honoured me, with you, to have the leaſt hand in it, it being the only public teſtimony our poor church hath in a ſtrange land. As to the irregularities, and irreligiouſneſs which it is charged with by the plotters, this being but like what ſuch teſtimonies of that nature and the inſtruments thereof are ordinarily charged with, may be the better borne, eſpecially when we find it has ſo hit the nail on the head,—and wrought ſo kindly on the ſtomachs of the plotters, and all that ſide of the houſe, that they have ever ſince vomited much filth of their ſtomachs, that was never before diſcovered.—If they had mentioned in their libel, wherein the irreligiouſneſs, and irregularities of it conſiſted—it is like I might have ſhown you my mind, as in other particulars: But finding it but an impudent, and naked aſſertion, I cannot fight with the wind.

But as to the ſecond Article, wherein ye write to me, that they alledged they were wronged by us, in mentioning their lies, treacherous dealing, aſperſions, reproaches and miſinformations, which they would have freed themſelves of. It is true, it might be well anſwered that take in all the miniſters in *Cumulo*, with the *&c.* that is at the end of it, which takes in all the miniſters

that

that came to that place and were embarked with Rotterdam, *viz.* the indulged plotters, *&c.* and it will be very eaſy to any to ſee that they are ſo far from being wronged, that the half that might have been ſaid againſt them, is not inſerted: But if nothing leſs will ſerve Mr. Langlands and Mr. Barclay than probation.

I anſwer, 1*ſt*, Whether or not, was that treacherous dealing in Mr. Barclay (to paſs by other things) at that time when great Meſſrs Cameron and Cargill were in the fields, carrying Chriſt's ſtandard over the mountains of Scotland, not only to refuſe to join with them in the work of the Lord, but to come into Galloway with ſeveral others, commiſſionated from their brethren for that end, and ſet up his tent as near theſe two witneſſes as he could, upon a pretext as being one with them, and ſo crying out againſt the indulgence, calling it a *well buſked Jad*, &c. thereby to draw poor things off from the other two: and when the people flocked to him, imagining that Meſſrs Cameron and Cargill, and he were one, then took occaſion in private to oppoſe them and their faithful witneſſings, and to condemn withdrawing from the indulged, or any other of the miniſters.

2*dly*, Whether or not, was that treacherous dealing in him, that before he deſerted his own pariſh, in Stirling ſhire and the poor perſecuted Remnant in Scotland, for him to go through the land to thoſe places and perſons, whom he knew were diſaffected to all public preaching and faithful witneſſing, and offering the goſpel to them (to be a ſconce to his own practice, and to make him the more acceptable where he was going) and then to come over immediately to Holland, with ſuch a bad report of that land, ſpreading it among ſtrangers, and others, that he had gone from one end of Scotland to the other end of it, and there was none that would receive the goſpel off his hand. If this was not treacherous dealing, let all unbiaſſed perſons judge.

And further, when he was come over, he and Mr. Langlands and Mr. Thomas Hogg younger, after many horrid miſinformations to Mr. Kooleman formerly, went again to him preſſing him to write in all haſte to Mr. Brackel, then at Leewarden to ſtop Mr. Renwick's ordination, which Mr. Kooleman obeyed, and wrote in all haſte what dreadful accuſations theſe three forementioned miniſters, with the reſt at Rotterdam, had againſt you; and withal told him that theſe three miniſters were to be at

at his houſe the Wedneſday after, to draw up the libel they had againſt you, and to ſubſcribe it, and ſend it to Mr. Brackel; whereupon Mr. Brackel wrote to me immediately a ſhort line acquainting me of it, the true copy of it in Latin I have ſent you, and when he came to Amſterdam to Mr. Kooleman's, and waited all day, the three miniſters came not, but at night ſent their apology that they could not come that day, by reaſon that their information was not ſubſcribed by all the miniſters, ſome of them not being then to be found, but that they ſhould ſend it with the next. So, when he returned, he wrote to me in all haſte another letter to Groningen, with a little account of their aſperſions, the true copy whereof I have alſo ſent you; but before it came to my hand the ordination was paſt. When I returned to Leewarden, Mr. Brackel told me there were other articles they had diſperſed againſt us, beſide thoſe contained in the letter; but becauſe I cannot prove them by witneſſes (as they ſay) I ſhall not inſert them.

Now, whether this will not make out treachery, lies, &c. and counteracting the godly in their lawful endeavours,—I leave it to the Lord and to tender conſciences to decide. I wonder theſe men did not put us to prove theſe things ſooner, when worthy Meſſrs Cameron and Cargil were in the fields, or when Mr. Brackel was one with us; perhaps then they thought by our moyen at home and abroad, we would have got too many to witneſs for truth and againſt them: But they'll wait untill I be deſerted of friends abroad, and a party of you at home engaged for them, or well jumbled, and then they will bid us prove. But alas! the blue marks of their practices in all places where they come, are ſufficiently proving, and crying againſt them.

Look at home, who are the moſt active enemies, and moſt calling in queſtion the faithful wreſtlings, contendings, teſtimonies and heroic ſufferings of the poor remnant at home? Is it not they and their confederates? Or go abroad, and ſee who is moſt prejudicate againſt you? Who is ſowing diſcord betwixt you and your friends who were once valiant for you? See who is moſt imbittered againſt you and the Lord's cauſe, as now ſtated in that land, and againſt any that would lay out themſelves for you, and you will find that it is that party of the plotters and their confederates. Alas! though they may for a time thus dally with God and men, and ſay,

Behold

Behold we know it not: doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth the soul, doth he not know it? and shall he not render to every man according to his works?

But supposing these three men had been innocent of some things inserted in the protestation, yet I could not grant that the writing of these sins *in cumulo*, was either irregular or irreligious, especially considering them as imbarked in one ship, carrying on one cause and steering one course together, though not all alike expert in that. What more ordinary in the scriptures, than for the Lord to charge home *in cumulo* the sins of a land or of a church, upon the whole, they not witnessing and contending against the same, even though not all actually guilty, See Deut. ix. and Ezek. xxii. in that long catalogue of Judah's and Israel's sins, the Lord charges the city, the prophets, the priests, the princes and the people's sins *in cumulo*, and verse 29. and 30. he says, *I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, but I found none:* and yet *there were* at the same time (chap. ix.) *found* sighers *for all these abominations*, (which that party are so far from that they will neither acknowledge nor mourn for their sins) and also we see in many examples in scripture, the Lord threatening and plaguing *in cumulo*, as in the case of *Achan*, and David's numbering of the people, Saul's slaying of the Gibeonites, &c. and our blessed Lord threatens Jerusalem *in cumulo*, Mat. xxiii. 37. although there were not a few therein of his own people, who consented not to the counsel and deeds of his enemies.

Now my very dear Friends, I hope ye will pardon my prolixity, being so far contrary to my own design when I began, yea, and in a great measure extorted from me, that if it had not been singly for the glory of God, (so far as my weakness would allow) and the vindication of his cause and followers, I would never have condescended to it. I have also endeavoured to manage every article I have mentioned, that any who please to back-trace me, may come to the knowledge of all the steps, wanderings and fighting circumstances contained in this information.

Dear friends, you cannot but see what an high stage you are set upon, as it were to be a mark for all sorts to shoot at, *Set forth last, as it were, appointed to death,*

leath, to be made a ſpectacle to the world, to angels, and to nen. But thanks be to God which giveth the victory thro' ur Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Therefore, my beloved brethren, e ye ſtedfaſt, unmoveable, always abounding in the work f the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not vain in the Lord.

As to the account you ſent me of your wreſtlings with nat diſaffected party of miniſters and others; I think he Lord hath nobly helped you, and has diſcovered his ich grace towards you, with the rottenneſs of theſe nen's principles and practices, helping you to keep up he good old cauſe on foot. O! *be ſtrong in the Lord, nd in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour f God, that ye may be able to ſtand in the evil day.* And nce ye are ſo fairly parted, beware of further meddling vith them, until ye ſee another work on them, which I ear is not much to be expected, for as yet I ſee nothing mong them but a contemning and burying of the faithful wreſtlings of the poor remnant, a vindicating of their wn proceedings, a ſubtile endeavouring to have you inked in one chain with them, and divided and broken mongſt yourſelves, and dreadfully loading with reproaches, both at home and abroad, ſuch who have heir hands at the work of God.—O! I ſay, as ye love your peace and the favour of God, ſtand afar off from uch. When I look through their laſt proceedings with you, it brings their woeful proceedings at Bothwel freſh into my mind. It is the ſame cauſe they are now carrying on.

As for further libellings and pamphletings of theirs, reject them, otherwiſe ye will find they ſhall never have an end, until the Lord take them red-hot in their plottings and politics, and diſcuſs the controverſy himſelf: O pray, pray that he may haſten to do it.

I would alſo beg of you, not to put your princely Maſter in the common of any out of his way, who are oppoſing or refuſing to embark with you in your faithful wreſtlings, as it has been the ruin of many of this generation, and alſo diſparaging to the glory, honour and cauſe of your noble Maſter; and far contrary to the practice of the noble hero Abraham, who gave a noble teſtimony againſt ſuch peeviſh, covetous and hateful politics, telling the king of Sodom, (no enemy nor backliden profeſſor) that he would not take from a thread even to a ſhoe latchet, neither any thing that was his,

leſt he ſhould ſay that he had made Abraham rich. Abraham let him know that the Lord, the Moſt High GOD, the poſſeſſor of heaven and earth, was engaged for him, (who is alſo engaged for you) he kent full well that ſuch ſort of bodies were very ready to call their threa- a web, their ſhoe-latchet a Nout's hide, and their an- thing, how little ſo ever, a vaſt treaſure, and that Abraham ſhould be obliged to him all his days for it. O be tender of the Lord's glory, as it has been the trick of all the enemies to gain their woeful purpoſes, and very fatal to, and hath tongue-tacked many a valiant hero for Chriſt in our day. *Truſt in the Lord and do good, ſo ſhalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou ſhalt be fed.*

I had almoſt omitted Mr. Langlands anſwer to the 6th article of the Rotterdam proteſtation, wherein he would vindicate joining with that congregation, by alledging that after *Rathillet* was debarred from the communion, Mr. Hamilton communicated there, and Mr. Cargill preached and gave the communion that very day that Rathillet is ſaid to be debarred; ſo that the ſcandal, (as he ſays, if there be any) lies at our door. To paſs by other anſwers that might be given, I ſhall give you the true relation of it. Mr. M'Ward on ſaturday night before the Communion ſent for me, and told me that church's deſign of debarring Rathillet, which I did much reſent in the time, and went immediately and told Mr. Cargill of it; but he, with other friends, though reſolving to reſent it, yet could not determine on ſuch a ſudden to withdraw from the church, this being the firſt ſtep of their ever appearing againſt us; for ever formerly they had owned and joined with us in all the teſtimonies that ever had been given in our land, yet we went to Mr. John Hog (who was then their only miniſter after Mr. Brown's death *, Mr. Robert Fleming not being then come over) to ſee what was the cauſe; who told us, that the elders had done it without his advice, and thereupon gave out tickets to Mr. Thomas Douglaſs to give to Rathillet, whereupon that great witneſs for Chriſt would not accept of it: yet then we could ſee that there was a-

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* By this and ſome other things it appears to be a miſtake that ever Mr. M'Ward was a ſettled miniſter in Rotterdam, altho' he had his reſidence much there, and often viſited while his dear brother Mr. Brown lived, who was miniſter there many years, excepting the time he was forced to retire to Utrecht, upon the account of hazard from England.

ny cauſe of ſcruple for us to join with them at that time. But the reaſon, as I underſtand, that it is inſerted in the proteſtation, was, that immediately after, Mr. Fleming coming over, and faithful teſtimony being given againſt him, and the church of Rotterdam not only eſpouſing his plea, but caſt at all the faithful teſtimonies and late wreſtlings of our church, involved themſelves with the Monmouthian party then on foot, and in perſecuting, reproaching, &c. the remnant and their proceedings at home and abroad, and adhered to the deed of the elders againſt Rathillet.

As to the charge againſt the miniſters who ordained Mr. Renwick, I refer you to Mr. Linings and the bearer's information. If I have omitted any thing, I expect ye will let me know.

Now, much honoured and pleaſant remnant, my earneſt deſire, and my laſt deſire in this letter ſhall be, that ye may be helped, and kept following the Lord fully and ſingly, laying aſide every weight, that *ye may run with patience the race that is ſet before you, looking unto Jeſus who is the author and finiſher of your faith, conſidering him that endured contradiction againſt himſelf, leſt ye be weary and faint in your minds.*—Alas! there has been too much looking after multitudes. Chriſt's flock is a little, little flock; boaſting in ſomewhat without and beſides Chriſt, has coſt us dear; O that we might be wiſe at laſt, neither looking to perſons nor parties, pretend to what they will, but as we ſee them following and imitating him who was holy, harmleſs, undefiled;—and hath called us to holineſs, to be holy in all manner of converſation, built up a ſpiritual houſe, an holy prieſthood, to offer up ſpiritual ſacrifices, acceptable to God by Jeſus Chriſt. Holineſs becomes his houſe and ſervants; and ſuch will the Lord honour to follow him in his conqueſts, in tumbling down Antichriſt and all his enemies, (Rev. xvii. 14.) who are called, choſen and faithful. And whatever men may pretend to by their policy, aſſociations, boaſtings, learning, parts, &c. where holineſs with theſe is wanting, never expect a good turn from them; and where this is, whatever other outward advantages are or may be amiſſing, yet be far from contemning them—becauſe the fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer than men, and the weakneſs of God is ſtronger than men; *For ye ſee your calling brethren, that not many wiſe men after the fleſh, not many mighty, not many noble are called.*

God hath chosen the foolish things to confound ... the weak things to confound the mighty, that no flesh ... ld glory in his presence.—Where is the wise? where is ... scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Hath not ... d made foolish the wisdom of this world. Be strong in the ... ord and in the power of his might. The only wise God ... rengthen you with all might, according to his glorious ... ower, unto all patience and long-suffering with joy- ... fulness.

Yours in all duty in his sweet Lord Jesus.

ROBT. HAMILTON.

December 7th, 1685.

The two fore-mentioned Letters from Mr. William Brackel containing the accusations of the forementioned minister against the societies, were brought home by Colin Alison and presented to the following meeting, which were attested by Thomas Lining and him, giving it under their hands that they were true transcripts of the originals written in Latin :—Whereby it evidently appeared that the copy they had before was a true one, which the foresaid ministers said was stuffed with lies, &c. †

As to that which was desired in the letter to Mr. Hamilton, *viz.* to deal with the Presbytery of Groningen, to answer what was laid to their charge by the two foresaid ministers, &c. Thomas Lining and Colin Alison went and conversed with severals of the said Presbytery, and others, concerning these things; an account whereof being drawn up and subscribed with both their hands, Colin brought home and presented to the following meeting; a true copy of which follows :

A true relation of the answers which the ministers in the Netherlands, *to whom we went, gave in private conference to the two first accusations given in against them by Mr.* George Barclay *and Mr.* Robert Langlands.

First, We went to D. Gorcema, minister in Leewardan, who told us there would be no Presbyteries in Gro- ningen

† These Letters being in Latin, it is judged unnecessary *print them here*, as the contents of them are related already

ningen till the winter was over. And after reading the letters which we ſhewed to him, he rehearſed to us the formal way of their calling and ordaining of miniſters, which was thus: Firſt, the Preſbytery did nominate a great number, out of which, the next day of their meeting, they chooſe twelve, the third day they chooſe out theſe, ſix; the fourth day out of theſe they nominate three; and this gradation they uſe for decency and deliberation: Then if the miniſter be to come to a city, they ſend ſome of their number to the magiſtrates to tell them that one of the laſt three nominated the people are to chooſe as their miniſter; and therefore they muſt receive the miniſter choſen by the people as a citizen; after this the people chooſe, and the Preſbytery ordaineth.——To this *Profeſſor Marck*, when we went to Groningen, added, that in ſome places of the country, where there were gentlemen or heritors, they had the privilege of nomination or preſentation of the perſon to be examined or ordained, which is the ſame with our laick patrons, under which our church groaned until the year 1649. Alſo, the Profeſſor ſaid that it was the burden of the godly, under which they were groaning, and which they oppoſed as much as lay in their power. Alſo, he aſſerted, as to the ſecond member of the propoſition, to wit, Depoſition of miniſters, or ſending them a *pair of ſhoes*, (as theſe above related miniſters aſſerted) that it was a mere calumny, and was never practiſed, no not the leaſt ſhadow of it†; For, ſaid he, privative diſcipline, or exerciſe of church cenſures, was left to the church untouched by any whatſomever.

Item, D. Gorcema told us of two examples, which confirms what is ſaid. The firſt was, a miniſter choſen and placed according to the foreſaid order, which the magiſtrate of that place where he was to be miniſter oppoſed; yet the people ſtood to their choice, and the Preſbytery alſo allowed the ſame, becauſe the magiſtrate had nothing to ſay againſt the ſaid miniſter's life and converſation, yet for all that the foreſaid magiſtrate perſiſted in his oppoſition to the Preſbytery and people: Whereupon the Preſbytery were forced to complain of that violence to the *Novem viri*, or deputies of *Friezland*,—who commanded

† See Mr. Renwick's 49 Letter, page 169. where he ſhews his information that *Mr. George* Barclay flatly denied this charge *afterward, although it could be proved by a multitude of witneſſes, that he did indeed aſſert it.*

manded the foresaid magistrate to desist from his opposition, and let the church enjoy her privileges. This was an example of right administration.

The second was, that the people had chosen one of three (this was in another place of the province) and the magistrate opposed the minister chosen, and would not admit of him, but would have the people to choose one of the other two, which were in the list. The people upon this complained to the Presbytery: But the Presbytery, many of them being men led by corrupt affections, yielded to the magistrate's desire; yet not without opposition by these of the Presbytery that were more straight, whereof D. Gorcema was one himself. He told us this as an example of mal-administration; but particular examples of mal-admiuistration, make not a church *pure Erastian*, as these ministers asserted: Yea, when we came upon the like head with *Professor March*, he called it expressly, persecution.

A third instance *D. Abringa*, minister at Groningen, told us of *Phelingius* elder, when lately he was called to Rotterdam, the magistrates of Groningen would not suffer him to go away, and discharged the Presbytery to give him a dimission; yet because their command was groundless, they gave him a dimission.

Now consider the Erastian principles, which are,

First, That the Christian magistrate hath his political power and office of magistracy derived from Christ as mediator, head and redeemer of his church; and therefore must rule and govern the church as Christ's vicar, and is by Christ the head of the church, sent and instituted. *Secondly*, That church-officers have no power nor authority to censure scandalous persons, whether ministers or others, with ecclesiastic authority, distinct from from civil punishments.

Thirdly, That ecclesiastical power is not distinct from the civil.

Fourthly, That church officers have only power of administrating church-discipline, because the magistrate has laid that care and burden upon them, as his deputies, as not being himself sufficient to exerce both offices,

Fifthly, That ecclesiastic power is not given to church-officers, *jure divino*.

Sixthly, That the Christian magistrate as such, is properly a church officer.——This is the character of a church *pure Erastian*, for which ye may see Gillespie's

Aaron's

Aaron's rod bloſſoming; and ſo we leave it to your wiſdom to apply the foreſaids, and then bring forth judgment accordingly.

As for the ſecond accuſation, to wit, *Trine aſperſion*, or three ſprinklings in baptiſm; all with whom we converſed, ſaid that they conſtantly taught publicly, that whether one or two, it was indifferent as to the nature of the ſacrament and that they; never knew one in all their churches that taught otherwiſe. Likewiſe they confirmed this by their carriage toward the French churches, who uſe but one ſprinkling, though in the ſame city with themſelves; for they ſhew themſelves as well pleaſed with the French external form of baptiſm (which alſo is ours) as they do with their own.

Laſtly, Profeſſor Marck ſaid, if the letters had been to himſelf, he would have anſwered them immediately. But we deſired him, ſeeing there were to be no meetings of the Preſbytery theſe three or four months, he would write a line of true information, which he almoſt condeſcended to do.

Then we went and delivered the letters to *D. Mathiæ*, the eldeſt miniſter, and he promiſed to preſent them to the *deputati-claſſis*; and that they ſhould do, *totis conatibus*, for the perſecuted church.

After that, we went to *Phelingius* younger, and came over all theſe things with him, and he further confirmed all theſe things foreſaid; ſo they all ſpake the ſame things ſeverally, which is a great confirmation of the truth of them *. He alſo aſked where James Ruffel was? We told him at *Francker*; at which he wondered that he who was ſo ſtrict ſhould ſtudy under a Coccian.

We

* The Reader will be pleaſed to underſtand, that there was need for all this care and circumſpection, as theſe before-mentioned miniſters and many others who took part with them, had, (as is before related) and ſtill continued to calumniate the church of Groningen, (under the name of the Hollandiſh church) that thereby they might render Mr. Renwick's ordination and miniſtry odious, and by all means in their power, labouring to make poor, tender, ſimple people believe, that by hearing or having their children baptized by him, they were guilty of all the horrid things wherewith they charged the church of Holland. And none were more ſervid and furious in this than Robert Cathcart, Kilſyth, &c. in which they were too ſucceſsful for a time, until their ſcandals, lying and laxneſs in other things, made them loſe much of their former credit and reputation. See *Shields in the life of Mr James* Renwick Page 16, 77, 78, 96.

him that it was an ordinary thing for unstable
float from one extreme to another, to which he
.—Then he told us how James behoved to de-
om Groningen, on account of his irregular mar-
He also asked what Mr. Flint was doing, we
aim he was sometimes preaching, and sometime
and that Thomas Ruffel, had been with him als
ching; he wondered more at that, that Mr. Flint
m he had heard so stiffly oppose the Cocceians, shoul
Thomas Ruffel, who both studied under them, an
nothing for ordination, but a testificate from so
occeian ministers; This also profeffor Mark declare
at he had no more than Mr. Flint had, which was
are testimony of his studies.

These things we thought fit to collect, that there
ferious and tender souls might be satisfied, and mo
confirmed in the truth, and the falsehood of these as-
persions made the more to appear.

These things are true, as witness, our hands, wr
ten, and subscribed at Leewarden, the 1st of Decem-
ber, 1685. *Sic Subscribitur,* THOMAS LININGA.
COLIN ALLISON.

WHILE the popish and persecuting powers being solicitous, where to lay this *Cockatrice-egg* which under the warm wings of the following toleration hath been hatched into maturity for an unhappy production, did see it for their interest to contract their oppressions, and not to extend their severity so promiscuously, and universally against all that bear the name of dissenters,—they thought fit for prosecuting their design to liberate many gentlemen and ministers of the indulged faction, out of prison, and multiplied their favours toward such as they found pliable, and of greatest figure, by which they projected, and did wofully prevail to advance the mystery of iniquity and to stop the mouths and bind up the hands of such, from whom they might have expected contradiction or contradiction, at least by way of a testimony, in a clear case of confession, and lay them by, now blinded with flatteries, and bribed with favours, from all opposition to Popery, twisted with slavery, in the

nt design of Antichriſt. So that among all the Preſbyterian miniſters in Scotland, there was no public teſtimony againſt Popery, and the open efforts to introduce it. But however, the perſecution was not ſo inceſſant, yet ill their rage did many times exert itſelf in bloody murders of ſuch as they could catch of the wanderers, ſeveral of which they butchered in the fields where they found them, and others on ſcaffolds, and in filling prisons with them, while the enemy had no other to perſecute and purſue but them. Yet their greateſt difficulties and diſcouragements were from profeſſed Preſbyterians, who had been formerly perſecuted themſelves, and who ſided themſelves with the foreſaid miniſters; ſome of theſe perſons came to the General Meeting, which met at *Trierminion* upon the 28th of January, 1686.

An account of what was done therein, with relation to theſe perſons, being drawn up after the Meeting. I ſhall here ſet down.

Upon January 28th, 1686, Alexander Gordon*, John Dick†, and ſome others came to *Trierminion* aſſerting that they had Commiſſions from the Societies in the ſhires of Galloway and Carrick, and ſome of the Societies in Kyle. Where their procedure was after this manner:

Theſe who had written Commiſſions were deſired to produce them, but the foreſaid perſons having none, but by word of mouth, were deſired to remove a little. And in their abſence we ſpoke our minds anent theſe ſuppoſed grounds, whereupon they, or at leaſt, thoſe who were embodied with them had built great accuſations againſt us; and after calling of them, that which was ſpoken in their abſence, was rehearſed before them: As

(1.) Our minds were declared about the firſt Call given to the miniſters, ſhewing that it was not now owned, as to the title, and many of the contents of it.

(2.) With reſpect unto the engagement to ſecrecy, which was once amongſt us, ſhewing that the miſapplying thereof, contrary to the intention of the firſt penners, and all the abuſes thereanent, were acknowledged, and a day of humiliation kept for the ſame.

* This Alexander Gordon laird of Kilſteurs, was afterward a bitter reproacher.

† John Dick, alſo, who afterward was a diſputant about the *teſt.*

(3.) Anent ſome expreſſions in our firſt declaration at Sanquhar, and Lanerk (about which, many have raiſed debates) ſhewing what way we underſtood theſe words; and declaring that we never looked upon ourſelves as a formal judicatory, whatever ſome draweth from the expreſſions therein, but declaring we refiled not from theſe our declarations.

(4.) Anent the proteſtation againſt the Scotch Congregation in Rotterdam, deſiring the ſecond article to be conſidered diſtributively, applying not all the charges to every one of the miniſters ſingularly, but what every one was guilty of unto himſelf, and ſo that there was no falſehood in theſe charges; but withal acknowledging too much bitterneſs in ſeveral expreſſions.

(5.) Anent the charge of laying impoſitions on miniſters, declaring that we were againſt all impoſitions on miniſters, and will deſire nothing but what is antecedently bound upon them by the divine authority of God in the ſcriptures, and the eccleſiaſtic authority of our church conſtitutions; ſo this is no impoſition.

(6.) Anent ſearching and trying of ſcandals, expreſt in one of our papers; ſhewing that we underſtood not a judicial trying, but private and popular, by way of information, that we might the better know our duty, how to carry towards the perſons.

(7.) Anent the nature of our General Meeting; declaring that theſe meetings, as they were neither eccleſiaſtic, nor civil judicatories; ſo they are of the ſame nature with private Chriſtian ſocieties, ſeeing that in them, Chriſtian ſufferers in this time of extreme perſecution, do meet together, in their General Correſpondence, for advice and conſent, about the duties of our day: And that in theſe meetings we proceed not as a judicatory, making acts and laws, but as a ſelected meeting of Chriſtians, for promoting the work of God in our ſtations and capacity, proceeding by way of counſel and determination.

(8.) Some things were declared which we judged not to be ſufficient grounds of ſeparation: Such as 1*ſt*, What is determined only by a man's own private light, and diſcretive judgment. 2. Infirmities. 3. Circumſtances never reformed, nor doctrinally condemned by our faithful miniſters. 4. Such controverſies as being no parts of our attained unto reformation, overturns not the word of our churches teſtimony, againſt Papiſts, Malignants, Sectarians, and Backſlideers. 5. No ſcandal con-

confeſſed and forſaken, but our mind is more fully declared of all theſe things, in our Informatory Vindication. Howbeit it is to be advertiſed, that our minds, as they were then declared, were the ſame with what they were always, as to theſe things: Which (in ſome meaſure) may be alſo evident from ſome things in our conferences with the foreſaid miniſters the preceding year.

After which, Mr. James Renwick ſhewed the cauſes of his going abroad to ſeek ordination, and the caſe of theſe miniſters, by whom he was ordained; and read the foregoing paper ſubſcribed by Thomas Lining and Colin Aliſon, in vindication of theſe miniſters from the charge of eraſtianiſm, ſuperſtition, *&c.*

Then theſe who were particularly ſent from the ſeveral ſocieties, in their reſpective ſhires, did nominate a number from among themſelves to ſpeak, that confuſion might be avoided: But there was at this time no modelled meeting, for as we never chooſed a preſes of authority, ſo there was no preſes for order here elected: ſeeing this meeting could be only for conference, not for condeſcending upon any concluſions. Therefore it is falſe which was informed at this meeting, *viz.* that Mr. James Renwick was preſes. And in what followeth, we proceeded after this manner.

(1.) It was aſked at Alexander Gordon, John Dick, *&c.* who had not been at our two preceding meetings, whether they were to concur with us as formerly, or not? To which they anſwered neither freely, nor poſitively, but that they were ſo, for ought they knew.

(2.) A letter was read *,—after which the foreſaid perſons were deſired to declare their minds, whither they owned that letter, or not; and though none of them did own it, yet they were not free in diſclaiming it. Again, it was aſked whether or not they had been inſtrumental in ſpreading it? And this they denied; though the contrary was known of ſome of them: It is to be noted, that theſe perſons being embodied with the author of the ſaid letter, gave occaſion to aſk ſuch a queſtion.

(3.) Every one who was nominate to ſpeak, was deſired to give his mind anent the declaration of Argyle, and

* This letter was one Robert Cathcart's, an abſtract of which is inſert in Mr. Shield's Life of Mr. Renwick, page 88, to 96. as alſo anſwers thereunto. Which might be pertinently ſubjoined to the *count of this conference.*

party, as it is complexly taken, which we disown. ... the foresaid persons were not positive anent it, al... ing other senses might be put upon such places as w... cted against, than the words themselves seemed t... port, we told them that no man could be hinder... d be the interpreter of his own words, yet the practic... e that party, and the expressions of some of note ... ongst them, did put no other meaning than ours upo... n these articles.

(4.) They were desired to declare their mind anent th... at general conclusion amongst us, *viz.* 'That nothing re... 'lative to the public, and concerning the whole, shou... ld 'be done without the consent, at least the knowledge of 'the whole, which we do all agree with.' But the fore... said persons rejected it, calling it an imposition. But we answered that it was no imposition: for if a part, pro... poned to the whole, the doing of a necessary duty, and if they sinfully denied their consent or concurrence, then that part might do it for themselves, without breach of the foresaid conclusion.

(5.) It was asked, what was thought of breaking that conclusion, and drawing up, and consulting with other parties, and calling of ministers, against whom their brethren had just exceptions without their knowledge or advice? which we looked upon as no small breach of union.

But the foresaid persons, (1.) Alledged that they did not call, though they did hear these ministers before our conferences with them. (2.) They spake against the foresaid conclusion; saying that by it they might not hear a faithful minister when occasion offered.

Their first answer was repelled, as an evasion; and for freeing the conclusion of the charge of being an imposition, we explained it to the purpose of what is insinuate above, and to make it more clear, added some few caveats. As,

1. That it is not taken in absolute sense, as a restriction simply necessary for all times, all places, all persons, all cases, and things.

2. The conclusion imports, that even in necessary duties, which concern the whole, a part ought not to on therein, without proponing the same to the r... And if these shall sinfully deny their concurrence, ... part may lawfully, and without breach of the conclu... do it for themselves. *Quod omnes tangit, ab omnibus*

hidden, that which concerns the whole, ought to be
ıdled by the whole..

3. As for points doubtful and controverted, this con-
ition imports an orderly and rational method for ad-
ng, and deliberating anent matters in controversy,
t so we look upon it as a hedge against precipitancy
rashness, helpful for the preservation of union, pre-
nting of confusion, the curbing of petulant spirits,
l the right managing of affairs; so when according to
conclusion, a right method in deliberation about such
tters is followed, then we choose that which we judge
reable to the law, and the testimony. And added,
t before they had drawn up with other parties, and
ded such ministers, they should have known if their
ethren had any just exceptions against them. And if
y had none, and yet denied their concurrence and
sent, the foresaid persons had been free to do as they
d, without violation of the conclusion.

(6.) Then the exceptions that were given in against
e ministers with whom we had the conference, before
lated, were read over, but in a more succinct method,
an they are in our relation, and so every one of us,
ominated to speak was asked, whether or not, they
ere clear to call them, while these exceptions stood?
o which we all answered, that we were not clear for
e same. But the foresaid persons reckoned these ex-
ptions not to be valid.

(7.) It was asked at the foresaid persons, whether or
, they were clear to join with us in general, and par-
ular fellowships, now when they had heard us speak
r minds so freely? But this they refused to answer un-
putting the question back to us, whether or not, we
uld join with them in these meetings?—After a little
liberation, it was concluded to answer positively by re-
ing to concurr with them in such meetings. So in
posing the question, these two caveats were premi-
1. That the question was not to be about joining
family exercise, or such like occasional meetings; so
was not refused by the answer to the foresaid questi-
2. That we answered not in the name of our so-
ties, but in our own names, having no commission
direction from our societies for that effect. Then
state of the question that was proponed was this.
Considering, 1*st*, That the foresaid persons, are nei-
er plain, nor free, in their answers to the preceding

questions

queſtions of ſo great concern.——*2dly*, That they have broken the brotherhood, by drawing up, and conſulting with other parties, (who in the mean time were laying heavy things falſly to our charge) without our knowledge and advice. *3dly*, That they have ſided with ſome miniſters in points of diſagreement, againſt us, and called them, and were yet clear to hear them, even while our exceptions againſt them ſtand unremoved: ſo it was aſked, conſidering theſe things, whether or not, we were clear to concur with the foreſaid perſons in General Meetings and Societies? whereunto our anſwer was; That upon the foreſaid conſiderations (altho' other things might have been named) we were for that time clear, not to concur with them in the foreſaid meetings. Which, when the foreſaid perſons heard, they cried out, It is becauſe we are clear to call faithful miniſters that they will not join with us; but we denied ſuch a charge, and when we were ſpeaking to them about the foreſaid reaſons, they would not ſtay to hear, but ſuddenly and abruptly departed.

. . . . . .

THIS *Robert Cathcart* had pretended, at leaſt to join in contending and ſuffering for the ſame teſtimony with the ſocieties in *Carrick*, and profeſſed cheerful and cordial adherence thereunto, upon all hazards; which for a time he ſeemed very reſolutely to ſuſtain, until the expedition of the Earl of *Argyle* appearing, he began ſecretly and openly to bear hand to the breaking of theſe ſocieties, and to ſhew, either much unſtableneſs, or that he but diſſembled in ever pretending to be one with them, whom now he relinquithed, and ſtudied by all means to traduce. Which firſt appeared in a letter, accuſing and repreſenting Mr. *Renwick*, and thoſe that joined with him, "As ſuch, whom the Lord had given "up, in a great meaſure, to the deluſion of their own "deceitful hearts, to believe lies, and follow the dic-"tates of an erring conſcience; whom the Lord in his "anger, hath plagued with miſinformed judgments, that "they perſevere in the breach of our ſolemn known co-"venants in two points,

"*Firſt*, In that of error and hereſy: For, (1.) With "the papiſts, they would have their church infallible; "their practice teſtifies this, in declining a miniſter, "be he never ſo faithful in his function, for the leaſt "*alledged* perſonal failing, even though that which is al-

"ledged

ledged cannot be made out: Surely, had theſe men lived in the days of the apoſtles, they would have rejected them too; for they had their own failings, *a body of death.* (2.) With the Independents, upon the leaſt failing in a miniſter, they take upon them the power to depoſe. I think (ſays he) they needed not have troubled the church of *Groningen* with the ordination of their *Rabbi* Mr. *Renwick*; they might as well 'have ordained him themſelves; ordination being as 'much in their power, as depoſition. (3.) In very lit-'tle they differ from the Separatiſts.

"*Secondly*, In that of church diſcipline and govern-'ment, they have altogether broken that, as (1.) Their 'ſending over a youth, ſcarce read in the common 'heads of divinity, to *Groningen*, a moſt corrupt church, 'never yet come the length of prelacy in its reforma-'tion, having declined the faithful miniſters of the 'church of Scotland, and ſet him up in their room, as '*Jeroboam* the ſon of *Nebat* did, when he made idol 'calves, crying, *Behold thy gods, O Iſrael!* ſo did they 'of him, *Behold thy repreſentative, O church of* Scot-'land! I can call him nothing but a creature of their 'own making, and an idol whom they have ſet up in 'the room of the honeſt miniſters in Scotland. (2.) By 'their meddling with things which only belong to a 'church judicatory, and the higheſt church judicatory: 'Not only being laick-men, they examine faults, yea 'abſolve the guilty; but alſo, conſtitute laws and make 'acts, which none but a General Aſſembly could do.— 'Muſt the goſpel live and die with Mr. *Renwick*, ſup-'poſe he were a miniſter of the church of Scotland? 'Muſt we be all tied to him? But a miniſter of the 'church of Scotland he is not; neither can he be ad-'mitted to ſit a member of a church judicatory in Scot-'land: For, the church of Groningen had no more 'power to ordain a miniſter of the church of Scot-'land, than the clergy of England had long ago to con-'ſecrate *Sharp* Archbiſhop of St. *Andrews.*" With much more odious ſtuff to this purpoſe, diſcovering more malice and ignorance, than either wit or ability to ſuſtain his charge, and bewraying the contagion of that plague to have infected his own heart, tongue and pen, which he alledges they were ſmitten with, whom here he ſtudiouſly belies; yea, and ſomewhat worſe than an erring conſcience, believing lies; even a ſeared conſci-

ence,

ence, dictating lies in hypocrisy; which in his own experience with them, he knew to be lies.

Mr. *Renwick*, and those with him, did indeed confess and lament their breach of covenant, and wished their brethren with whom they contended, and particularly these ministers, whose faithfulness he so much proclaims, to have been more sensible of their own breaches of that covenant, which then they had forgot, and now they have forgone in silence; And, upon these terms of mutual confessing and forsaking the breaches of that covenant, they always declared their desire of uniting with them: But, because they persevered in the breach of that covenant, not only in two, but in all its parts and articles: Therefore they found themselves obliged to discountenance them, while they continued in so breaking it. In the first article, *being so far from endeavouring the preservation of the reformed religion in doctrine, worship, discipline and government*, that they have complied with or connived at many things eversive of, and destructive unto that reformation; as the supremacy in the former indulgences as well as in the present toleration: The oaths and bonds inconsistent therewith, some of which were taken by some of them; some again connived at, and not witnessed against by many of them; the cess and other impositions and exactions, expressly required for the suppression and destruction of that which they were sworn to endeavour to preserve. As likewise not only in lying-by and surceasing from endeavours to preserve it when they left off preaching and discipline, in times of the peoples greatest necessity; but also, in disseminating other principles, and justifying other practices, than are consistent with the doctrine and government of the covenanted church of Scotland, *viz.* The doctrine of association with malignants and sectaries: The doctrine of owning and maintaining tyrants.

In the second article, Being so far from extirpating popery, prelacy, *&c.* That many of them have made their peace with declared papists; all have owned the head of papists, the great pillar and promoter of popery: and instead of extirpating prelacy, have complied with, or connived at such courses, as conduced in the contrary to establish it: As hearing the curates, paying them stipends, *&c.* In the third article, Being so far from preserving rights and privileges, *&c.* as there qualified; that not only many have subjected themselves to

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...sion supremacy, to the prejudice of the true reli-
...and the liberties of the church and kingdom; or
...ed at it without a testimony: But also, all have
...allegiance to a destroyer of religion and liberty;
...respect to the covenant-qualification, in the *de-*
...religion and liberty. In the fourth article, Instead
...ersing malignants, &c. they have many of them
...anced them, associated with them, strengthened
...hands, admitted them to the Lord's table, &c.
...all have owned the authority of the head of them,
...and on the throne of iniquity. In the fifth article
...have broken our conjunction in firm peace and
...in truth and duty; and instead of that, have
...promoting and abetting a sinful confederacy in de-
...n. In the sixth article, Instead of assisting and de-
...ng all their covenanted brethren; many have added
...m to the afflicted by reproaches; and have been
...ntaining their murderers with supplies of exacti-
...contributing thereunto: And many ways have suf-
...themselves to be divided and withdrawn from their
...ng brethren, and have made defection to the com-
...pact, and given themselves to a detestable indiffer-
...in the cause and testimony of Christ. And in the
...sion, Instead of mourning for these breaches of
...ant, they yet defend or daub them. But,
...to these breaches, charged here on Mr. *Renwick*,
...he people with him: However, they confess mani-
...reaches, they deny these. And in these charges,
...advertency, at least, of this accuser, is so manifest,
...t cannot escape the observation of the impartial:
...in making lies of them whom he would accuse, he
...also all these with whom he would have them clas-
...or, ignorantly misrepresents them. For, *First*,
...papists never pretended that every one of their doc-
...r laicks were infallible; as this dictator alledges of
...men, both teacher and taught. Neither did they
...ssume, or improve this kind of infallibility here
...ed, of declining ministers for the least alledged fail-
He knows who are like the papists in that, in fol-
...g ministers hand over head, and allowing them as
...a an *indelible* character: Whereas, the men he ac-
...have been so far from pretending to infallibility,
...have not declined to publish their resentments
confessions of their mistakes to the world; which is
...r testimony against all pretences of infallibility,

than thoſe that contended againſt them ever yet profeſſed; though *with them, even with them*, there have been found ſome *ſins againſt the Lord their God*; But that error they will not confeſs, nor can they ever be convicted of it, that ever they declined a faithful miniſter for the leaſt alledged perſonal failing: They have declared the contrary in their *Informatory Vindication*, Head IV. page 80, &c. If they had been living in the apoſtles days, as they could not have found ſuch diſorders to diſcountenance; ſo, in caſe they had, they would have been obliged to follow the apoſtles practice and rules, they would not have called *John Mark*, when the apoſtle thought not good to take him along; becauſe, *he went not with them to the work*. They would have joined with *Paul* in their capacity to withſtand *Peter* to the face, when he diſſembled. They would have ſaid, even to as good a miniſter as *Archippus*, *Take heed to the miniſtry*, &c. That would not have been looked on as an impoſition on miniſters in the apoſtles days; neither would that have been thought in their days ſinful ſeparation, to *mark thoſe who cauſed diviſions and offences, contrary to the doctrine received, and to avoid them*. And to *withdraw from brethren walking diſorderly*.

(2.) He belies the *Independents*, in alledging, they take upon them to depoſe miniſters for the leaſt failing; they will diſown that. Mr. *Renwick* did ever abhor, that people ſhould take upon them to depoſe miniſters for any failing, the leaſt or the greateſt; nor did ever allow people, ſo much as to withdraw from miniſters upon the leaſt failing; but upon ſuch ſcandals as did bear the weight of withdrawing according to ſcripture rules: they had reaſon and neceſſity to trouble the church at *Groningen*, not to make a *Rabbi* of him; but from the power they had received of Chriſt the common head of the church, to ordain him a miniſter of the New Teſtament; ſeeing they could neither have clearneſs in point of duty, nor confidence in point of ſucceſs, to ſeek or obtain ordination for him, from the miniſters at home (that were then far to ſeek, and ill to find) except they ſhould have reſolved to loſe what they had wrought; to deſtroy what they had built; to condemn their own ſufferings, and contradict their own contendings. And they did always diſclaim all power, either of ordaining or depoſing of themſelves.

(3.) He

(3.) He does not ſay, wherein they either agree or differ from the ſeparatiſts. There were never ſuch ſeparatiſts in the world as he makes them, that did depoſe miniſters for every the leaſt failing. What ſeparation Mr. *Renwick* was for or againſt, may be ſeen in the above mentioned *Informatory Vindication.*

(4.) If he had been ſuch a youth, *ſcarce read in the common heads of divinity;* he diſcovers himſelf very ill read in them, when he calls this a breach of church-government, to ſend ſuch a youth to a foreign Univerſity, to be fitted for ordination in the miniſtry; or, to ſend him firſt to be fitted, and then after trial to be ordained, by a reformed ſiſter-church, found in their own and not contradicting our teſtimony, when ordination could not be had at home, without the breach of ſeveral ſtanding conſtitutions of the government, yea without yielding to ſeveral corruptions threatning the diſſolution and perverſion of the whole of it; yea, without bowing to ſome of the calves *Jeroboam* had ſet up: For, without bowing or ſubjecting himſelf, either to the idol of prelacy or ſupremacy, or at leaſt, to complying with, or conniving at the bowers thereunto; or, without ſome way of homologating ſubjection unto the land-idols of jealouſy, eſtabliſhed and encouraged by a power, and for an end equivalent to and correſpondent with that of *Jeroboam's* ſupremacy, he could not have gotten ordination in Scotland at that time. The compariſon may ſeem odious between *Jeroboam's* calves, and the corruptions and defections of miniſters in our day; yet it ſeems more pertinent and appoſite than to ſay, the declining of theſe corruptions, and calling and countenancing a miniſter, witneſſing againſt the altar of *Jeroboam*, and crying to the generation, That they have forſaken the God and covenant of their fathers, is like *Jeroboam* ſetting up his calves. It is like, this gentleman, if he had been living in *Jeroboam's* days, would have ſaid as much againſt that prophet, that cried againſt the altar at *Bethel*, and would have condemned him as much for arrogancy, in refuſing conformity with the prieſts and prophets, in theſe days; eſpecially if he, being a young prophet, had not hearkened to the kind counſel of the old prophet that entertained him, as now he hath done to Mr. *James Renwick.* However it is a lie, that the church at *Groningen* never came the length of prelacy in its reformation; except it be ſaid, that they were never ſo far corrupted, as to de-

cline to prelacy ſince their reformation. And it is another lie to ſay, that ever Mr. *Renwick* was called representative, *&c.*

(5.) They whom he accuſes, never examined [illegible], nor abſolved the guilty, in a way belonging to any church judicatory; nor in a way not competent to the meaneſt private perſon, lad or laſs, in the kingdom, being only in a way of Chriſtian and charitative inquiry about the truth of reports, in order to exhort, admoniſh, reprove or approve, and that they might know how to carry towards them: Nor did they ever make any laws or acts, but ſuch as any two or three in ſociety might make by common conſent, to determine one another as to duties or dangers: Nor did they ever ſay or dream, that the goſpel ſhould live and die with Mr. *Renwick*; but that they were content to live and die with him in partaking of the goſpel ordinances, diſpenſed by him, whom they eſteemed a faithful miniſter of the church of Scotland; and worthy to ſit as member of any church judicatory therein. The church of *Groningen* did not make him a miniſter of the church of Scotland; but they ordained him a miniſter of Chriſt, and ſteward of the myſteries of God; a miniſter of the church univerſal (which is the primary relation of all miniſters) a miniſter in any church, whereof he was a member, and ſo conſequently in Scotland; and a perſecuted people in Scotland called him to be their miniſter, whereby he came to have as good right to be a miniſter of the church of Scotland, as Mr. *Rough*, Mr. *Knox*, and ſeveral reformers, who were not ordained by the miniſters of Scotland: Yea, as any, who now theſe twenty five years, have been appropriate to particular flocks, though not by fixed ordination by miniſters. And therefore, the difference between the church of *Groningen* their ordaining Mr. *Renwick*, *&c.* and the clergy of England their conſecrating *Sharp*, as in many reſpects it is vaſt, ſo in this, it is as great as between a reformed church ordaining a faithful officer of Chriſt's kingdom, and a deformed church conſecrating a knave, no officer of Chriſt's, but of antichriſts kingdom.

Theſe ſcurrilous invectives heaped together in this lying libel (which I have the longer inſiſted on, that the writer hath been ſo much applauded and blown up into a conceit of himſelf for it, and even by ſome who were obliged by office, as well as duty, to have checked him for

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his arrogance, ignorance and impudence diſcovered in it) might have been thought nauſeating to all that ſhould read them. Yet the ſubſcription being torn away, and the Writer's name concealed, it was ſpread and read through the ſhires of Air, Galloway, and other places, and copies multiplied through many hands, only carefully providing that none ſhould be given or lent to any therein accuſed. Many poor people, not knowing who was the author, took it to be written by ſome miniſter who was much concerned and had great underſtanding in theſe debates, and thereupon were much commoved and perplexed with fears and doubts, that by their partaking with Mr. Renwick, eſpecially in baptizing their children with him, they had made themſelves guilty of the ſins of that church by whom he was ordained; and were hereby ſo exerciſed, that ſome of them were caſt into a fever. At length the Author being diſcovered, people thought not ſo much of it. Afterwards, notwithſtanding the people in Carrick, who formerly had countenanced and entertained him, were now much alienated from him; and this Mr. Cathcart and others, were turned avowedly oppoſite to him.

Theſe unpleaſant debates and contendings being at an end, and the perſons with whom they had the ſame, being gone from the place; the meeting having met, there was read before them a part of Mr. Hamilton's long letter to the Societies, which Colin Aliſon brought home with him, who returned a little before this meeting. At ſome things in which ſeverals were diſſatisfied; But it being long, was not all read, the reſt being left to another time *.

Likewiſe, there was a letter from Mr. John Flint read, wherein he earneſtly deſired a conference with ſome of our number. Whereupon the meeting reſolved that Mr. James Renwick and Mr. William Boyd, with any other whom they ſhould chooſe, ſhould be deſired to go and converſe with Mr. Flint. According to this reſolution, in May thereafter, Mr. Renwick being at Edinburgh, had conference with him, a ſhort account of which being

* See this more fully in Mr. Renwick's 43 letter, page 134. where he adviſes him, when writing to the whole, to write as to ſuch ſome of whom may be his greateſt reproachers the next day.

ing drawn up, I ſhall ſet it down, after I have related what was further done at this meeting.

It was agreed upon and appointed by the meeting that a day of faſting and prayer ſhould be obſerved by the Societies, to ſearch out the cauſes why the Lord permitted us to be ſo broken and divided amongſt ourſelves; and alſo to lie under ſuch ſad and heavy reproaches and miſrepreſentations. A particular time was not concluded upon, but it was left to every ſociety to make choice of what day they thought moſt convenient.

And it was appointed, that the next General Meeting conveen at *Blackgannoch*, upon the firſt Wedneſday of *April* thereafter.

UPON the 28th of *May*, Mr. James Renwick, miniſter of the goſpel, James Wilſon, William Nairn, James Ingles and Michael Shields being then at Edinburgh, it was thought expedient to give Mr Flint notice that in anſwer to his deſire, they were willing to meet with him, to know what he had to ſay, (this was done rather leſt he ſhould take occaſion to boaſt, that we would not, yea durſt not give him a meeting, than from hope to gain him) and to anſwer the deſire of the General Meeting, Jan. 28th, above related.

Mr. James Renwick ſpoke to him to this purpoſe, That the Letter which he ſent in winter laſt, to our friends, was read at the laſt General Meeting, and well accepted of by them; in token whereof they deſired him, when he ſhould have the occaſion of going to Edinburgh, and Mr. Boyd, with any other they ſhould chuſe, to meet and confer with him: But now, ſeeing Mr. Boyd was not there at the time, he did not look upon it as a full anſwer to our friends deſire, otherwiſe he would have given him more timeous advertiſement; but Providence having tryſted them to be there, he had ſent for him, that they might in ſo far anſwer their friends deſire, and deſired to hear what he would ſay. Mr. John profeſſed that as he had ſeveral times deſired a meeting, ſo he was glad to have the opportunity of one, but would have wiſhed to have had more time for deliberation: To which Mr. James anſwered, That he could have wiſhed for that alſo, but ſeeing it was thus ordered, and the time of their being together could not be long, (Mr. James being to preach that night) he deſired

him

him to come to the point, and ſpeak of the differences betwixt him and us: So he began with this:

1. That while they were ſtudents at Groningen, Mr. James had written a letter to Mr. William Brackel, without Mr. Boyd's and his knowledge and conſent.

2. That he went on in his ordination without acquainting Mr. Boyd, which was diſſimulation.

3. That our delegate Mr. Robert Hamilton, had given lying informations of the remnant to ſtrangers.

To the firſt, Mr. James anſwered, That the ſaid letter was but a private letter, about a particular buſineſs and not relating to the public, and therefore not their concern either to know or have their conſent thereto.

To the ſecond, That he knew well enough at that time there were differences betwixt Mr. Boyd and them, and ſome exceptions againſt him. [To this Mr Boyd aſſented.]

To the third, Mr. James ſaid, That Mr. Hamilton denied what was alledged againſt him, and the contrary was not yet proved; and giving, but not granting that he had ſo informed, as he ſaid, How could that be charged upon us?——At this time, Henry Love, (who came with Mr. Flint) began to ſpeak ſomewhat; whereupon Mr. James deſired him to hold his peace, for he ſhould not be ſuffered to ſpeak, being under ſcandal. About this time Michael Shields ſaid, That we did not meet with Mr. John as a miniſter, neither did we look upon, but denied him to be ſuch.—Upon which Mr. Flint, in anger, repeated his former accuſations, adding, "That "they had confounded church and ſtate together in "their meetings.—Had overturned our declarations in "paying of cuſtoms,—and that they obſtinately held "and maintained the idolatrous names of the days "of the week, and months of the year."——After he had done, Mr. James anſwered to his firſt accuſation as is already related; and to his additional accuſations *viz.* That we had confounded church and ſtate, *&c.* Mr. James anſwered to this effect, That we altogether denied this, neither could the ſame be inſtructed againſt us, but was a calumny caſt upon us by our antagoniſts: For we did not, nor do not look upon our meetings either as civil or eccleſiaſtical judicatories, but only as meetings of Chriſtian ſufferers, acting jointly and unanimouſly, adhering to our ancient laws and covenanted work of reformation, deſiring to *know* the duties of our day, that

ſo in our ſtations we might keep up in this land, according to our power, the teſtimony of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

It was objected by Mr. John, That Mr. James did ſit in our Meetings.

To this it was anſwered, That he never ſat as a member in any of theſe meetings, but only gave his advice in matters as a miniſter of the goſpel.

As to the overturning of our declarations, *&c.* it was anſwered, That this could not be inſtructed, for we heartily adhered to them.

It was objected by Mr. John, That Mr. William Boyd ſaid to him, that we reſiled from ſome things in them. To this it was anſwered, That if Mr. Boyd ſaid any thing amiſs concerning them, he could only do it for himſelf, and not in our name, for he had no commiſſion from us for that effect.

It was aſked at Mr. John, If he looked upon our declarations as authoritative actions, publiſhed by perſons inveſted with authority? He anſwered, He looked upon them as publiſhed by a poor ſuffering party, reduced to their primitive ſtate, adhering to our covenanted work of reformation, founded upon the laudable and ancient laws of the kingdom. To which it was replied, That we did the ſame; the publiſhers having the authority of the law, but not of the judge.

As for the cuſtoms, we would not defend the paying of the ſame, yet we did not look upon the paying of them to be a ground ſufficient in itſelf of ſeparation from perſons, againſt whom we had no other exception, either as to matter of judgment or practice.

To the laſt, *viz.* the naming of the days of the week, *&c.* it was anſwered, That we did not defend the naming of them, and heartily wiſhed the ſame were reformed, yet we did not look upon the ſimple naming of them as a ſufficient ground of ſeparation from any perſon, neither did we think this time of our broken and confuſed ſtate fit for reforming the ſame, we having greater and weightier matters to be exerciſed with; and as Mr. Durham ſays, 'Nothing ſhould be done but what 'is for the good of the church.'

It was objected by Mr. John, That the reformation of them was both neceſſary and eaſy to be accompliſhed. To which it was anſwered, That we did not ſee

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the abſolute neceſſity of it at this time, neither ſuch an eaſy thing as he ſaid.

It was further objected by Mr. John, That the naming them was contrary to ſcripture, as Pſal. xvi. 4. Hoſ. i. 16, 17. To which it was anſwered, That theſe ſcriptures had a relation to the not worſhipping of idols, and not to the ſimple naming of them, otherways they ſhould be contrary to ſome other places of ſcripture, where the names of idols are mentioned.

It was aſked at Mr. John, Whether James Ruſſel his joining with and ſtudying under Cocceians was ſinful or not? To which he refuſed to anſwer.

Moreover, it was aſked at him, How he would reconcile two of his letters written to us, in the firſt of which he had commended us at an high rate, and in the other, he had cried us as far down again; whereas, at the writing of both letters we were one and the ſame? To which he refuſed to anſwer, until he ſaw his letters.

THOUGH it was ſad, that enemies were making great advances in order to accompliſh their deſign of introducing Popiſh idolatry in this land, yet it was ſomewhat promiſing-like, that there was in the interval ſome ſmall witneſs and teſtimony given againſt it by the boys in and about Edinburgh, and ſome others, of whom no ſuch thing was expected. Againſt theſe the cruel enemy kythed their malice, in cauſing ſome of them ſuffer even unto death, and puniſhing others by ſcourging and impriſonment. This, as it demonſtrated the cruelty of the adverſaries, which as it was ſevere and implacable againſt any who manifeſted the leaſt diſſatisfaction at their wicked courſes, ſo it is not to be paſſed without obſervation, that when many were ſilent whoſe place and office called them to ſpeak and appear againſt Popery, that then even boys, &c. ſhould be ſtirred up to ſhew ſome diſlike of the ſame.

But in the mean time, theſe enemies did not forget their great eye-ſore, the weſt country; but continued in perſecuting them, and eſpecially the United Societies, whoſe trials and afflictions at this time were many; for beſide the heavy hand of the bloody adverſary, the tongues and pens of ſeverals were bent againſt them, they were loaded with reproaches and miſinformations, eſpecially by Alexander Gordon of Kilſteurs, one who had formerly appeared very zealous for the cauſe for which they

were ſuffering, but had broken off and had joined with theſe miniſters who came over with Argyle, whom the Societies had no clearneſs to hear, as is related before, who with Robert Cathcart, *&c.* were at no ſmall pains to ſpread reproaches and miſinformations, not only at home in this land, but alſo accounts were ſent to Ireland, and informations ſent to Holland and turned into Dutch, that the means they had uſed had proved ſo ſucceſsful, that all had now left Mr. Renwick, but about a hundred *poor, ſilly, daft bodies*, that were now running through with him and robbing the country, *&c.* Their activity in this work was great. Alexander Gordon foreſaid, went to Baſs and Blackneſs priſons with ſome papers, (wherein were ſad and heavy miſrepreſentations of the ſocieties, drawn up, as was ſuppoſed, by ſome † of whom better things were expected) which he ſhewed to and left with theſe miniſters that were in the ſaid priſons and a perſon who knew nothing of it before, coming in to viſit ſome of the priſoners ſhortly after Mr. Gordon had been there, got a copy of theſe papers, which was brought to the General Meeting, which met at *Blackgannoch*, upon the 7th of *April*, 1686.

After prayer and modelling of the meeting, there was read before them a letter to ſome miniſters of the Baſs, ſubſcribed by William Lockhart and John Dickſon, whereof Alexander Gordon was the bearer; and two papers the one intitled, an information againſt Mr. Renwick's party, given in to miniſters; and the other an account of the conference at *Frierminion*, *January* 28th, 1686. (a true account of which is already given.) In both theſe papers there are many groſs falſehoods and miſrepreſentations of perſons and things; ſuch as, That Mr. Renwick was Preſes in that meeting at *Frierminion*; —That they have arrogate to themſelves the government of both church and ſtate, and the management of both civil and eccleſiaſtical affairs—by the ſame perſons and aſſembly;—That they have conſtitute themſelves into, and aſſume the title of a Convention of Eſtates;—and have acted accordingly, in a legal authoritative depoſing of the late King, reſcinding, caſſing and annulling all the acts and ſtatutes made by him ſince the year 1660. They next expatiate upon ſome things in the firſt call to the

† *VIZ.* The foreſaid miniſters Meſſrs Barclay and Langlands.

the miniſters, altho' they knew that the ſame was ſoon reſiled from, and ſeveral things in it retracted and condemned by the following meeting, (as is already ſhewn) and although ſeverals of them (particularly Kilſteurs) were principal agents in, and managers of that call.

Finally, they ſay, that the very cauſe for which the ſociety-people refuſed to join with them, was, becauſe of their ambiguity in their anſwers in the foreſaid meeting at Frierminion, and becauſe they own it as their duty to call and hear ſuch miniſters as have owned and do own and adhere to the true received principles of the church of Scotland, founded upon the written word of God, and whatſoever declarations and teſtimonies, former or later, particular or more general, are agreeable thereto.——

The hearing of theſe papers was not a little affecting to the meeting, not only upon the account that the ſocieties were ſo ſadly miſrepreſented in the ſame; but alſo that they were ſo miſrepreſented to ſome miniſters for whom they had a great reſpect, and of whoſe ſympathy they deſired to be ſharers.

But although the conſideration of theſe things was very heavy and grievous, yet the conſciouſneſs of their being innocent and free as to the moſt weighty charges caſt upon them, was helpful to them under the ſame. And any who will be at the pains to conſult the Informatory Vindication, (printed after this) and the account of the proceedings of the laſt meeting, (related before) will clearly ſee how ſadly they are wronged.

The meeting, after deliberation concerning what was their duty in reference to theſe papers, did reſolve and think it expedient that Mr, James Renwick, Mr. William Boyd, George Hill, James Wilſon and Michael Shields, ſhould be deſired to draw up a paper containing a vindication of our principles and practices, in anſwer to the moſt material of the accuſations and miſrepreſentations contained in the informations given in againſt us; as alſo, a true relation of the conference at Frierminion, and bring it to the next meeting, that they might conſider the ſame.

Though this work was both unpleaſant and troubleſome, yet the ſame was judged neceſſary in order to vindicate themſelves and the cauſe they owned from theſe falſe charges. This was the riſe and occaſion of writing

our Informatory Vindication. But before it was printed it was more than once reviſed *.

It was alſo, at this meeting, reſolved and appointed, that every member of this meeting ſhould acquaint and deſire the reſpective ſocieties from whom they were ſent, to provide themſelves of arms, and to bring the ſame with them when opportunity ſhould offer to hear the goſpel, and alſo to General Meetings for their own and their brethren's defence.

The occaſion of this reſolution, was, that ſeveral perſons had of late become ſlack and remiſs in this.

And it was appointed that the next meeting ſhould meet at *Auchengilloch*, upon the firſt Wedneſday of *May* next. This General Meeting was appointed to meet the ſooner, that the emitting of the vindication might be haſtned.

THE Enemies went on ſtill in their wicked deſigns to introduce Popiſh idolatry, and inſlave the nation; and for effectuating thereof, they endeavoured to get Papiſts advanced to places of power and truſt. But the penal ſtatutes, which are the legal bulwarks of our religion, which incapacitate and exclude all Papiſts from the leaſt of theſe places, ſtanding in their way, they reſolved to have theſe removed; and for that effect called a Parliament that met in *April*, to which the Earl of Murray was Commiſſioner: In which they were diſappointed (beyond what was expected, conſidering what men that drunken Parliament were) as to the taking away of the Penal ſtatutes, upon account of which they were ſoon diſſolved. And contrary to all law, by virtue of the uſurped abſolute power, ſeveral Papiſts were advanced, not only after this time, but alſo before it. In the mean time, the weſt country and ſeveral other places wanted not perſecution and trials; and in particular the ſocieties had ſeveral difficulties to grapple with, and among other things the reproaches caſt upon them, and miſrepreſentations of their proceedings, as is before related.

WHEREFORE, according to the appointment of the laſt meeting, a draught of a paper or vindication was brought

* Mr. William Boyd having the principal hand in drawing the firſt draught of it, occaſioned it to need the more reviſing. But *proving unſatisfactory*, it was afterward tranſcribed and altered *by Mr.* James Renwick. See his 45 Letter, and his Life page 88.

brought to this General Meeting, which met at *Auchengillock*, upon the 5th of May, 1686.

After prayer and modelling of the meeting, the vindication was read in part; but in regard it was long, and the place inconvenient at the time to ſtay in, it was thought it to go to ſome houſe. Accordingly the meeting having parted that night, conveened the next day, before whom the ſaid paper was read, and ſome things helped in it. But the further conſideration thereof was thought fit to be referred to another time.

In the mean time, it was appointed that the 20th of May ſhould be obſerved by all our ſocieties a day of faſting and prayer unto the Lord, that he would give light, counſel and direction how to do and what to do in the affair concerning that paper of vindication, and that if it be not for his glory and the advantage of his cauſe that it may be cruſhed and not permitted to come any further: But if it be conducive for theſe ends, that he would countenance and bleſs it, and that he would take the management of that affair in his own hand.

It was appointed that the next meeting ſhall meet at ———, upon the firſt Wedneſday of *June* next.

ALBEIT the cruel enemy had endeavoured much formerly to debauch and inſnare the conſciences of people by wicked oaths and bonds; yet as not being weary thereof, in the interval betwixt the laſt meeting and this, there was a Bond called the Bond of Regulation impoſed by many noblemen and gentlemen upon their tenants in obedience to an act made in Queenſbery's parliament, and ſome cauſed it to be inſert in their tacks; by which the takers obliged themſelves to live regularly, keep the kirk, and refrain from conventicles, *&c.* which in the enemies ſenſe, was, not to withſtand but ſtupidly to comply with whatever was impoſed. To this (alas!) many yielded, though others were helped to refuſe it, and choſe rather to ſuffer than to ſin. In the mean time, (though not many of the wanderers had this tentation, being put from their poſſeſſions before, yet) they wanted not their ſhare of other trials and perſecutions of the time, which (to the praiſe of free grace) did rather animate than cool their zeal, and ſtir them up to diligence in duty. But one thing was very afflicting and heavy to bear, *viz.* the reproaches caſt upon them not only by enemies, but even by thoſe who ſhould have

been

being ſtrengthners of, and ſympathizers with them in their afflictions, from which they endeavoured to clear themſelves, and vindicate the cauſe by publiſhing a Vindication, which was again brought to this meeting, which conveened at ——— upon the 2d of June, 1686.

WHERE, after prayer, and modelling of the Meeting, the Vindication was again taken to conſideration: But the further reviſing of it, was thought fit to be delayed a little.

Mr. William Boyd being at this meeting, and having an inclination to go out of the land: But deſiring to know the Meeting's mind therein, and to have their conſent thereto, propoſed to them, what they thought of his going abroad to reviſe his ſtudies*; And deſired to know if they would give him a teſtificate, in order to his ordination where he could lawfully have the opportunity to obtain it.

The Meeting after deliberation, reſolved that an anſwer could not be preſently given him. Wherefore it was thought fit that every one of the Commiſſioners ſhould be deſired to acquaint the Societies they came from, of the ſame. And that a day (*viz.* June 10th) for ſupplication and prayer to the Lord, ſhould be obſerved by them to ſeek light and counſel what to do, and how to do in that affair.

As alſo that another meeting ſhould be appointed upon the 24th of the ſame month, at *Auchengilloch*, unto which, theſe who come, ſhould bring with them the mind of their Society in that matter,

ACCORDINGLY a meeting did conveen, (day and place foreſaid) to which Mr. Boyd having come, he declared that (with reſpect to what they were about concerning him) it was not his reſolution at the time either to ſeek, or take ordination, albeit he ſhould get the opportunity to obtain it lawfully, but only to go abroad for reviſing his ſtudies†. Though his declaring this to be his

* It is here to be obſerved that he finding his draught of a vindication was not acceptable, wanted by going abroad, to ſhift for himſelf, and ſhun it.

† His diſſimulation in this, appeared afterward, and as ſome accounts bear, he had then obtained a teſtificate from ſome of *the miniſters* who were oppoſite to the Societies, in order to *divide* them amongſt themſelves, in which he was ſucceſsfull. *See more* of him in Renwick's Letters, viz. 44, 45, 54, 55.

his end and design in going out of the land, helped to clear some persons in the meeting, as to their giving of their consent to his going abroad; yet there being some differences betwixt him and severals in the societies, it was thought fit to speak of them at this time: Accordingly there was sundry things signified to him by several persons, which had been offensive. Whereunto he answered particularly; which did in some measure satisfy the meeting. Whereupon he, at the meeting's desire, giving it under his hand, in a paper called his testimony, that he was in one judgment with the societies, as to the controversies of the time, and that he did not leave them through any dissatisfaction at them, or to disjoin from them; they thought they could not refuse to give their consent to his going abroad, only in order to reviving of his studies, nor to give him a testificate of christian carriage while conversant among them, which being drawn up after the meeting, was delivered to him, who not long after this went away.

The Meeting further resolved that a letter should be written to Mr. Robert Hamilton, in order to know how it was with Mr. Lining, who was with him in Leewarden getting the benefit of learning from a minister in that place, desiring him that if Mr. Lining be found qualified, that he would lay out himself to procure his ordination. Which letter being written was sent: Whereunto, not long after, Mr. Hamilton returned an answer. A copy of the letter follows.

Much honoured Sir,

THIS is amongst our greatest complaints, the want of the preached gospel, in a powerful manner, and plentiful measure; and the case of our land seems to be so now, that if there were but some few ministers to concur with us, and plenish the country, they might thro' the Lord's assistance be instruments of very much good. For there is not only a general willingness, but also a great longing and anxiety amongst people, thro' very much of the country, to hear the gospel: So that we may say, it is with us as in Isa. xli. 17. *The poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst.* Whatever the Lord purposeth to bring out of it, there is now a more earnest desire after the word, than we have observed formerly amongst the people.

Yea

Yea ſeemingly the threatenings and cruelty of the enemy would not much terrify them from following of the goſpel, from mountain to mountain. And alſo how confirming and comforting would it be tothe people? and what a mean would it be to wipe off ſome of our reproach from amongſt men, to have miniſters concurring together, ſeeing with one eye, and ſpeaking with one mouth, working with one hand, and lifting with one ſhoulder. O cry mightily to the Lord that he would ſupply with help in this caſe. We doubt not but theſe conſiderations will have great weight with you.

Hence we deſire *1ſt*, to know if Mr. Thomas's maſter looks upon him to be in any tolerable capacity as to literature for ſubjecting to ordination. And if not, we would have him go to the Univerſity of Groningen, and are willing to maintain him there for a ſeaſon. Alſo let us know your own thoughts, if the Lord be fitting him for the work. *2dly*, We deſire to know if you have any juſt exceptions againſt him, that will bear weight, and if ſo, to acquaint us with the ſame. But *3dly*, If there be none, and if he be at the time fit, we deſire that you will lay out yourſelf to the uttermoſt of your power, for a valid, and lawful ordination of him, with as great expedition as poſſible.

However we deſire previouſly to know who are the miniſters by whom you expect him to be ordained, and where they are ſtanding, that our conſciences may be ſatisfied anent them, and we may timeouſly give our conſent. As alſo we would be previouſly acquainted (if the Lord ſhall be pleaſed to carry it through) with the time of his ordination, that we may keep ſome days apart before the Lord upon that account.

So praying that the Lord may direct and aſſiſt you in that affair, and may ſtrengthen and comfort you in all your combats for his precious truths, and may help you to behave in the midſt of the generation, ſo as you may have his teſtimony, and may grant you grace to perſevere unto the end. We remain,

Much honoured and dear Sir, Yours, &c.

Subſcribed in our name, at our appointment,

JUNE *24th*, 1686. By MICH. SHIELDS.

To

To this Letter Mr. Hamilton returned anſwer to this effect, that all doors abroad ſeemed at this time to be ſhut for Mr. Lining's ordination. And as for his going to a Colledge there, he writes, that he would be for any thing that might be to Mr. Lining's encouragement. Nevertheleſs the colleges being accompanied with ſo many ſnares and ſo little advantage he could ſee he would have by them, he having already (as his maſter had informed him) made ſufficient progreſs in his ſtudies; he could not adviſe to it, but on the contrary judged it every way fitteſt, that he were amongſt the ſocieties, which might ſerve more for clearing of them as to what they deſigned concerning Mr. Lining, than it was poſſible for him or any man to judge of while there. And though he was not for his going to the Univerſity of Groningen, nor to that of Utrecht, yet he wrote that in the mean time he ſhould want no encouragement that he could either give him, or make for him.

It was likewiſe reſolved by the Meeting that a letter ſhould be written to Mr. Lining; which was accordingly done. The tenor of which followeth.

SIR,

WE think you are not ignorant how the Lord's vineyard in this land ſtands in great need of labourers, there is ſuch a general anxiety in people thro' many ſhires, to have the word truly and faithfully preached unto them, that would draw forth hearts that were not obdured, to pity their condition; and we hope you are not unwilling to put to your hand to the work of the miniſtry, for the converſion and confirmation of ſouls, and the advancement of the Lord's precious though controverted truths, as he ſhall open a door for your ſending forth.

Therefore we deſire 1*ſt*, That ye would ſignify unto us by writing, your concurring with the preſent ſtated teſtimony, and that ye are ſtill of the ſame mind, as to what you have expreſſed in your teſtimony, for the further ſatisfying the conſciences, eſpecially of theſe amongſt us, who are not acquainted with you.

2*dly*, If you find yourſelf in any tolerable capacity for ſubjecting to ordination, that you preſently ſeek after the ſame in a valid and lawful way: But if you do rationally apprehend any *unfitneſs* at the time, which a lit-

tle more literature would help, we would have you taking ſome public college at Groningen, and we are willing to maintain you there. But

3dly, Before ye ſubject to ordination by any miniſters, we deſire that you will ſignify unto us what they are, and where they ſtand, that our conſciences may be ſatisfied anent them, and particularly what caſe the Preſbytery of Groningen is now in, and a more full clearing of the foul ſtain of *Eraſtianiſm*, which would come beſt from themſelves, in anſwer to the letter written unto them with Colin Aliſon, whereof we deſire you to put them in remembrance.

Thus we exhort you to ſet the Lord before your eyes, to ſeek his glory only, and to go on in nothing without himſelf, otherwiſe you ſhall come off with his diſhonour, and your ſhame: So praying the Lord may give you a ſpirit for what work he hath to put in your hand: We remain,

Yours, &c.

Subſcribed in our name, by our appointment.

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

To this Letter Mr. Lining returned anſwer of the date Auguſt 1685, which I ſhall ſet down in his own words.

As to your deſires, I ſhall ſatisfy you as ſhortly as I can.

And *firſt*, hereby I declare I am of the ſame mind with what I left ſubſcribed with mine own hand by way of teſtimony, which I ſtill own, as I have there expreſſed myſelf.

As to the *ſecond* of your deſires, *viz.* If I be in any tolerable capacity to ſubject to ordination, *&c.*

I anſwer, what means I have uſed have been all in private, ſo that I cannot ſo well know my wants, until I be a little in public, and there ſee and hear others.

However I deſire to be plain with you, that within a month, if the Lord continue the preſent means which he hath provided, I will be near twice through all the common heads of divinity. And as for the *Hebrew* I have gotten ſome knowledge of it, and the *Greek* I have ſome what reviſed it: But doubtleſs I would be the better as to my learning of a little ſpace at the Colledge to

reviſe

reviſe all. Therefore what you ſee fit for my maintainance there, you may ſend it with the firſt occaſion.

As for ordination I ſhall uſe all lawful means to have it cleanly and according to your mind, for I intend to do nothing therein without ſeeking the Lord's mind, and acquainting you therewith, that I may have your Chriſtian advice and conſent thereto, before I ſubject myſelf to any whomſoever: But I am very apprehenſive that there ſhall be no ordination had in thir lands, for Groningen was the only place that it could have been expected at, but I have heard lately that there is an act made by them ſince Mr. James Renwick was ordained, that no man ſhall paſs there, without he ſubſcribe the act of the Synod of Dort, Heidelberg Catechiſm, and their own Confeſſion of faith. True it is, that this is the ordinary engagement of the miniſters in thir lands, yet the Synod of Dort ratifying their forms, cannot be ſubſcribed unto by any of our church; and for my part, I intend never to ſubſcribe it, though I ſhould never be ordained; for God calls no man to do evil that good may come of it, though ſometimes he may bring good out of our evils; this is of his wonderful wiſdom and mercy, which is not be to abuſed, neither is the rule of our duty.

Yet this ſhall not hinder me from trying, though I fear a refuſal, that ſo the blame may ly at their door, and not be imputed to our negligence.

It was in like manner reſolved by the Meeting that Mr. James Renwick, with James Wilſon, Doctor Furd, and Michael Shields, ſhould be deſired to go and ſpeak with Mr. Anthony Slie, a miniſter in Cumberland in England.

The occaſion of this reſolution was the account given to this meeting, by ſome friends (that had travelled in England) of this miniſter that he was concerned with the cauſe and teſtimony ſuffered and contended for by the ſocieties, and a ſympathizer with them in their afflictions: And therefore to be more and better acquainted with him it was thought fit to deſire theſe perſons to go and confer with him, from whom the Meeting expected an account, that ſo if he were found ſuch as the ſocieties could hear, and join with, theſe perſons might invite and call him to preach the goſpel among them.

Accordingly theſe perſons above named went to Cumberland and converſed with the ſaid miniſter.

It was moreover resolved by the Meeting that Col[illegible] Alison and William Nairn should go to Ireland and spe[illegible] with Mr. David Houstoun, a minister there, in order [illegible] know how he was affected to our testimony as then st[illegible]ed; Also in regard there were several bad things tal[illegible]ed of him in this land, they were desired to lay out th[illegible]m-selves to search after the truth or falsehood of these re-ports; but not to give him a Call to come to Scotland, but only to give an account of their diligence to the Meeting, that so it might be deliberated upon what was further their duty towards him.

The occasion of this resolution was an account given to this meeting that Mr. David was concerned with our testimony, and a contender against defections in Ireland. Accordingly presently after the meeting, the two young men went away, an account of whose diligence here follows, which I got from one of themselves.

When they went to Ireland, they first sought after some persons to whom they were recommended, and meeting with them told them their errand, and finding them honest, desired their assistance, and that some of them would take so much time as to go through the country with them and be present to hear what past betwixt Mr. Houstoun and them, which accordingly two or three did: As they passed through the country they met with several strange reports of Mr. David, and laid out themselves so far as they could, to enquire after the grounds of them. They found indeed that every person had heard of them, and every one almost, added a new one, yet could find no person, either of these who were for him, or of others, that could make out any of these reports. The most honest, and others also, believed them to be but reports, and the effects of prejudice which severals who were opposite to us, had at him.

However, this did not satisfy some, as the things were reported in such a probable manner, wherefore they collected together what seemed most material, and had the greatest appearance of truth in them, in order to lay them before Mr. David himself when they met with him†.

Ac-

† By other accounts it appears that these accusations were chiefly rash, harsh, uncharitable reflections upon some of the *indulged* ministers and their favourers, who were against public *testifying* against them.

Accordingly having met with him (where were alſo ſeveral of our friends) they gave Mr. David a relation of the ſtate of our teſtimony, to which in every point he agreed. They alſo gave him a ſhort account of the occaſion and manner of our ſocieties uniting together, and of our General Meetings. All which, he highly commended.

In ſhort, he needed but a word to underſtand every particular, enlarging very much in bleſſing the Lord for, and admiring his goodneſs and condeſcendency towards that poor people in ſo leading and guiding them in the right way. And particularly in ſpiriting them ſo zealouſly againſt the defections of miniſters, and againſt compliance with the corruptions of the time.

In the end they told him, although they were but ſtrangers to him, yet they hoped he would not take it ill, that they let him know that they had met with ſeveral ſtrange reports concerning him, which ſomewhat troubled them, but they were hopeful he was able to make his innocency to appear. He took this very well, and applauded them much, for uſing ſo much freedom with him.

In ſhort, as ſoon as they related the ſame to him, he gave an anſwer to each of them: And that with ſuch a geſture, and in ſuch words and expreſſions, as they could not but give him the greateſt of their charity. Then he prayed, as he did likewiſe, when he began. To return,

It was reſolved by the Meeting that the 8th of July next be obſerved by the Societies, a day of prayer unto the Lord, that if it were for his glory, he would fit Thomas Lining for the work of the miniſtry, and open a door for his lawful ordination there being at the time great need of faithful miniſters. As alſo, to ſeek counſel and direction what to do anent calling home of Mr. Hamilton.

And it was reſolved that the next General Meeting ſhould meet at *Blackgannoch*, upon the 18th day of Auguſt next.

As before the laſt meeting, ſo between it and this, there were ſtrange apparitions and prodigies ſeen in the Weſt, particularly the falling of bonnets, and armies, as guns, ſwords, ſpears, *&c.* which as they were much talked of at the time; ſo many concluded that they pre-

preſaged ſomewhat more than ordinary that this land was to meet with.

ACCORDING to the appointment of the laſt meeting a General Meeting conveened at *Blackgannoch* upon the 18th of Auguſt 1686.

After prayer, and modelling of the meeting, Mr. James Renwick gave an account that he and ſome others according to the deſire of the laſt meeting had gone to Cumberland and converſed with Mr. *Anthony Slie*, a miniſter, about the controverſies of this church, and ſhewed him how our cauſe was at this time ſtated: Againſt which, Mr. Anthony told them he had nothing to object, but agreed therewith.

But albeit, the meeting was well ſatisfied and glad at the hearing of this account, yet it was thought fit and requiſite, before any more was concluded anent him that two men, *viz.* John Latimer and John Matthiſon, ſhould go and converſe further with him, anent our cauſe and teſtimony for which the ſocieties were ſuffering and contending (theſe who formerly went, having had but ſhort time with him) and give an account thereof to the next meeting.

Accordingly, John Matthiſon and Thomas Latimer, in place of his brother John, went to Cumberland and converſed with Mr. Slie. But their report was either not given, or elſe I have forgot it. However though Mr. Slie came not to Scotland to preach, yet he continued to have a reſpect to our teſtimony, and a ſympathy with the owners thereof.

There was read at this meeting, a Letter from Robert Hamilton, wherein he deſired they ſhould write to Embden, excuſing themſelves for not doing it ſooner, and give thanks for the many favours received at ſeveral times from them. Though this was thought a duty, yet it was not written until after the next meeting, an account of which ſhall be given.

It was alſo reſolved by the Meeting that Mr. James Renwick with Michael Shields ſhould be deſired to reviſe and tranſcribe the Vindication and preſent it to the next meeting. According to this reſolution the vindication was reviſed and written again.

It was further reſolved by them that the —— day of Auguſt ſhall be obſerved by our Societies, a day of faſt-

and

and prayer upon the account of the Lord's people who are baniſhed, both formerly and of late.

And it was appointed that the next Meeting ſhould conveen at ———, upon the 22d of *September* next.

In the interval betwixt the laſt and this meeting, the caſe of the land was in general as before; and alſo the Societies, many of whom were taken, and others hunted after.

About the time of this meeting, the cruel enemy to carry on their dreadful deſigns, and to make the ſoldiers then on foot more fit for miſchief (who were before ſkilful enough, of which they had given ſufficient proof) and to have the more aſſurance for their acting whatever they ſhould be commanded, be it never ſo horrid and barbarous; impoſed an oath upon the moſt part of them, both foot and horſe, which (as reported) was to this effect: That they ſhall not fight againſt their king upon any pretence whatſoever, but ſerve him upon all occaſions, and obey his laws and commands whatever they ſhould be. Some few refuſed it, and were put in priſon.

At the time appointed by the laſt meeting, *viz.* the 22d of *September* 1686, A General Meeting conveened at ——.

After prayer and modelling of the meeting, it was reſolved by the Meeting that a Letter ſhould be ſent to Embden.

This Letter was accordingly drawn up and ſent with with James Wilſon, who not long after this meeting went abroad, being deſired by ſome perſons who were together at Glaſgow to go and carry this Letter, and a Letter to Mr. Gerkima and ſome others, and to take with him a copy of the vindication, that Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Lining and Mr. Boyd, as alſo Mr. Douglaſs then at London, might ſee the ſame, and ſend their ſentiments concerning it here.

This was thought neceſſary to be done, that it might be known what objections they had againſt it, and if they had none to get their counſel and advice anent it and concurrence with it.

Whereupon James Wilſon having undertaken the voyage, received and delivered the letters, and taking a copy of the vindication with him, ſhewed it to the fore-

foresaid persons, some of whom sent home their mind concerning it with James Wilson, when he returned.

Here follows a copy of the letter to *Embden*.

Right Honourable, and dearly beloved in the Lord,

AS Christ is love, and the pattern of it, so he says unto his disciples, that *this is his commandment* (by way of excellency) *that they love one another*. Love amongst the children is a thing well-pleasing to the Father and very advantageous to themselves; yea, it is some resemblance of heaven. So we have good ground to acknowledge that the effects of your love toward us have not been restrained; we have received frequent tokens of your sympathy and concernedness with a poor remnant who are wasted, and yet not consumed in the furnace of affliction. The effects of your bounty have been largely and frequently manifested toward us, whereof we are neither insensible nor forgetful, albeit we have given you but too much ground to apprehend so of us, by our long and ungrateful silence, wherein we cannot well excuse ourselves. However, being conscious that we neither forgot nor yet despised your grateful benefits, which came always in season unto us, and in the time of particular distresses; we have some confidence to request for your favourable construction of that omission in us, of not returning unto you timeous and due thanks; we being kept in a chased and tossed condition by the common enemy, and also perplexed with various and confusing business from other hands, multiplying themselves upon us; therefore we hope you will not look upon us as a people forgetful of your benefits, but rather loaded and borne down with burdens and troubles of several kinds. Albeit our long silence may have done hurt both to you, in giving you occasion to misconstruct of us, and to our right honourable delegate Mr. Robert Hamilton, in marring his confidence with you, and also to ourselves, in making us sorry (which yet we could not help) for the great occasion of your possible mistake anent us; which yet we hope your favourable compassion will prevent.

What shall we say? we acknowledge ourselves your debtors, and though we in this our low condition cannot give you any recompence, yet we desire to pray that

iat the Lord would be your exceeding rich reward, egging the continuance of your ſympathy, and that ou would not ceaſe to pray fervently for us, for we can- ot help nor extricate ourſelves out of manifold calami- es and difficulties, but we deſire to have our waiting es toward the Lord, whoſe faithfulneſs fails not, and ho is a preſent help in time of need. It is true, though any of us be apprehended and killed by the cruel ad- erſaries, yea, ſeverals without either trial or ſentence, r previous time to deliberate upon death, and very ma- y old and young women baniſhed, to be ſold as ſlaves, et the Lord ſhews his goodneſs and power in raiſing up thers in their places, and preſerving a remnant and ontinuing the teſtimony. Howbeit, we are under great pprehenſions and fears of ſome ſad and univerſal ſtroke ipon this land, whether by a ſudden maſſacre or a waſt- ng and deſolating war, the Lord knoweth. Yet conſi- lering the heinous abominations of our time, the great nd general apoſtacy from God, the exceſs of profanity, he grievous breach of covenant, the blaſphemous arro- ation in robbing King CHRIST of his princely pre- ogatives, the changing of his ordinances, the ſubſti- ting of idolatry and ſuperſtition, the execrable and orrid cruelty of the common adverſary, the deteſtable id lamentable lukewarmneſs, temporizing and defecti- of many miniſters and profeſſors; we cannot expect it God will rain down heavy and ſore judgments. Al- we know, that the machinations of the Popiſh malig- nt enemy are intended not againſt us only, but againſt the churches of Chriſt through Europe: Therefore is a time when none ſhould be ſecure, but all ought endeavour to ſecure themſelves from the prevailing anny and uſurpation of the beaſt.

But we hope, Right reverend and dear brethren, that e need not ſpeak of ſuch a thing to you, whom we ex- ct to be on your guard againſt the wiles and fury of the evil and his inſtruments. It is not fit for us to exhort ou, yet let us take our farewel of you at this time, with ie words of the apoſtle,—*Stand therefore, having your ins girt about with truth, and having on the breaſt-plate righteouſneſs, and your feet ſhod with the preparation of e goſpel of peace. Above all, taking the ſhield of faith, wherewith ye ſhall be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked; and the helmet of ſalvation, and the ſword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with*

all prayer and supplication in the Spirit; and watching thereunto with all perseverance and thanksgiving for all saints, and for us, who remain,

Your intire, obliged friends and servants in the Lord,

Subscribed in our name, and at our appointment, by

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

It was also resolved by the meeting, that a Letter should be written and sent to Mr. *Gerkima*, a minister of the gospel at *Leewarden*, to whom we were much obliged, particularly for his kindness to Mr. Lining.—— Which accordingly was drawn up and sent with James Wilson: a copy of which letter follows.

Right Reverend and Dear Sir,

IT pleased a holy and gracious God to advance the reformation of the church of Scotland to a very high pitch, so that we were glorious to all our beholders; and to lift us up above our enemies, so that we were terrible to them as an army with banners. Notwithstanding whereof, we did prove most ungrateful and forgetful of our solemn and sacred oaths and covenants, and turned aside out of the way. Howbeit, the Lord hath been hitherto so condescending to our poor land, that he always raised up some to continue the testimony to the reformation, and to bear witness against all the particular steps of defection and backslidings, through this lamentable tract of our church's apostacy. But as the Lord's cause in Scotland hath been greatly opposed by the stated and avowed adversary, whether the Popish or Prelatic party; and as the doleful declensions of many who once appeared to be valiant for the truth, have given the work the sorest wound; so the pitiful misrepresentations and sad aspersions of the contending and suffering part of this church, cast upon them by men of corrupt principles and practices as to the covenanted reformation, hath made our cause, or rather Christ's cause in our land to be greatly suspected.— Hereby many among us have been hardened in their wicked

wicked ways, ſome put to a non-plus, not knowing what to chuſe and what to refuſe; and foreign reformed churches perplexed how to judge of Scotland's ſufferings and contendings. Hereupon we conceive that the reverend Preſbytery, and alſo the famous univerſity of Groningen have been put to a difficulty, not knowing how to act in our affairs, or what way to prove encouraging to us, ſince the confuſions of Scotland (by the diſtorted informations of ſome who turned aſide to the right, and of many who declined to the left hand) did flee abroad as miſt through a great part of the Chriſtian world, ſo that our beloved ſtudent Thomas Lining found no ſuch acceſs to the foreſaid famous Univerſity of Groningen, as ſome of our young men had formerly done, whereby was laid upon us an obligation never to be forgotten.

Nevertheleſs, the Lord did wonderfully ſtir up you, Right reverend Sir, to own us and ſympathize with us in ſuch a ſtrait, and to take ſome time from your weighty and great affairs, and to beſtow the ſame upon the foreſaid ſtudent.

Wherefore (though we cannot repay what we owe unto you for ſuch kindneſs and labour, yet) we acknowledge ourſelves your debtors, and render you many hearty thanks; and alſo, we are hopeful that we ſhall never forget ſuch a great benefit as you have ſhewed unto us very ſeaſonably in a diſcouraging time.

Howbeit, we expect to be yet further obliged to you by the continuance of your ſympathy with us, and the help of your prayers in this furnace of affliction, (which we carneſtly beg). O ceaſe not to pray for the once glorious, but now defaced, deformed, afflicted, wounded and bleeding church of Chriſt in Scotland. And though it be not fit for us to exhort you, yet we hope ye will not be ſecure at this time, but conſider what is a watchman's duty, in ſuch a day, when the Lord ſeems ſome way or other to be declaring his diſpleaſure againſt his churche; and when the adverſary, the man of ſin, is ſtrengthening his forces and aiming at the utter undoing of the whole intereſt of Chriſt in the earth. O ſtudy to acquit yourſelf as a valiant aſſertor of all your Maſter's prerogatives; a faithful bearer of his ſtandard: A reſolute maintainer of his truths, and painful labourer in his vineyard.

Thus commending you to the grace that is in Chriſt Jeſus, which is ſufficient for you; and praying that he may bleſs your miniſtry in his church, with much viſible fruit, and that he may richly reward you with ſpiritual and temporal bleſſings for the favour and kindneſs which ye have ſhewn to a poor wreſtling and ſuffering remnant, who according to their power are willing to ſerve you: And to whom if you would write, it would be very acceptable. We remain,

Right reverend, your moſt obliged and aſſured friends and ſervants in the Lord,

Subſcribed in our name and at our appointment,

By MICHAEL SHIELDS.

The Meeting for that time being parted, met again the next day before whom the paper of VINDICATION (which was reviſed according to the deſire of the laſt Meeting) was read: Some words in it were objected againſt, and ſome ſentences debated. But the grounds of withdrawing from miniſters, were deſired to be further enlarged and more fully cleared, and brought to the next meeting. And copies thereof to be ſent to Societies that they might more deliberately conſider the ſame.

It was likewiſe reſolved that ſix men, *viz.* George Hill, Gavin Wotherſpoon, William Niſbet, John Clark, Alexander Marſhall, and Michael Shields, ſhould be deſired to go and confer (upon the 14th of October next) with Samuel Hall, Marion Stuart, Elizabeth Wilſon, Jean Hackſtoun, and Marion Young, who had been in the fields with that wretched man John Gib, to try (not judicially but privately) how great a length they went in theſe blaſphemies, and ſcandalous practices with the ſaid John Gib; in order to further clearing us of our duty towards them.

Accordingly two of the men nominate, *viz.* Gavin Wotherſpoon and John Clark, with ſome others, met at Edinburgh the foreſaid day with ſeveral of theſe perſons, and conferred with them: The reſult of which was, that they undertook to give an account in writing, and to ſubſcribe it, how great a length they went with the

the said John Gib, and to send it to the next meeting, that they might consider further what was their duty concerning them.

It was in like manner resolved that a Letter should be written to Mr. David Houstoun, and that some should be sent to Ireland with the same. The tenor of which followeth.

To Mr. David Houston *minister of the gospel in* Ireland.

At ——— the 23d of *Sept.* 1686.

Right reverend Sir,

WHEN we consider the necessity of a standing gospel ministry, for the conversion of souls, the confirmation of the converted, and the discovery of the sins and duties of the time, and the great loss that his poor afflicted and wrestling church hath suffered, in being deprived in a great measure, for some years, of the faithful and free preaching of the gospel; we look upon it as a great duty incumbent upon us, to lay out ourselves, in our places and stations, to the utmost of our power, to recover such a sad and lamentable loss, and that our land may enjoy the inestimable benefit of a pure, powerful and plentiful gospel: Wherefore, we hearing of your zealous inclinations and affections to this poor suffering church, did send over some to confer with you, whose informations anent you have been satisfying to us; whereupon we have jointly resolved to send over the bearer hereof, to confer further with you, and to convey you unto us, according to your resolution; that so we may meet together, which we desire that it may, through the Lord's goodness, tend both to your and our satisfaction.

Now, reverend Sir, we hope that you will take this to your consideration, and not look lightly upon the case of our land; for though we be low, and so our need of help the greater, yet we may say, that through many places of Scotland, there is now among people more longing and earnest desire after the faithful and pure preaching of the gospel than formerly we have observed. But we shall not insist upon this. And as for reports anent yourself, (which we thought not fit to insert here, and whereof you would *do well* to clear yourself) we refer

you

you to the information of the bearer, until that you and we meet together, if the Lord please to order it so in his holy providence.

Thus, desiring to intreat the Lord, that he may conduct you safely unto us; and that our meeting together may be blessed with a right and full understanding of one another, and joint concurring together, for the advancement of his public work; and earnestly begging the help of your prayers, we commend you to the grace that is in Christ Jesus, your Master; and we are,

Reverend Sir,

Your endeared friends and

servants in the Lord,

Subscribed in our name, and by our direction, by the clerk of our General Meeting,

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

James Bool was appointed to go to Ireland with this Letter to Mr. David, which accordingly, not long after the meeting, he did. But before he went, all our friends were gathered together, who had been living any time in Ireland, and were now resident here, that we might be informed anent what they knew of Mr. David.

They could not relate any difference in his principles from us, but gave in some accusations against him, which they had by report, and which were all *personalia*, all which accusations were written and delivered to James Bool, to the end that he might when he went to Ireland endeavour to get either the verity or falsehood of these things proved. And if he found them to be but calumnies, he was to conduct Mr. David to this land, according to his former resolution.

Accordingly James Bool used all diligence in Ireland for information with respect to these reports, bringing some of Mr. David's accusers and him face to face, and found no ground for the foresaid accusations.

It was likewise appointed by the Meeting that the 28th of October should be observed by our Societies, a day of fasting and prayer unto the Lord upon the account of the hiding of his face, and withdrawing the sweet

ſweet and lively influences of his holy Spirit from his people; and that the cauſes thereof might be ſearched out and mourned over, and to cry mightily to the Lord for his returning to his people to viſit them with his preſence and ſalvation, and that he may pour out his Spirit from on high upon them.

And it was reſolved that the next meeting ſhould conveen at *Wanlockhead*, upon the 22d of December, 1685.

THE caſe of the country continued as before, and the cruelty of the enemy againſt the ſocieties was ſtill manifeſted by apprehending, impriſoning, and baniſhing many, and moſt inhumanly murdering others in cold blood in the fields. Which though ſad in itſelf, yet it did not daunt nor diſcourage their brethren, whether thoſe at liberty or thoſe that were in bonds, from aſſerting and contending for the cauſe and teſtimony, for adhering to which their blood was ſhed like water. And in the mean time they had many diſcouraging difficulties to wreſtle with, which were procured by the forementioned informations and accuſations of ſome miniſters and others againſt them, both at home and abroad, an effect of which appeared at this time, in a Letter from Mr. Hamilton of the date September 30th, 1686. And another effect appeared in a Proteſtation, againſt Mr. James Renwick, *&c.* ſubſcribed by William M'Hutcheſon in the name of all the profeſſors betwixt Dee and Cree, a compend of both which here follows.

Much honoured of the Lord,

SINCE my laſt to you dated Auguſt 5th, I have had a new trial, which though a very heavy and bitter one, yet I could not but ſee much of the Lord's hand in it.——Mr. Kooleman, Thurſday laſt came to this Town, where he had not been for ſome years before.——Our friends called him to preach with them, where I and the family (*viz* Earlſtouns) were hearing: after the exerciſe he was deſired to ſtay and ſup with them, and I and my ſiſter were alſo invited. We were not well ſet down to table, when in great vehemency, he began to inform againſt you, and to run down all the late wreſtlings, the half of which I could not retain, yet ſo much of it as I remember I here inſert, (omitting the anſwers I then gave) which was.

He

He ſaid, he had very diſtinct accounts from ſure hand that the report of a witneſſing party in Scotland, was a lies. That there were about an hundred bodies there led by Renwick a poor blown up illiterate perſon, who but very lately had any profeſſion of religion; that he preached publicly but once in twenty days, or a month that the people that followed him were for killing all who were not of their own judgment; That they are a dread ful party, who will go into a gentleman's houſe and take what ever makes for them, and then run away, and thus the poor family is both ſpoiled by them, and laid o pen to the enemies perſecution; that their ſuffering i their ſin, bringing themſelves in hazard; and that th miniſters had told him that if ever there was a Genera Aſſembly or ſtates of their mind, they would make Ren wick and Hamilton ſuffer for it in a high degree, an all who have been active in miſleading theſe poor be dies, *&c* *.

As it was grievous to hear ſuch a man ſo employed ſo eſpecially, as he freely and openly confeſſed to myſelf that the depreſſing of you, and your cauſe and the poo family here, was his principal deſign in coming here, an we found him as good as his word: yet I, nor the fami ly durſt not withdraw from him, deſiring rather to loo on him with pity and compaſſion, as a ſtranger ſadl miſinformed, who yet is the only witneſs in the Nether lands.

If there were no more to be ſaid againſt theſe mini ſters and that party, but their murdering ſuch worthie as Meſſrs Kooleman, Aſkin, Peden, *&c.* with thei horrid miſinformations, it is ſufficient to all who love our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, his cauſe and intereſt, to ſtand afar off from them, until their repentance be as public a their oppoſition has been. O they have done much e vil.——My judgment in this, is no other than what wa the mind of many of our worthies, who are now in glo ry. I have ſent you an exact copy of one of their letters, *viz.* Mr. Cargill's, which my ſoul joins with. I ſhall only lay before you, Jer. xii. 5, 6.—*Believe them not, tho' they ſpeak fair words unto thee.*

Our old friend Mr. Brackel is alſo active againſt you and the poor family here, and informed profeſſor Mark bitterly againſt you, and excited him to reprove Mr. Ger-

* See an anſwer to this in Mr. Renwick's Life, pag. 111 to 114.

Gerkima ſharply for teaching Mr. Lining.——But in this they were not ſucceſsful.

After Mr. Boyd had ſtayed ſix, or ſeven days with me he went to Groningen and ſtayed a day or two, and returned immediately, whereupon I took occaſion to aſk him why he prayed not for Mr. Renwick and the witneſſing remnant at home,—he ſaid that he durſt not do it under ſuch a notion as the witneſſing remnant, knowing to his certain knowledge there was ſome of the other party as great wreſtlers and contenders as they, neither durſt he on that ſame head pray for Mr. Renwick.

I anſwered that it ſeemed ſtrange that any who looked upon Mr. Renwick as an anſwer of prayer, and a gift of God ſent us in our low eſtate, durſt bow a knee and not acknowledge him for it; or how they durſt ſeek more of the Lord, and not acknowledge him for what they had gotten.

He replied, well Sir, whatever be your judgment, friends at home and I are of one mind in that, yea they judged that they ſhould be cenſured that did it, and that privately they had cenſured ſome precipitant perſons who had been of my judgment, *&c.*†.

Upon the 21ſt of Auguſt, Again converſing with him on his new opinion, *viz.* That now no other ſatisfaction was to be ſought of any for bygone things, providing they were but willing to join in the public work. At firſt, he would have diſſembled in it: But I putting him in mind of his letter to William Cleland, *&c.* He then acknowledged it, and ſaid that it was the judgment of friends at home, and his alſo.—I ſaid that I knew that both the judgment and practice of friends at home was otherwiſe formerly, and I hoped it was ſo ſtill, and inſtanced Mr. Renwick his requiring ſatisfaction of ſcandalous compliers, before he would admit them to preſent their children to baptiſm. He anſwered, that it was now gone.——He then reflected upon me for ſeparating from thoſe of my own nation, *viz.* Monmouth's and Argyle's party.——And accidentally meeting a gentleman, ſtiled Pardoven, one of his acquaintance who is a furious zealot for the Aſſociation, he introduced him and me into converſe, and when the gentleman was raging,

† Here his diſſimulation appeared, in giving it under his hand when he left Scotland that he agreed with the Teſtimony as ſtated by the Societies againſt the Aſſociators. See Mr. Renwick's XLV. Letter to *Mr. Hamilton*.

ing, and reviling all who did not join with Monmouth and Argyle. Mr. Boyd ſhewed himſelf well pleaſed with him, and diſſatisfied with me.

The laſt time Mr. Kooleman was here giving his informations he had not great advantage, I offering to write down and ſubſcribe all I had aſſerted, and deſired him and the other party to do the like, which he refuſed, and finding that this was like to loſe all to them, this ſtratagem is now fallen upon to make it paſs, that all that I had ever informed anent a ſuffering party in that land, was all Chimera's, that there was never any thing like it, only ſome few ſectaries were lately ariſen by me and Renwick. This Mr. Kooleman was at much pains to ſpread, as being the readieſt way to anſwer all objections, and this now paſſes for current with many.

So I ſeeing that no further information of mine could have place, and that the Lord was looſing me from Frieſland, and that my further ſtaying there could not be for further advantage either to you, the poor family, or our friends here embarked with us.——Upon theſe conſiderations, I determined to take my life in my hand again, and go to other churches, though our dear friends here with many tears preſſed my ſtaying, yet this is too weak to hold me, being perſuaded that the Lord his cauſe and intereſt are calling me to move: Wo to them that are ſeeking a reſt to themſelves, when the ark of God, and his little flock are in the fields.

Now ye know my outward encouragement is but ſmall, and my danger great: O then, I deſire your prayers and ſympathy: my errand and deſign, the Lord knows, is to venture yet again my life through the wilderneſs for my poor afflicted mother, and although there is none living more in his debt, than I am, yet there is none more unworthy of the leaſt of his favours to a poor unworthy, wretched ſinful worm: but he, O he delighteth in mercy, and duty is ours, the ſucceſs it his, and he can do us no wrong.——If I can win at Piamond, I intend it.

I ſay, O mind me, who although with much weakneſs I have ſerved you in the Lord's work, yet he knows it was in uprightneſs and ſincerity, and I hope ye have learned of your great maſter not to caſt at the poor's mite, but to take the will for the deed: I ſay your welfare, and that poor church's thriving I have ſought; and it is my great deſire to live and die in your ſervice, and brea-

thing

thing put my love and affection to you, my aim hath been your well, and Chriſt's reigning amongſt you more gloriouſly than ever, which though I never ſee, yet I live in the faith it ſhall be, though at the preſent I am in the apprehenſion of ſudden terrible waſting judgments.

Remember poor Frieſland, labour to ſtrengthen thoſe that are yet ſtanding in it: there are two praying ſocieties yet left in Leewarden perſecuted on the account of you and the cauſe.——I alſo recommend the poor family to you, the only family in this land ſhot at by all ranks, for Chriſt's cauſe, a family witneſſing both at home and abroad.

If in any thing I can ſerve you, it ſhall be my joy to do it, in the Lord's work.——Though our dear friends preſſed me to take Mr. Lining with me, yet I durſt not do it without your conſent, ſo he ſtays in the family, he will want for nothing.

Now the bleſſing of the moſt high be with you: it is like we may never meet in time face to face; let us meet much before the throne, and be preparing, looking and longing for that day of the bridegroom when he will gather all his never to part: pray, pray for the well of Jeruſalem, and for him who is yours in the Lord,

ROBERT HAMILTON.

THE PROTESTATION againſt MR. JAMES RENWICK, together with his REPLY thereto, which for brevity's ſake is a little abridged.

WE Underſubſcribers, according to the laudable example of others taking to our ſerious conſideration, the great ſcandal and woful effects of diviſion among the profeſſors of the church of Scotland, and eſpecially amongſt ourſelves: and finding the cauſe of this diviſion to proceed partly from ſome paying ceſs, hearing curates, taking the late abjuration oath: And partly from others their condemning theſe things, and adhering to the late declaration on the church doors, and receiving of, and adhering to Mr. James Renwick, without the conſent of the Remnant godly and faithful miniſters,—contrary to the laudable practice of this church, and acts of the General Aſſembly ſince the Reformation to this day.

And finding these things to be above our capa decide;——we do hereby refer and submit ourse these, to an assembly of faithful ministers and eld only competent judges of such debateable principl practices,—and promise upon the one hand to giv faction to the church, according as we shall be guilty, and convinced by the word of God for any done by us, to the scandal of our dear brethren.

And upon the other hand, we will forbear to c hear, or join with Mr. James Renwick, till such t his ordination be seen and approven of some com number of the faithful ministers of the church of land,—and are willing upon his submission to h thren, according to the word, to receive him in bosom;—but if he, at the desire of strangers, or our brethren dividing from us, intrude himself labours,—till such time as we have the mind of t ministers anent the foresaid things, we will protest all such dealing, as horrid and abominable intrusi usurpation before God and man.

Subscribed with my hand in the name of this p the Stewartry betwixt the Water of *Dee* and C the name of the whole,

Sic Subscribitur,

Nov. 1686.

WILLIAM M'IIUTCH

THE REPLY to the foregoing Paper, directed Authors and Consenters, by MR. JAMES WICK.

AS it doth not a little grieve me that such should have come from your hands, who adherence to presbyterial government, who ha fered so much at the hands of the common enem with whom (at least some of you) I have gone for to the house of God in company, and have been perils because of the sword of the adversary.

So, Albeit I am conscious to myself of no desi delight in keeping up needless strifes, and vain jar of no design to render any persons, or party And also of no inclination to resent private and injuries: Yet when I perceive the truths of G

the work of Reformation, which hath been tranſmitted to us through the wreſtlings and blood of our worthy martyrs, in a great meaſure, like to be buried; and many valiant and honourable contendings and ſufferings of Chriſt's witneſſes in our age, condemned and forgotten; I ſay, when I perceive this, I cannot, I dare not keep ſilence.

Therefore your paper being given in to me, November 2d, 1686. and finding it ſo prejudicial to the intereſt of Chriſt, I have thought fit, with ſorrow, ſobriety and candour, to give ſome animadverſions upon it.

1. The ſcope and deſign of it, is, to ſtop the preaching of the goſpel.

2. When ye ſpeak of diviſion, ye do not deduce the ſame from its own original: For ye ſay that the cauſe thereof partly proceeds from ſome their paying ceſs, hearing curates, and taking the late abjuration oath; and partly from others their condemning theſe things, adhering to the late declaration on church doors, and receiving of, and adhering to Mr. James Renwick without the conſent and approbation of the Remnant godly and faithful miniſters, &c. Whereas it is well known to all who are not ſtrangers to the caſe of our church, that diviſions abounded as much before there were any thoughts of that declaration, and before I (though moſt unworthy of ſuch a honour) did put hand to the public work. I judge our diviſions have their more native riſe and real progreſs from a party who ſtill cleaved to the malignant intereſt, and fell upon public reſolutions to bring known malignants into places of power and truſt: From the many preſbyterian miniſters, who changed their commiſſion, and exerciſed their miniſtry under this abjured Antichriſtian Prelacy: From others, who took a new holding of their miniſtry from an arrogated headſhip over the church, by accepting indulgences, warrants, and reſtrictions from the uſurper of their Maſter's crown: From others, who united with the foreſaids, both curates and indulged, and ſtiffly pleaded for the ſame: From others, who did meet in Preſbyteries to cenſure the more faithful, for diſcovering the ſin of the indulgence: From others, who at Bothwel, oppoſed the keeping of a day of humiliation for the ſins of the time, and foiſted in the late tyrant's intereſt into the declaration of the army: From others, who after Bothwel induced the priſoners

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taken at that fatal defeat, to ſubſcribe the conſcience-defiling bond of peace: From others, who tolerated, or adviſed people to compliance with other abominations of the time: From others, who have been unfaithful in not applying their doctrine againſt the prevailing ſins of our day: From others, who have ſatisfied themſelves to ly by from the exerciſe of their miniſtry, and deſiſted from the work of the Lord, and that when his vineyard ſtood moſt in need: And from others who have gone into, carried on, or countenanced *hotch-potch* confederacies with malignants and ſectaries, and temporizing compliers: And *finally*, From all, whether miniſters or people, who have carried on, plaiſtered, or ſtrengthened any courſe of defection, through the courſe of this churches ſinful and lamentable revolt.

3. Ye very inconſiderately ſay, 'That the cauſe of 'this diviſion proceeds partly from ſome paying ceſs, 'hearing curates, and taking the late abjuration oath; 'And partly from others condemning theſe things, adhering to the late declaration: And receiving of, and 'adhering to Mr. James Renwick, without the conſent 'of the Remnant godly and faithful miniſters of the 'church of Scotland." Herein no ſmall contradiction and abſurdity is implied; For in your accounts, the paying of ceſs, the hearing of curates, and taking the abjuration oath, hath cauſed diviſion; and the condemning the foreſaids hath done the like: Now a practical condemning of theſe things, is a not doing of them; and the ſame charge laid againſt the doing of a thing, and the not doing of the ſame thing, is flatly contradictory: Ye judge that the condemning of ſin as well as the practiſing of it muſt (either in part, or in whole) bear the blame of diviſion.

Is not this moſt abſurd? Is not this ſad miſreckoning? Though ye ſhall ſay that the practiſing of the foreſaid evils, hath cauſed a ſad diviſion, and the condemning of the ſame, a juſt and warrantable diviſion, yet it cannot be here meant, becauſe ye here ſpeak only of the diviſion which hath ſcandalous and woful effects:—and as to the forementioned declaration, I know ſome of the miniſters, and many of yourſelves opened not a mouth againſt it, while they thought it ſubſervient to their deſigns: and as for the receiving of, and adhering to Mr. James Renwick (as ye ſay,) without the conſent of the godly and faithful miniſters of the church of Scotland;

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it is not pertinent for me to anſwer much unto it, as ye gave it forth. Only ſeeing there are ſo many parties, and fractions of miniſters, I deſire to know to whom (or if to all) ye give that ſignature FAITHFUL. And whether or not, ye judge that I ought to have ſought the conſent, and approbation of any that are UNFAITHFUL. And whereas ye ſpeak of this receiving and adhering (as ye term it) as being contrary to the laudable practice of this church, and acts of the General Aſſemblies; ye would be pleaſed to conſider the broken and declining ſtate of this church, and then inſtance either practice, or act, whereof ye do ſpeak.

4. Ye overturn ſome material pieces of our attained Reformation: For, the paying of ceſs, hearing the curates, and taking the abjuration oath, are brought in debate, and exhibited as above your capacity to decide and determine: And ye do tacitly inſinuate a forbearance to meddle in theſe things, as if they were not worthy to be contended againſt: But will ſubmit yourſelves in all the foreſaids, to an aſſembly (as ye ſay) of faithful miniſters and elders.

Where can ye get a more faithful Aſſembly to decide theſe matters, than our venerable aſſemblies who have decided the ſame already? And where can ye have a more faithful deciſion then they have given, by their acts, according to the word of God? As for the paying of the ceſs, does not the act of the General Aſſembly, June 17th, 1646. Seſſ. 14. for cenſuring compliers with the enemies of this kirk and kingdom, ſufficiently determine the ſame? As for hearing the curates: Do not our Covenants National and Solemn League, convincingly condemn the ſame? As for the Abjuration Oath, Does not the act of the Aſſembly June 28th, 1648, Seſſ. 14. againſt all oaths and bonds in the common cauſe without the conſent of the church, clearly decide the ſame? If theſe things be now debateable principles, all the actings and ſufferings that have been theſe twenty-ſix years and more, may be brought in debate and the juſtneſs thereof queſtioned.

Had our Aſſemblies no authority? or did they not give right deciſions in theſe matters, that they are now reſiled from, and their ſentences referred to the deciſion of others? Yea, where ſhall ſo many miniſters now be had, as to make up an Aſſembly, except theſe who are practiſing, or tolerating the foreſaid evils? Moreover, if an

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Aſſembly, leſſer or greater, ſhould give out an act, or ſentence, for the lawfulneſs of paying the ceſs, hearing the curates, and taking the abjuration oath; would ye ſtand to it? If ye would ſtand to it, would not that be an implicit ſubmiſſion, and an obeying man, rather than God? If ye would not ſtand to it, where is your ſubmiſſion in theſe points? For my part, what is clearly decided already, both divinely, and eccleſiaſtically, I will never refer it to the deciſion of any man; Shall I ſubmit it to man to determine whether or not the ſoul of man is immortal? Or whether there be more ſacraments than two? Let Aſſemblies confirm, ratify and approve undoubted, uncontroverted truths, and theſe things that have been already juſtly and clearly decided: But let none give unto them the determination and deciſion of theſe things.

5. 'Ye once give forth the paying of ceſs, the hear-'ing of curates, and the taking the abjuration oath, u-'pon the one hand; and upon the other hand, the con-'demning of theſe things; the adhering to the foreſaid 'declaration, and receiving of, and adhering to Mr. 'James Renwick,' &c. as debateable principles, and practices, and matters above our capacity to decide: And then you aſſume to yourſelves the determining that none ſhall call or join with the ſaid Mr. James: Doth not this imply, *(firſt,)* A contradiction? Ye cannot determine, and yet you can determine; ye will not decide, and yet ye do decide: Does it not import, *(ſecondly,)* that it is a matter in debate with you, whether or not, people may hear the curates? But it is out of ou[r] debate with you, whether or not, people may hear th[e] curates? But it is out of all debate with you, that y[e] ought not to join with me in my miniſtry: And yet i[n] what precedes in your paper ye give forth the receivin[g] of me, only as a debateable thing: and how ſufficient ground is a matter debateable with the Proteſtors, to en-ter ſuch a reſolved Proteſtation upon, let any man o[f] reaſon judge?

6. The ground ye walk upon (in your paper) in for-bearing to call or join with Mr. James Renwick, an[d] for marching in ſuch violent oppoſition againſt him, i[n] becauſe his ordination is not ſeen, and approven (as y[e] ſay) by the faithful miniſters of the church of Scotland This in your account, albeit in the broken and declin-ed ſtate of the church, is more ſinful, ſcandalous, and of-fenſive than all that can be tabled againſt the curates

For

For this gives you ground to determine not only a forbearance to join with, but of a direct oppoſition unto my miniſtry; Whereas all that ye have againſt the Curates, is in debate (as ſaid is) Whether or not they may be heard.

Howbeit, as to my ordination, it is valid and lawful, and I refuſe not to give all poſſible ſatisfaction, to any who may be conſcientiouſly deſirous to hear: Neither refuſe I to ſatisfy any faithful miniſter thereanent, who may ſeek the ſame. Yea, hearing that a certain miniſter of the church of Scotland was deſirous of information anent my ordination, I did write unto him a true tranſcript of the certificate of the ſame, with my judgment as to the chief things controverted in our day; but I never received any anſwer. Likewiſe, ſome other miniſters whom ye know, (Meſſrs. Barclay and Langlands) ſhewed their willingneſs to have a concurrence between them and me, and to lay all debates aſide; which I could not do, except theſe offenſive courſes were reſented and relinquiſhed. They made no exception againſt me on account of my ordination not being ſeen and approven by the miniſters, &c.

But as I refuſe not to ſatisfy any faithful miniſters upon that head,—and I am willing to yield all due ſubjection unto them in the Lord: Nevertheleſs, I humbly conceive, that theſe bear not the ſignature of faithful miniſters, and of ſuch as I am ſubject unto; who have directly and actually complied with the enemies of this covenanted church and kingdom; or who defend, excuſe, plaiſter, or cover and tolerate compliances with the foreſaid enemies and their palpable defection from the reformation of this church; or, who pervert their miniſtry by contradicting our preſent teſtimony, founded upon and agreeable to the ſcriptures, our Confeſſion and Covenants; or who have deſerted miniſterial duties, and deſiſted from the public work of preaching the goſpel, for fear of hazard; or who have divided the church,—calumniated and condemned the more faithful.

Now, (paſſing by others whom I might mention) I ſay, I humbly conceive that miniſters guilty of all or any, more or fewer of the foreſaids, are not ſuch, as in conſcience I can ſubject unto, conſidering theſe charges (as I deſire) with application to miniſters of this organical church, under the ſame bond of Covenant with us, and obliged to maintain the ſame word of teſtimony,

and with reſpect to the broken and declined ſtate of the church, They will be found ſufficiently to warrant my non-ſubjection to theſe (while ſuch) to whom they are duly applicable.

7. Ye call the foreſaid Mr. James his preaching upon a call, without previous ſubmiſſion to miniſters, againſt whom he hath juſt exceptions, 'an horrid and abominable uſurpation and intruſion?' Whereas it cannot be called uſurpation, becauſe I have a proteſtative miſſion to exerciſe all the parts of my miniſtry; neither can it be called intruſion upon the labours of any faithful miniſters of Chriſt: For I declare, with grief and lamentation, that I travelled for a conſiderable ſpace of time through the country of Scotland, where profeſſors and ſufferers did moſt abound, and in all my journies I never heard of any labouring, ſave the indulged for a ſeaſon, and the Curates. And I think I may ſay before God, that it was pity toward the ſcattered ſheep of Chriſt in this land, who were fainting and ſwooning through the famine of the public ordinances, that moved me to ſubject myſelf in ſuch a weak condition to ſo great a work, and to undergo ſo many perils and wanderings. And it is moſt likely, if labourers had been faithful and laborious, I had laboured none to this very day.

8. Ye ſignify your reſolution to proteſt againſt the foreſaid Mr. James his preaching, as 'horrid and abominable uſurpation and intruſion upon you and your labours, till ſuch time (mark it) as ye have the mind of your faithful miniſters anent the foreſaid things.'

What are theſe things? They are nothing, if they be not the ceſs-paying, hearing curates, and taking the abjuration oath upon the one hand; and upon the other hand, the condemning theſe things, and adhering to the foreſaid declaration, and receiving of, and adhering to the above-named perſon, without the conſent and approbation (as ye ſay) of the remanent godly and faithful miniſters, *&c.*

I am content indeed, that ye caſt upon the receivers of my miniſtry the brand of condemning theſe iniquities, but does not this that ye ſay, confirm what I have inſtructed in animadverſion fourth, *viz.* That ye have overturned ſome great and material pieces of our reformation, and brought in debate what was out of debate, and that ye will have a new deciſion of what has been by the

thority of the church of Scotland, long ago, very
decided. What if theſe faithful miniſters ſhall
ſel you to pay the Ceſs, hear the curates, and allow
ing the abjuration oath? And if ye follow their
ſel, Where will ye be? And if ye follow it not,
w can ye hang your reſolved Proteſtation upon it?
t herein you have inveigled yourſelves in a great in-
acy: For ſome of the miniſters whom ye account
hful, will tolerate (if not defend) the paying of
ſs, and others will condemn it: Some of them
allow of taking the abjuration oath, and others
(at leaſt did) diſapprove of it: Some of them
wink at hearing of Curates, and others will teſtify
inſt it. Now, whom will ye follow? and whoſe de-
mination will ye take in your appeal? Have ye not
ght yourſelves by this to a great difficulty?

Ye expreſs yourſelves with ſuch confuſion, as I
not whether to look upon you as men in office or
of office, or both; ye ſpeak with one breath as if ye
re miniſters, and yet alſo, only as people: For ye ſay,
the foreſaid Mr. James, at the deſire of ſtrangers,
of any of your brethren dividing from you, ſhall in-
de himſelf on your labours, without your call or con-
t, till ſuch time as ye have the mind of your faithful
niſters anent the foreſaid things, ye will proteſt againſt
horrid intruſion on your labours.' If ye be people,
r labours cannot be intruded upon by the exerciſe of
miniſterial function; And if ye be miniſters, how
e ye to ſay, That ye muſt have the mind of your
hful miniſters? I never knew miniſters ſpeak ſo.
though ye ſhould ſay that ye are both miniſters and
ple, yet none can free ſuch a ſpeech of worſe than
rror in orthography. And I do verily wonder, how
can build ſuch abſurdities upon ſome expreſſions in
e of our former papers, which many of you once
ed, and which can bear a far other and better ſenſe
n ye put upon them: And in the mean time, ye your-
es fall in a greater fault. And if I thought that any
gyman had penned your paper, I would take a little
ty to diſcover the contradictions and confuſions, (to
no worſe) and that he hath not adverted to his
k when he wrote it. But what I have obſerved in
giving me occaſion to take it as the draught of illite-
men, (who ſometimes cannot aptly expreſs their

meaning) I shall be the more favourable, and shall forbear.

10. Ye say, 'That ye will look upon Mr. James his preaching the gospel, without subjection to such ministers as he hath sufficient exceptions against, to be divisive and destructive to the poor suffering remnant of this church.' Whereunto I shall reply nothing, but, That the faithful remnant of this church, who suffer most, both by the hands and tongues of men, do not look with your eyes.

11. Ye give in your paper subscribed by a faithful and creditable man indeed, William M'Hutchison, in the name of that place of the stuartry of Galloway betwixt Cree and Dee:—Whereby ye have done an injury to some conscientious sufferers and owners of truth in that place, who do abominate your deed; and also to yourselves in your designation so comprehensive as to exclude none, either papists or malignants who reside there. And again ye say, in the name of the whole. Is that of the whole of your party? Does not this give just ground of exception against the whole of your party?

Now, having in weakness (though with studied candour and sobriety) briefly animadverted upon some things in your paper, wherein I conceived to lie the greatest prejudices to the work of the Lord, I shall not touch some other things in it, which may be looked upon as importing only weakness, chusing rather to cover these, and pass them in silence *.

And notwithstanding of all that ye have done against me, I have love to you, and desire to behave myself as a friend: Yea, I may say, I am filled with a great measure of sorrow and amazement when I consider your present course and carriage, and compare it with your former. Many of you, and I, have wandered in the silent watches of the night together, been in perils together, fled from the sword of the common adversary together; and I appeal to yourselves if ye have not found sometimes something of the power of God in our solemnities together.—Ye have suffered much at the hand of the enemy, even to the shedding of the blood of many of you, which I hope was acceptable to God, and is a part of the seed of the church.—Ye professed once with

* See Renwick's letters, viz. let. 48. and his life, p. 98,-103.

us

the ſame thing that we own and profeſs this day; ye were the moſt forward for action, and we gloried in you, and boaſted of you, and I think this hath been our ſin and a part of the cauſe of your judgment.

Howbeit, there are ſome things wherein ye have greatly wronged the cauſe of Chriſt, which (out of reſpect to that cauſe, and love to your ſouls) I ſhall bring to your remembrance, and ſet before you for your ſerious conſideration.

Therefore (I ſay) conſider, when ye were profeſſing a concurrence with us in the ſtated teſtimony of our day, what underhand dealing ye had with other parties, (without once acquainting us therewith) from which both ye and we were obliged to ſtand at a due diſtance.

Conſider how ye divided from us, and joined with miniſters chargeable with ſundry offences, (ſtill defended) and are now gone that length that I know not any miniſters (however ſadly turned aſide) from whom ye ſtand at a diſtance; yea, do not ſome of them whom ye call and embrace, calumniate and condemn the more faithful remnant, uttering as untender and uncharitable expreſſions of them as they can do of the perſecuting enemy.

By what warrant ſhould they be heard preach, who ſpeak lies in the name of the Lord? Conſider, whether are the miniſters who lurk and reſide at Edinburgh, and who are chargeable with other things than at preſent I ſhall name; I ſay, are they now become ſuch unto you, that ye will receive no miniſters but ſuch as have an approbation and warrant from them? Conſider alſo, how many temporizing compliers ye have received into your ſelect ſocieties?

Conſider how ye came to our General Meeting, *Jan.* 28th, 1686, with what purpoſe of uniting with us, the Lord knows; and when we were uſing all means to conciliate an union in the Lord, ye dealt very diſingenuouſly with us. And alſo, when we becauſe of your ſundry offences no way reſented by you, did conſcientiouſly, in our own names, refuſe your concurrence with us in ſelected Chriſtian fellowſhip, ye went away and did ſpread ſad lies and calumnies of us.

Conſider how ye have diſperſed your papers and pamphlets, with what truth and tenderneſs as to the charges therein contained, we leave to every conſcientious Chriſtian who knows us to judge.

Conſider

Conſider how ye have by letters, informations, counſels and proteſtations, with more zeal, oppoſed and contended againſt an afflicted witneſſing Remnant, than ever ye did againſt the antichriſtian hierarchy. And tho' the Lord knows (as far as I can ſee into my heart) I mention it not to reſent any injury done unto myſelf, yet I muſt deſire you to conſider how when I came to your border, offering to converſe with you, and willing to preach the goſpel, as formerly I had done in that place, you would let none ſpeak with me but ſuch as you pleaſed: Ye ſeparated from me when I was going about family exerciſe; and you alſo proteſted againſt both my preaching and converſe.

Conſider what errors, abſurdities, contradictions, &c. are ſtuffed into your paper prefixed. O I ſay, conſider and take a look of theſe things; how thereby ye have ſadly wronged the intereſt of Chriſt,—have made the enemy to blaſpheme,—made conſcientious ſufferers to ſtumble and fall,—to grope in the dark not knowing what to chuſe or refuſe,—have hardened the hearts, and ſtrengthened the hands of theſe engaged in a courſe of defection, ſo that they do not turn from the evil of their ways,—have done ſo much to deprive poſterity of the truths which ought to be tranſmitted to them; and *finally*, how you have thereby ſinned againſt your own ſouls.

Now I beſeech you conſider your ways: And that the Lord may pour out on you the ſpirit of mourning and turning, is the prayer of him who is your ſoul's well-wiſher.

Sic Subſcribitur,

JAMES RENWICK.

ACCORDING to the appointment of the laſt Meeting, a General Meeting conveened at *Wanlockhead*, upon the 22d of December, 1686. Prayer (as was uſual) being gone about, and the meeting modelled.

Mr. David Houſton having come out of Ireland, with James Boole (or Boyle) was conducted to this meeting: To which Mr. Alexander Shields preacher of the goſpel did likewiſe come, who had upon the 21ſt of October made his eſcape out of priſon, and then came to the United Societies, and was for ſome time with Mr. James Ren-

Renwick; who was very well satisfied with him. These two ministers having come to the meeting, a short account of what was there done with reference to them follows.

However considering the importance of what was done at the last General Meeting, I judge it necessary to give you a true account thereof.

There came two ministers to the last Meeting *December* 22d, 1686. *viz.* Mr. *David Houston*, and Mr. *Alexander Shields*. But I shall first give you an account of our carrying toward the said Mr. *David*, and toward the foresaid Mr. *Alexander*.

When I was in England the last summer, the General Meeting of our Societies being informed that Mr. *David Houstoun* refused concurrence with, and subjection to the ministers in Ireland because of their defections, and that he preached faithfully against all the sins of the times, did send unto him *Colin Alison* and *William Nairn* to know the verity thereof; who after full and free communing with the said Mr. *David* anent all the heads of our present testimony, received great satisfaction; who also signified unto them his resolution of coming unto us. But before we sent any unto him again, we did convocate all our friends who had been living any time in Ireland, and now come over to us, that we might inform ourselves anent what they knew of the said Mr. *David*, who could not relate any difference in his principles from us, but gave in some accusation against him which they had but by report, and were all *personalia*: All which accusations were drawn up and delivered to *James Boyle*, who was sent to Ireland to get the verity or falsehood of every one of these things instructed, and finding them to be but calumnies, to conduct the foresaid Mr. *David* to us, according to his own resolution. So the said *James* laying out search for information anent these reports, conferring with some of Mr. *David's* accusers, bringing him and them face to face; likewise conferring with some of his neighbours and ordinary hearers, and finding no ground for the foresaid accusations, did conduct Mr. *David* unto us, that we might satisfy ourselves anent him in a free communing with himself.

Wherefore Mr. *David* came to our last General Meeting, which was upon *December* 22d, 1686. being accompanied with one *James Kinloch*, who was particularly

larly ſent by ſome ſocieties in Ireland to our correſpondence, and who alſo teſtified before us all for Mr. *David's* honeſty and innocency of the foreſaid allegances; after which, we did read over in Mr. *David's* hearing, the introduction to our vindication, wherein are ſummarily comprehended ſome ſignal ſteps of our church's defection, and a brief declaration of our preſent teſtimony, both as to what we own and diſown, together with the fifth head of the ſame vindication, containing (among other things) ten grounds, every one of which, we judge ſufficient for withdrawing from miniſters of this covenanted and reformed church, to whom they are applicable in this broken and declining ſtate: and then we aſked Mr. *David's* judgment of what he had heard, and whether or not he was of one mind with us as to every part of our preſent teſtimony. He replied, that as to ſome matters of fact he was ignorant, but he agreed with our judgment and principles in all that he had heard, adding, that it was foretold by *Luther*, that before Chriſt's glorious appearance for his church in the laſt days, the controverſy ſhould be ſtated and rid about miniſtry and magiſtracy. So Mr. *David* being deſired to remove, we gave in our minds about his anſwer, and it was ſuſtained as ſatisfying in that point. After this, we conſulted among ourſelves what was further neceſſary to deſire for our further ſatisfaction anent him; and having heard from himſelf, that he had ſome papers with him which could tend to our information and clearing, concerning his carriage for many years; we called him to us again, and deſired to hear theſe papers. So there was read in our hearing, firſt his licence, then his ordination, which was to the pariſh of *Sraſtrie*, a little before the Reſtoration. Next (as I remember) a paper which he had drawn up himſelf, and given to the miniſters in Ireland, containing his reaſons wherefore he would not be ſubordinate unto, nor concur with them, whereof their oppoſition to the ſuffering party in Scotland was one. Afterward were read ſome teſtificates, from the people in the reſpective places in *Ireland*, where he had exerciſed his miniſtry, ſome whereof being of a very late date, and one of them bearing, that they had been greatly refreſhed and edified with his preaching the goſpel amongſt them; but that he had denied them other privileges for reaſons ſatisfying to himſelf; by which he declared, they underſtood his refuſing to ha-

tize their children, becauſe of their paying exactions to the enemy, and this we looked upon as the greater teſtimony.

Further, we enquired how long he had kept a meeting-houſe in Ireland, and upon what terms; and declared the terms of his holding were not ſinful; for he was ſettled by the miniſters upon the call of the people; and whenſoever he knew of any tranſaction of the ſaid miniſters with the ſo called magiſtrate, that he forſook his meeting-houſe, and refuſed ſubordination to theſe miniſters; which was a little after *Bothwel.* Moreover, he declared, and *James Kinloch* witneſſed the ſame, that at the incoming of the aſſociators, *Anno* 1685, he gave a plain and public teſtimony againſt that *hotch-potch* confederacy. Now, Mr. *David* being deſired to remove again, we communed together anent what we had heard from his papers and from his own mouth, and found a great meaſure of ſatisfaction therefrom.

Howbeit, to remove ſcruples yet further, we called him again to us, and dealt freely with him in telling him what was reported, by ſome, of him, deſiring to hear what he would ſay to theſe things himſelf. All which allegiances he heard very patiently, and anſwered to them one by one, as they were given in, very pleaſantly, and gave very demonſtrating evidences of his innocency.

Now, from all the foreſaids, we being in ſuch a meaſure ſatisfied in our conſciences, concerning the ſaid Mr. *David*; our ſocieties do both call him, and hear him preach for further trial, whereunto I gave my conſent, ſeeing no reaſon wherefore I could deny it. But he is not as yet ſettled amongſt us as our miniſter by a formal and ſolemn call for that effect. Howbeit, for the time, I know not of any ground that will be for excepting againſt it; for I hear that he preaches very zealouſly and faithfully whither he goes, and carries ſtrictly in adminiſtering the ſacrament of baptiſm. And for mine own part, from his expreſſing himſelf at our Correſpondence; I thought he ſeemed to have the right ſtate of the cauſe, to have a right impreſſion of the caſe of the church, to be tender-hearted and zealous in the frame of his ſpirit, particularly for the royalties of Chriſt, and again the idol of the Lord's jealouſy, the eccleſiaſtic ſupremacy and civil tyranny.

As for our carriage towards the foreſaid Mr. *Alexander Shields*, he having by the providence of God made

his eſcape out of priſon, after a little ſpace of time (without ſeeking after any party of miniſters againſt whom we have exceptions) came to the country, unto this contending and ſuffering party. And at length upon the 5th of *December* 1686, came to a meeting which we had in *Galloway*, in the Wood of *Earlſton*, for preaching; and ſo going alongſt with me from thence, upon the day following, I told him, albeit I had ſome ſatisfaction concerning him from what I had ſeen under his own hand, and albeit I expected more by further converſe with him; yet I thought it moſt rational in itſelf, moſt conducing to the preſervation of union amongſt us, and alſo according to the concluſion of our General Meeting, *viz.* that nothing which concerns the whole ſhould be done without acquainting them therewith; that the foreſaid Mr. *Alexander* ſhould not be employed in the public work until he came to the General Correſpondence, that all might be ſatisfied anent him: which he did take very well, and deſired us to take that method with him which we would do with any backſlidden miniſter, if God ſhould touch his heart and bring him out from his defections unto the public work. Howbeit, we thought fit to employ him ſometimes to go about family exerciſe, not ſeeing any reaſon why this ſhould be forborne, for thereby we might attain to more clearneſs anent him. And indeed, in a certain family, where ſome neighbours (as is ordinary) were gathered unto the worſhip, I was greatly refreſhed with what he ſpake from Rom. xii. 12. eſpecially with what he had in prayer, with a heavy lamentation to this purpoſe; "I cannot "longer contain, but I muſt confeſs unto the Lord be"fore this people, I am aſhamed to offer my body a liv"ing ſacrifice to thee, yet I muſt do it; for I a priſoner "and preacher, might have been a martyr, and in glo"ry with thee and thy glorified martyrs above; but I "ſinfully and ſhamefully ſaved my life by diſowning "thy friends and owning thy enemies; and it will be a "wonder if ever thou put ſuch a honourable opportuni"ty in my hand again." And very ſeldom did he go about exerciſe, but either in prayer, or in ſpeaking from the ſcripture, he brake forth into heavy lamentations, confeſſing particularly his defections. So the time of our General Meeting coming, which was *December* 22d, as ſaid is, the foreſaid Mr. *Alexander* came to the ſame; and we did read over in his hearing (he being preſent with

with Mr. *David*) the introduction to our vindication, wherein are comprehended ſome ſpecial ſteps of our church's defection, and a brief declaration of our preſent teſtimony, both as to what we own and diſown; together with the fifth head of the ſame vindication, containing, among other things, ten grounds, every one of which we judge ſufficient for withdrawing from miniſters of this covenanted and reformed church to whom they are applicable, in this broken and declining ſtate. And then we aſked Mr. *Alexander's* judgment concerning what he had heard, and whether or not he was of one mind with us as to every part of our preſent teſtimony. To which he replied, that he agreed cordially with us in all that he had heard, and particularly in the foreſaid ten grounds, judging every one of them to bear a ſolidity and ſufficiency in point of withdrawing. But, ſaid he, there are ſome things there teſtified againſt, whereof I am guilty; and I will take a little time to unboſom myſelf unto you anent the ſame. So he began his confeſſion with ſome preoccupying cautions; deſiring that none might think he was moved to what he was now about to do, from the affectations of applauſe from any man, or, that he might be in with a party (for he knew he would not want alluring employments if he had freedom to embrace it) but only that he might give God the glory, vindicate the cauſe, exoner his own conſcience, and ſatisfy offended brethren: Intimating alſo, that he looked not upon the ſocieties as competent for handling eccleſiaſtic matters, and that he knew, they did not aſſume the ſame unto themſelves, though they were falſely branded therewith: Yet he held himſelf bound in duty, to declare with ſorrow before them, wherein he had denied any part of the teſtimony which they did own. Then he proceeded to the particulars of his confeſſion, and acknowledged:

1. That he had involved himſelf in the guilt of owning the (ſo called) authority of *James* VII. ſhewing an exceeding ſinfulneſs in it, and taking ſhame unto himſelf.

2. He acknowledged himſelf guilty of taking the oath of abjuration, and of relapſing into the ſame iniquity; the ſinfulneſs whereof he held out a great length, making it appear, that by that oath many orthodox principles which concern us greatly to contend for, are abjured. He declared the occaſion of his being inveigled in theſe tranſgreſſions, was, the entring into an accommodation with the enemy; for he could propoſe nothing unto them but

they ſtill added and yielded to it, until they got him a ſilly fiſh catched in their angle. Howbeit, hereby (as he ſaid) he did not extenuate or excuſe his ſin, for, albeit he had as much to ſay for himſelf as any man could have, who had declared in ſuch a meaſure, yet he would neither ſtiffle his own conſcience, nor blind the eyes of others; wherefore, he ſhewed both the ſin and danger of entering upon any accomodation whatſoever with the enemy.

Now, he ſpoke largely to all theſe particulars, diſcovering ſuch heinous and manifold ſin therein, that, I think, none could have done it, unleſs they had known the terrors of the Lord: Shewing alſo the aggravations thereof, deſiring every one to look upon their ſin with the aggravating circumſtances they can ſee in it; And he expreſſed ſo much ſenſe and ingenuity, that none, I think, could require more of him, and I know not who would not have been ſatisfied as to the foreſaids, who had heard him expreſs himſelf ſo fully, ſo plainly, ſo freely, and with ſo much ſenſe, grief, and ſelf-condemning; and I thought it both ſingular and promiſing, to ſee a clergy-man come forth with ſuch a confeſſion of his own defections, when ſo few of that ſet are ſeen in our age to be honoured with the like.

So Mr. *Alexander* being deſired to remove, we communed together about what we heard, and all declared, they found themſelves ſatisfied as to the foreſaids. After this, it was conſulted amongſt us, what was neceſſary to deſire for our further ſatisfaction anent him; and we judged it expedient to enquire how and by whom he was licenſed to preach; whereupon I having conferred with him before thereanent, gave a brief account thereof; and ſignified that a conſiderable while ago, I ſaw it under his own hand, that if the buſineſs of his licence were to be done yet, he would neither take it from ſuch perſons, neither would they give it him; and that of late he had ſaid unto myſelf, that he knew not one of theſe who had granted it, that now he could concur with.

However, we thought it convenient to call himſelf, that he might give an account thereof before us all; which he did; ſhowing that he went to *London* with an intention to be an amanuenſis to *Owen*, or ſome of their great doctors, who were writing books for the preſs, and had a letter of recommendation to one Mr. *Blackie* a

Scottiſh

Scottiſh miniſter, who tryſted him to ſpeak with him a certain ſeaſon, and had ſeveral miniſters conveened, unknown to Mr. *Alexander*, and did preſs and enjoin him to take licence; ſo, he being carried unto it in that ſudden and ſurpriſing way, he accepted it from the hands of *Scottiſh* miniſters then at *London*, but without any impoſitions or ſinful reſtrictions.

However, a little after, the oath of allegiance becoming the trial of that place, the foreſaid Mr. *Alexander* ſtudied, as he had occaſion in preaching, plainly and ſatisfyingly to diſcover the ſin of it; which was ſo ill taken by the miniſters by whom he was licenſed, that they threatened and ſought to ſtop his mouth, but he refuſed to ſubmit unto them.

Now, to this very purpoſe was the relation that Mr. *Alexander* himſelf gave. So, conſidering what is before related, the ſocieties for themſelves, and I, with the concurrence of ſome elders then preſent, did call him to officiate in preaching the word to the ſuffering Remnant of this church. Wherefore, upon the Sabbath following he and I did preach together, he having his text, 2 Cor. v. 11. in theſe words in the former part of the verſe, *viz. Knowing therefore the terrors of the Lord, we perſuade men.* In which preaching, I may ſay, he particularly aſſerted every part of our preſent teſtimony, both as to non-compliance with enemies, non-concurrence with defective parties, and diſowning the pretended authority of *James* VII. and alſo doctrinally confeſſed his own particular defections; and cried out, that *knowing the terror of the Lord* in theſe things, he *perſuaded men.* And having appointed a faſt upon the *Thurſday* following, I briefly drew up about the number of forty four cauſes of humiliation, omitting no piece of defection of old or of late, that I knew or could remember, which cauſes he cordially agreed with, and expreſſed the ſame publicly in his preaching before the congregation, declaring every one of them to be a great cauſe of humiliation; and confeſſed again his own defections, holding forth the ſin thereof to be very heinous, with much ſorrow and regret. So I find Mr. *Alexander* to be one with us in our preſent teſtimony; I look upon him as having the zeal of God in his ſpirit, and the poor remnant have much of his heart; and I think the Lord is with him, and he cannot be challenged as deficient in the application of his doctrine; and for mine own part,

I have

I have been refreſhed with hearing of him, and have been animated to zeal by his preaching and diſcourſe.

There was a letter preſented to and read at this meeting, from ſome friends in Ireland; to which an anſwer was earneſtly deſired. Though the meeting reſolved to return an anſwer, yet it was not done till afterward.

It was reſolved that the 16th of February thereafter ſhould be obſerved by the ſocieties a day of thankſgiving unto the Lord; bleſſing and praiſing him for his mercies beſtowed on us at this meeting; and praying that he would give grace to improve the ſame rightly to his glory and praiſe. And alſo, that he will be graciouſly pleaſed in his mercy and condeſcendency to lead and direct them what to do in the matters to be treated of in the next meeting, ſo as it may be for his glory and the advantage of his cauſe.

And it was reſolved that the next General Meeting ſhall conveen at *Frierminion*, upon the 2d day of *March*, 1687.

In this interval the adverſaries changed a little their method of working, to bring to paſs their wicked deſign of inſlaving the nation and introducing Popery; for, not getting the penal laws reſcinded and removed by act of parliament, that ſo Papiſts might aſcend to places of power and truſt, and have liberty to exerciſe their idolatry without controul; they fell upon another method to effectuate the ſame deſign, which was by virtue of abſolute power claimed and blaſphemouſly arrogated by the Duke of York, (alias K. James) to ſtop and diſable them, in a proclamation, and to grant a toleration to Papiſts and Quakers. But that it might paſs the better, and to make all ſecure, liberty was granted to moderate Preſbyterians to exerciſe their religion, yet with ſuch reſtrictions and under ſuch conditions as it was not embraced. In the mean time, Papiſts were advanced, and prieſts and jeſuits, theſe locuſts of the bottomleſs pit, did ſwarm up and down the country, and exerciſed idolatry publicly and freely without trouble.

But as the poor wanderers were excluded from this toleration, being among thoſe who frequented field-meetings, who with the preachers at them, as alſo aſſiſters of, or connivers at them, were by this proclamation,

tion ordained to be profecuted according to the utmoſt ſeverity of laws made againſt them; ſo this excluſion was no grief to them, (they being reſolved to accept of none of their favours, though never ſo fairly buſked) but rather looked upon by them as their mercy.

ACCORDING to the appointment of the laſt meeting, A General Meeting conveened at *Frierminion*, upon the 2d of *Mnrch* 1687.

As was uſual, prayer was gone about, and the meeting modelled. A part of the day and of the two days following the *Informatory Vindication* was read over, and deliberately taken into conſideration. Upon the laſt day, *viz.* March 4th, the meeting came to a concluſion about it; and it was reſolved by them that it ſhould be printed and publiſhed: For the defraying the expences whereof, they agreed upon 120 pound Scots; and deſired that Mr. Alexander Shields would overſee the printing of it.

In compliance with this deſire, Mr. Shields went abroad, firſt to London, where he eſſayed to get it printed; but failing thereof, he went to Holland and got it done. After this was printed, and he had expeded ſome other buſineſs, he returned to Scotland *.

It was reſolved alſo by this meeting, that the Letter agreed to by the laſt meeting to be ſent to ſome friends in Ireland, which had not yet been done, ſhould now be written and ſent.

Accordingly it was drawn up, and ſent after this meeting; a true copy whereof follows:

To Friends in Ireland.

Loving Friends, and dearly Beloved in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt,

March 2d, 1687.

WE received your kind and Chriſtian letter, very refreſhful and acceptable to us; not only becauſe

* Together with Mr. Alexander, Michael Shields went alſo to the Netherlands, where they ſtaid till near the end of the year, being both employed in writing the Hind let looſe, and putting it to the preſs there, as appears by letters from them both to Mr. Hamilton, excuſing themſelves for not viſiting him, and deſiring *him to borrow and ſend to them* 300 gilders; which he *did*.

cauſe coming from ſuch who *have obtained like precious faith with us, through the righteouſneſs of God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*, and whom we reſpect as our brethren, under the ſame indiſſolvable bond of our holy covenants, engaged to concert the ſame cauſe and teſtimony for the precious intereſts of our princely Maſter; with whom we have deſired a more cloſe and intimate correſpondence than hitherto we have obtained; and coming from ſuch, at ſuch a time, when we were groaning under that bitter grievance, among many others, of being deprived of, and ſequeſtered from that deſireable and much deſired comfort of communion with our brethren in other churches, which we could not enjoy as we deſired becauſe of the univerſal decay of love, zeal and ſympathy, every where too viſibly decreaſing, and becauſe of the many odious and invidious obloquies we and our cauſe have been aſperſed with, which yet we find hath not got ſo credulous entertainment with you, as to block up your hearts, and bind up your hands from ſhewing ſuch tender affection toward us as ye diſcover in your letter; but alſo, becauſe of the manner of its conveyance by a hand very welcome to us, wherein you demonſtrate no ſmall care and concern to be informed of our caſe and cauſe, in that you ſpare no pains to purchaſe the underſtanding of it. And chiefly your letter was very grateful to us, becauſe of the matter of it; reliſhing ſo much of a goſpel ſpirit of ſympathy with us in our conflicts of ſufferings and contendings for truth and duty, and of a ſavoury ſenſe of our worthies witneſſings for the regalities of our royal Maſter, which they ſealed with their bonds and blood; and of heart-affecting grief, condoling the miſery of our unhappy diviſions, and of love to us prompting you to ſuch a ſerious ſolicitouſneſs to be informed of our integrity to the ſworn truths, and of our way in the Lord, the better to ſtop the calumnies of adverſaries, and of zeal for the common cauſe, in expreſſing your deſire to keep up harmony with us in purſuance of the ends of the Covenants and acts of venerable Aſſemblies, and that the mouths of liars may be ſtopped. The fragrancy of which graces that your letter did ſavour of, did very much endear it to us, and incites us to ſome earneſt diligence (as our uncertain wanderings would allow) to endeavour a ſpeedy return. But in confidence of your kind conſtruction we muſt apologize with regret, that

neither

neither our condition for the time will admit, nor our capacity will furniſh us with ſo ſpeedy and ſatisfactory an anſwer to ſend you as we deſire; and therefore muſt intreat your favour, both for our ſhortneſs in the abrupt abridgment of our anſwer, and for our longſomeneſs in ſending.

It would be tedious both for you and for us, to give a full deduction of the manifold tracts and ſteps, travels and traverſings, ups and downs we have had in our conflicts and contendings with open enemies and profeſſed friends, with cruelty and craft, with rage and reproach, with cenſures and calumnies, with perſecutors of hand and perſecutors of tongue, with defection and diviſion, with the extremes of left-hand declenſions and right-hand extravagancies, in our continued (and yet, through mercy uninterrupted) courſe of our weak wreſtlings againſt the corruptions of the times, and the indignities done to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt and his crown prerogatives. We muſt refer the more ample account of theſe to our *Informatory Vindication* we propoſe to emit, and alſo to ſend to you as ſoon as the times difficulties will permit us: Only at the time, to anſwer your deſire in ſome meaſure, that you may be informed about theſe reports of our animoſities fallen out among ourſelves; and how it comes, and why it is, that now in our land that *Judah* ſhould fight againſt *Judah* even at Jeruſalem, which cauſes your ſpirits to faint to hear the reports of it, we would in ſome ſhort hints and open-hearted ingenuity give you to underſtand ſomething of the cauſes and effects, riſe and reſult of theſe animoſities, and what our carriage hath been under theſe diſſenſions, and of our preſent abſtraction amidſt theſe diſtractions, whence it ſprang and where it ſtands with us.

Though we be moſt unworthy of the honour, and very uncapable and inſufficient for the work of proſecuting a teſtimony for the covenanted work of reformation of this once renowned church; yet it hath ever been, and ſtill is our ambition and endeavour to aim at it, and inſiſt in the footſteps of the moſt zealous and faithful promoters of it that have gone before us, and to advance in it as they left it without any abandoning or foregoing any part of it, or altering (further than that progreſs or rather application to our preſent caſe the times have called us to make) ſo that however we be reproached with new principles and practices which we have forged

and foſtered to maintain our new way, as many even of our backſliding brethren do call our preſent teſtimony; yet we can truly ſay, we know of none that we have espouſed either contrary to the venerable church conſtitutions in our beſt and pureſt times, or contradictory to what our miniſters preached before theſe diviſions began, or to what we ourſelves profeſſed when united with them, who now brand us with the odious characters of janglings and ſchiſmatics, which we will not now ſtand to refute by recriminations, but can eaſily vindicate ourſelves from it by a naked deduction of the controverſy as managed by us ſince the firſt riſe of it.

Our teſtimony hath been in ſome meaſure continued and propagated ever ſince the fatal cataſtrophe of overturning the work of reformation by the re-introduction of tyranny, ſupremacy and Prelacy, ſince which time we have always deſigned and deſired to adhere to and imbark with ſuch miniſters and profeſſors as did from time to time zealouſly withſtand and witneſs againſt the ſeveral ſucceſſive gradations of this national revolt from the Lord, and were incorporated with the body of them that did bear and follow the Lord's ſtandard in the field-preaching before Bothwel; with whom we had ſweet and ſoul-ſatisfying communion, while their *feet were beautiful upon the mountains, bringing glad tidings, publiſhing ſalvation*, and proclaiming as heralds, that *Zion's King reigned*; while they jeoparded their lives in the high places of the fields with us in the work of the Lord, in negotiating a treaty of reconciliation between the Lord and us; ſhewing forth all the counſel of God to us, and all the cauſes of his contendings with us, and preſſing us to all the duties of the day neceſſary for keeping up the teſtimony and bringing our King back again to the land, whom our provocations had baniſhed. For which end they inculcated upon us our covenant-engagements to keep and contend for the word of the church of Scotland's patience, to wreſtle againſt all the encroachments made upon our Maſter's kingdom, and to weep over all the indignities done unto his name by this apoſtate and malignant party, revolted from, and rebelling againſt him, and to ſtand at the fartheſt from all countenancing of, or complying with them, or ſtrengthening their hands by hearing of the curates, or anſwering their courts, or tranſacting with them any manner of way, in taking their enſnaring bonds or oaths, (whereof we had

had many then impoſed of the ſame nature with theſe forged ſince, though now more univerſally accepted) or in paying their iniquitous exactions for maintaining them in their wickedneſs, profeſſedly impoſed and required for that end; yea, when many of our much honoured watchmen ſpared not to ſet their trumpet to their mouth and cry againſt all the defections of their brethren impartially, particularly againſt all that church rending and ruining defection of the acceptance of that indulgence, the baſtard brat of that blaſphemous ſupremacy, then our ſouls were refreſhed in going along with them: But when ſelf-credit and intereſt did engage ſome to take the patrociny of that ſtep of defection, and prepoſterous prudence and reſpect to peace with prejudice of truth did prompt others to palliate and daub it, we adhered to theſe that faithfully continued to contend againſt it; who, for their ſo doing were much contemned and condemned; and ſome of them in ſundry Preſbyteries were cenſured and rebuked: Yet we did not break off communion with thoſe who were then labouring to quench our zeal and cool our fervour againſt that Chriſt-diſhonouring ſin, though at that time we were much diſcountenanced by them, but endeavoured to go on with the teſtimony, both againſt the defection and the tyrant's uſurpation upon Chriſt's crown, thereby explicitely exauctorated, from which it had its riſe; and accordingly the teſtimony at *Rutherglen* was emitted *May 29th*, 1676. againſt the declaration condemning our covenants, the act for keeping that anniverſary day for the ſetting up the Uſurper, and againſt other wicked acts made againſt the intereſt of Chriſt in the land, which were then publicly burnt; which is now condemned by many that then approved and applauded it.

After which, when in proſecution of the ſame teſtimony, the Lord favoured us with a notable victory at *Drumclog*, that expedition of *Bothwel* following thereupon, was broken by a holy provoked God for our ſins, by occaſion of our diviſions and confuſions, fomented by the oppoſers of our teſtimony wherein we were united before ſome miniſters and others favouring the indulgence did contend for inſerting the intereſt of the uſurping indulger in the ſtate of the quarrel, and oppoſed the inſerting of the indulgence as it was obtruded and accepted, among the cauſes of humiliation, that we then pleaded for as a neceſſary duty that appearance called

for. Whereupon followed that lamentable overthrow wherein much precious blood was ſhed, and many of our dear brethren were led in triumph captives by the inſulting enemy; ſome of them ſealed that teſtimony we then contended for with their blood; others of them refuſing the inſnaring indemnity (condemning that and all other appearances as ſin) and the bond of peace then tendered as the teſt of that compliance, were baniſhed; and in their voyage murdered, by being ſhut up under hatchets when the ſhip was loſt. Many came off by taking that bond, being tempted by the perſuaſions of ſome miniſters and the ſilence of others who refuſed to give their advice. At which time, a number of our miniſters formed themſelves into an aſſembly, wherein they voted for a new indulgence with the Cautionary Bond, in ſome reſpects more derogatory to Chriſt's prerogative and the goſpel's liberty than the former; and from that time ſuch as had not the benefit of the indulgence, in homologation of that impoſition, did confine their preaching within doors or near houſes, that that ſhadow of obedience might be a ſconce for their protection. Then did our perplexities begin that did much aſtoniſh us, and brought us to our wits end; Yet did not our hunger after the ordinances abate, but we adhered to the few miniſters we had that would concur and venture in the work of the goſpel, And when Mr. *Richard Cameron* uſed all diligence and patience in inviting and inciting others of his brethren then lurking, to a concurrence, he could not obtain it; yet with the concurrence he had and our adherence, he went on with the teſtimony both againſt enemies uſurpations and the ſhameful and ſinful yieldings of his brethren thereunto. And accordingly, conſidering the wickedneſs, uſurpations and tyranny of the late tyrant, then raging as a roaring lion and ranging bear over the poor people, impoſing upon their conſciences, robbing, ſpoiling and pillaging their poſſeſſions, hunting and cruelly handling, impriſoning, torturing, butchering and murdering their bodies for conſcience of duty; affronting and defying the Moſt High GOD, in heaven-daring wickedneſs, inverting, perverting and diverting the ordinance of magiſtracy; and deſtroying all laws and liberties, all ſecurities of mankind, and overturning the whole work of reformation, breaking and burning the covenant with God and compact with the people, and arrogating to himſelf a blaſphemous ſupremacy

macy over the church of Chriſt: he did, with the concurrence and adherence aforeſaid, publiſh a Declaration at *Sanquhar*, June 22d, 1680. diſowning and diſclaiming the tyrant; and in ſome expectation of a further capacity, did declare a war againſt him, and all that took his part. But, inſtead of that obliged concurrence which miniſters ought to have given to this teſtimony ſo ſtated, this action and the owners thereof were generally condemned by them: and being ſo deſerted and abandoned of them, in the holy providence of God, we loſt that worthy ſtandard-bearer, and many other worthies, at *Air's-moſs*; where many died valiantly fighting for that teſtimony, others were taken and barbarouſly butchered, hanged, and quartered, ſealing the ſame with heroic courage, and the countenance of the Lord ſignally ſhining upon them, who yet, by the oppoſers of our teſtimony, tho' profeſſed friends to the cauſe, were condemned as dying fooliſhly, upon inſufficient grounds.

Then had we none to concur with us but worthy Mr. *Donald Cargill*, of whom the land and we were not worthy; and therefore ſhortly after this, the Lord deprived us of him likewiſe, and gave him the crown of martyrdom, in owning the ſame teſtimony. That was a day of our perplexity and treading down in our valley of viſion. Then the word of the Lord was precious, and there was no open viſion; the ſtandard was fallen, and there was none to take it up, of all the miniſters that were then in the land; tho' they had many reiterated calls from ſeveral corners, yet none would come forth to preach publicly, but ſitting and ſlighting or ſhifting our calls, did either lurk in the land, or went abroad and deſerted their work. Whence, being left in that darkneſs, many went aſtray to the right and left hand. On the one hand, *John Gib* and his accomplices diſcovered their wild extravagances, to the reproach of the way of God. On the other hand, many deſerted our teſtimony, and made defection unto the time's compliances: and generally all were jumbled into ſuch confuſions, that ſcarcely could one underſtand the language of another, or know who concurred in the teſtimony: But in that extremity, the Lord made ſome inſtrumental to gather us together in a General Correſpondence; where this method was fallen upon, which we have hitherto kept up, of meeting together from all the ſocieties of our embodied community, to underſtand one another's minds

about

about the duties or ſins of the times, and to encourage one another, and to do all things jointly, by mutual advice and common conſent, in proſecution of the common teſtimony, which we call our General Meeting; which proved in ſome meaſure encouraging to us. For immediately, upon the firſt commencement hereof, tho' when we were few in number and deſtitute of paſtors, another declaration was publiſhed at *Lanerk*, *January* 12th, 1682. confirming the former and further teſtifying againſt the reception of the duke of *York*, and admitting him to preſide in parliament, and againſt the teſt, *&c.* which declaration did ſet us more alone, and made us more the butt of enemies malice, and of our brethren's contempt than any thing formerly; for from thenceforth, many did more declaredly oppoſe us, and informed againſt us both at home and abroad; laying heavy things, which we knew not, to our charge, without either trying the truth of them, or taking pains to admoniſh us of them.

Wherefore, in the next General Meeting, we fell to deliberate how our caſe might be repreſented, and our cauſe vindicated to ſtrangers; and we reſolved to ſend ſome abroad to make it known that we adhered to all the principles of the true Preſbyterian church of Scotland, in its doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline and government; after which by ſpecial providence, a door being opened for the inſtruction of ſome ſtudents at a college in the *Netherlands*, we ſent ſome young men thither to ſtudy; and in proceſs of time received back Mr. *James Renwick* an ordained miniſter, who hath hitherto laboured among us in the work of the goſpel, not without a ſeal of his miniſtry through the Lord's bleſſing; however it be oppoſed and deſpiſed of men. After which, the fury and violence of enemies were let looſe upon us, as well as the ſcourge of tongues, to the effuſion of much of the precious blood of our brethren, and the bondage and baniſhment of others; and wicked acts were given out for all to apprehend us wherever we could be found, and to raiſe the hue and cry after us, inhibiting all to reſet or correſpond any manner of way with us, under the ſevereſt penalties, which brought us to great ſtraits, and even to deſperate extremity, without any probable hope of relief, by reaſon of the enemy's vigilancy, the country's readineſs to obey, (being already much waſted with oppreſſion, and fearing greater devaſtations) and the wick-

wicked malice of many intelligencers and informers, whence we were neceſſitated to put forth another declaration, affixed on ſeveral market croſſes and church doors, *November* — 1684. confirming and explaining the former, and vindicating us and our teſtimony from ſome odious aſperſions, to the intent to deter and ſcar the country from giving intelligence of us: which, though it did ſcrew up our trial to a greater height than ever, (the enemies bloody cut-throats having a commiſſion to murder us wherever they met with us) and though it proved a ſnare to many, while an oath abjuring the ſame was generally preſſed thro' the country, in very ſmooth and ſubtile terms, which cozened many; yet it deterred many from their former diligence in informing againſt us, and alſo drew out ſome to join with us, even ſome who had taken that oath of abjuration, when they had diſcovered the guilt of it in their wounded conſciences. However, we cannot recount the number of our dear brethren that we loſt in this deluge of blood that was ſhed at this time by ſoldiers, and ſome gentlemen, that made it their work to kill us wherever we could be found, without either trial or ſentence, or time to prepare for death, or reſpect to age or ſex; even women, ſome of a very young, ſome of an old age being drowned in their fury. But in the mean time in the height of this rage, the Lord did remove the tyrant *Charles* II. which did put ſome ſtop to it.

Thereafter, when his brother *James* duke of *York* was proclaimed, and a parliament convocated for eſtabliſhing him in his uſurpation, we reſolved upon a teſtimony againſt the ſame; and ſo emitted another declaration at *Sanquhar*, *May* 28th, 1685. not only proteſting againſt the foreſaid uſurpation, contrary to our covenanted reformation and laws of the country; but giving our teſtimony againſt all kinds of papiſtry in general and particular heads, as is expreſt in our National Covenants. This was done in the mean time of the earl of *Argyle's* expedition, with which we were much preſſed to concur, and many embodied with us were drawn away with the importunity of ſome miniſters and others of that aſſociation; yet we could not join with them, nor eſpouſe their declaration as the ſtate of their quarrel, becauſe it was not concerted, according to the ancient plea of the *Scotiſh* Covenanters, againſt both right and left hand oppoſites, in defence of our reformation, expreſly according

to

to our Covenants, National and Solemn League; becauſe no mention is made of our covenants, nor of Preſbyterian government, which was of purpoſe left the Sectarians ſhould be irritated; becauſe it opened a door for a confederacy with Sectarians and malignants, of which malignants they had ſome among them guilty of ſhedding our blood at *Air's-moſs*.

After the defeat of this expedition, in anſwer to the deſire of ſome miniſters, who came over with *Argyle*, we had a conference with them, *July* 22d, 1685. in which, inſtead of allaying differences, the propoſals that were made for union did heighten our breaches, both with them and among ourſelves, as did appear by the conſequents; herein though they offered accomodations, yet in conference to bring it about, they mentioned and did not diſown that which bred alienation, *viz.* a previous information they had ſent to ſtrangers, accuſing us of heavy things, that we had not only caſt off all magiſtrates in Scotland, but had conſtituted among ourſelves all kinds of magiſtrates, and were for cutting off all as open enemies, who did not acknowledge our imaginary government; that our ſocieties were only an erroneous faction, and have no powerof calling paſtors, *&c.* which information, ſo full of calumnies, though they did extenuate, alledging that the copy of it which we produced was forged, yet they confeſſed ſome ſuch information was written, and went on to proſecute, in effect, the ſame crimination; and ſaid, they excerpted all out of our public papers: and further challenged us, for falſely accuſing them in our proteſtation againſt the *Scottiſh* congregation at *Rotterdam*; where they with others were promiſcuouſly charged with ſundry things in *cumulo*, which they were not guilty of. We confeſſed it was an overſight conjointly to accumulate theſe charges without diſtinction; but taking them ſeparately, we offered to make out every thing there charged upon the names inſerted. And further, in inveighing againſt Mr. *Rewick's* ordination, they accuſed the church of Holland of Eraſtianiſm, and many other corruptions: To which he only replied, that he had received his ordination from the Preſbytery of *Groningen*, and they being foreigners, and not chargeable either with our defections, or any declining from the teſtimony of their own church, but advancing, and groaning under ſome corruptions from which

ich they were never reformed, would come under an-
ier conſideration than miniſters of our own church de-
ding a courſe of defection; howbeit, as he proteſted
the face of the Preſbytery, when he received ordina-
n, againſt all things he knew among them diſſonant
the work of reformation of the church of Scotland;
ne told his purpoſe to inform that venerable Preſbytery
w they were repreſented in Scotland; and if they
uld not clear themſelves, at leaſt, of ſome of the groſ-
t of theſe things, he would be willing to acknowledge
ore ſuch as were competent, that he had offended in
ddling with them.

The accommodation which they offered, was upon
ms, which we thought deſtructive to our teſtimony,
ay aſide all debates, and let by-gones paſs, and go on
the public work; which we did not think was the
y to heal our ſore: But we offered if differences and
ceptions could be removed in a right and honeſt way,
would be moſt willing to join with them; which ex-
tions were given in, in theſe particulars following,
. Their leaving the country and deſerting the public
rk, when it was ſo neceſſary to concur in the teſtimo-
, but condemning it in *Sanquhar* and *Lanerk* Declara-
ns, even as to the matter of them; and not condemn-
the paying of the locality impoſed for maintaining
liers againſt the work and people of God; their coun-
ancing the compliers of the time, while in the land,
l when abroad; joining with the *Scottiſh* congregati-
at *Rotterdam*, and hearing the indulged preach there;
n, informing againſt us, and aſperſing us with ſlan-
s, ſuch as theſe in the forementioned information;
l then, concurring with the earl of *Argyle's* aſſocia-
n, againſt which we had ſo many things to object, as
ve hinted. Which exceptions (though among the
ſt we have againſt many other miniſters, with whom
have no clearneſs to join in our now circumſtances,
:) we thought ſufficient to demur upon; when, after
ny fruitleſs janglings, we could receive no ſatisfaction
ut them, nor a public teſtimony ſatisfyingly ſtated,
erein we might both agree and concur; ſo the con-
ence broke up. And thereafter we were more unten-
ly dealt with by them; and alſo deſerted by many
bodied with us in fellowſhip, who from that time
t off coming to our General Meetings, and to take ſe-
rate ways, without reſpect to our former conſented a-

greements; and alſo did hear, receive, and ſpread abroad ſome falſe reports given forth againſt us, without premoniſhing us about the ſame; and drew many off from our ſocieties by ſuch means. With ſome of which we had a conference, *January* 28th, 1686. who ſaid they had a verbal commiſſion from ſome ſocieties in *Carrick*, &c. the effect whereof (whatever was the intent of their coming) tended to a further breach, though we were not conſcious to ourſelves of any untender dealing with them. For firſt, we did endeavour to remove all ſuppoſed grounds upon which they might ſtumble into alienation from us, by clearing our minds about all theſe things the miniſters laid to our charge: then ſeveral queſtions of weight about our preſent differences were propounded to the meeting, about a letter of accuſation ſpread againſt us, which they did not poſitively diſclaim; and about *Argyle's* declaration, which they would own or diſown, accordingly as it was diverſely interpreted; about the exceptions given in againſt the miniſters, which they alledged were not valid; and finally, we aſked the foreſaid perſons, whether or not they were clear to join with us in general and particular fellowſhips, now when they had heard us ſpeak our minds ſo freely? this they refuſed to anſwer, putting the queſtion back. Whether or not we would join with them? and generally in all theſe queſtions they declined freedom and plainneſs, and ſeemed averſe from ſatisfying us, and to be rather for contending, than a free communing for union; chiefly they ſtickled about a general concluſion previouſly agreed to and reſolved upon among us, That nothing relative to the public, and concerning the whole of us, ſhould be done without the conſent, or at leaſt the knowledge of the whole; which concluſion, though formerly they agreed to, yet now they called an impoſition; alledging that hereby they might not hear a faithful miniſter when occaſion offered; though we told them, we did not take that concluſion in an abſolute ſenſe, as a reſtriction ſimply neceſſary, for all times, all places, all perſons, things and caſes; and in neceſſary duties, if the reſt ſhall ſinfully deny their concurrence, they propoſing it, may lawfully without breach of the concluſion, do it for themſelves; but in points doubtful and controverted, it is neceſſary for adviſing and deliberating, as a hedge againſt precipitancy and raſhneſs, uſeful for preſervation of union, excluding confuſion, curbing petulant ſpirits, and

for

the right management of affairs. In fine, for the of this conference, when we were urged as above, ether we would join with them as formerly, by way retortion to our propoſals of the ſame to them; we them, we could not anſwer in name of our ſocieties, ving no direction from them for that effect; and that our own parts, we would not refuſe accidental or oc-ional communion with them as brethren and Chriſti-s; but in the preſent circumſtances, we could not be ar to concur with them as formerly, in carrying on e public work harmoniouſly, and habitually, until our ceptions were removed; which were, their breaking t concluſion of brotherhood formerly condeſcended in their calling miniſters againſt whom we had ex-tions unremoved, without acquainting us therewith; their drawing together in arms without our know-ge, and contrary to what was concluded by themſelves th our and their friends: their reſiding with other ſons in points of diſagreement againſt us.

Whereupon, they broke away abruptly; and their riage ſince hath been very diſengaging, and diſcover-a great deal of alienation from us, by their labouring ny ways to repreſent us unto the world to make us o-ius, in their informations given in to miniſters againſt , and by their proteſting againſt and hindering Mr. *mes Renwick* to enter their borders, yea, refuſing to mmunicate with him ſo much as in family-worſhip, eit it was ſometime far otherwiſe, when they agreed th us in their teſtimony againſt Papiſts, malignants, aries, and backſliders. But now we muſt bear ma-obloquies from them and others, waiting in depend-ce on the Lord's vindication, who will bring forth our hteouſneſs, or rather the righteouſneſs of his own iſe by us maintained, as the light, and our judgment the noon-day; and in the mean time, carry ourſelves ractly, and let them be ſaying, we muſt always be ning at doing.

Now, dear Brethren, we have thus far, with all un-gned freedom, unboweled before you the naked ac-nt of our contendings, in ſhort hints, without all varication, or taking advantage of your unacquaint-neſs to repreſent our cauſe better than it is. We ſhall w ſhut up our letter with a brief declaration of our timony which we now ſtand and ſuffer for, and of the ciples that we own and diſown.

We do therefore teſtify our holding and adhering to the written word of God, as the only rule of faith and manners, and all the received principles of this reformed church, founded thereupon, and conſonant thereunto; as, our Confeſſion of faith, Catechiſms Larger and Shorter, Covenants National and Solemn League, Acknowledgment of Sins, and Engagement to Duties, the Cauſes of God's Wrath, *&c.* We adhere unto the doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline and government of this reformed church, as we are covenanted to maintain; and to all the acts and proceedings of our general aſſemblies for promoving the reformation.

We own and adhere unto all the faithful teſtimonies of the church, or of any of its faithful members or officers, former, old or later, particular or more general: againſt the public reſolutions, *Cromwel's* uſurpation, and toleration of ſects and hereſies in his time, before the overturning, and ſince; againſt Prelacy, ſupremacy, or the compliances and defections of miniſters and profeſſors; particularly, we own the *Rutherglen*, *Sanquhar*, and *Lanerk* Declarations, and the late Apologetical Declaration againſt intelligencers and informers.

We own all the duties profeſſed and proſecuted by the faithful, for the promoval and defence of theſe teſtimonies; as, preaching in the fields, and defending the ſame by arms, and appearing in a declared war againſt the public enemies of this kirk and kingdom, at *Pentland*, *Drumclog*, *Bothwel*, and *Air's-moſs*; and all ſuffering upon the account of theſe, or any part of nonconformity, with the God-provoking courſes of the time.

We diſown and obteſt whatſoever, in doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline and government, is againſt, beyond, or beſide the written word of God; all damnable hereſy, as, Quakeriſm, Popery, Libertiniſm, Antinomianiſm, Arminianiſm, Socinianiſm, and all other under whatſoever deſignation; together with the wild extravagances of *John Gib*: as alſo, all kinds of idolatry, ſuperſtition and profaneneſs; all ſects upon the right hand, as, Anabaptiſm, Independency, Millenarianiſm, and all other ſects and ſchiſms, and deviſive courſes: and on the left hand, we diſown and deteſt Prelacy and Eraſtianiſm, and whatſoever elſe is contrary to ſound doctrine and the power of godlineſs; and all countenancing of or complying with Prelacy, ſupremacy, or tyranny, or any uſur-

pation upon church or ſtate made by this malignant enemy; all hearing of curates or indulged, or paying either of them ſtipends enacted by iniquitous laws ſetting them up; all anſwering to the courts of perſecutors, taking any of their oaths, as the Declaration, Teſt, the oath of Abjuration, or any other oaths of ſupremacy or allegiance; ſubſcribing any of their bonds, as the Bond of Peace, Bond of Regulation, the Bond of Compearance, or any other of that nature; paying any of their wicked impoſitions, as Militia-money, Ceſs, Locality, or Fines, or any thing that may ſtrengthen the hands of ſuch evil doers. As alſo, we diſcountenance all the ſteps of defection, declining from, or contradictory to our fore-mentioned teſtimony; and diſown all aſſociation and confederacies with malignants or ſectaries.

But more particularly, becauſe our principles are moſt ſuſpected upon the ordinances of magiſtracy and miniſtry, therefore we ſhall plainly unboſom our hearts about theſe alſo.

We profeſs then concerning magiſtracy, That as it is not founded ſubjectively upon grace, ſo it is a holy divine inſtitution for the good of human ſociety, the encouragement of virtue and curbing of vice, competent unto, and honourable among both Chriſtians and Heathens. And for ſuch magiſtrates as being rightful and lawfully conſtituted over us, do act as the miniſters of God, in a due line of ſubordination to God, in the defence of our covenanted reformation and the ſubjects liberties, we will own, embrace, obey and defend them to the utmoſt of our power.

In church-matters, we allow the magiſtrate a power over the outward things of the church, but not over the inward things, as doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline and government.—We allow him the cuſtody of both the tables of the law, and a power to puniſh corporally all offenders (even church-officers) againſt the ſame; not under the conſideration of a ſcandal, but of a crime.—We allow him a power of ordering the well-being of the church; and in ſome caſes of convocating Synods, *pro re nata*, beſides their ordinary meetings, and being preſent there, but not to preſide in their debates; and of adding their civil ſanction to ſynodical reſults, but no power to reſtrain them in the power Chriſt hath given them.—We allow him a cumulative power to aſſiſt, ſtreng-

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then and ratify what church-officers do, by virtue of their office; but not a privative power to detract any way from the church's authority.—We allow him an imperative power to command church-officers to do their duty, but not an elective power, either to do himself what is incumbent on church-officers, or to depute others to do in his name, or by any ministerial power received from him.

Finally, We grant this to be the full extent of the magistrate's supremacy in church-affairs, to order whatever is commanded by the God of Heaven, that it may be diligently done for the house of the God of Heaven; and what further he may usurp, we disown and detest.

But in things civil, though we do not say that every tyrannical act makes a tyrant, yet we hold, that habitual, obstinate and declared opposition to, and overturning of religion, laws and liberties, and making void all contracts with the subjects, intercepting and interdicting all redress by supplications or otherwise, doth sufficiently invalidate his right and relation of magistracy, and warrant subjects, especially in covenanted lands, to revolt from under, and disown allegiance to such a power; yet they may not lawfully arrogate to themselves that authority which the tyrant hath forfeited, or act judicially either in civil or criminal courts: only they may do that which is necessary for securing themselves, liberty and religion.

But for the late tyrant, as we did disown and do detest the memory of his first erection and unhappy restoration, after, by many evidences, he was known to be an enemy to God and the country; of his nefarious wickedness in ejecting the ministers of Christ from their charges, and introducing abjured Prelacy; his atrocious arrogance in rescinding all acts for the work of reformation; his unparalelled perfidy and perjury in breaking, making void and burning the Covenants; his heaven-daring usurpation in arrogating to himself that blasphemous supremacy; his audacious and treacherous exerting of that usurped power in giving indulgences to outed ministers to divide and destroy the church; his tyranny over the consciences of poor people, pressing them to conformity with the time's abominations, and imposing upon them conscience-debauching oaths: his tyranny over the whole land, in levying militia and other forces for carrying on his wicked designs of advancing himself

to arbitrarian abſoluteneſs, and impoſing wicked
tions for their maintenance, profeſſedly required for
reſſing religion and liberty; his cruelty over the
es of Chriſtians, in chaſing and killing upon the
s many without ſentence, and bloody butchering,
ging, heading, mangling, diſmembring alive, quar-
g upon ſcaffolds, impriſoning, laying in irons, tor-
g by boots, thumbkins, fire-matches, cutting pie-
ut of the ears of others, baniſhing and ſelling as
s old and young men and women in great numbers;
reſſing many others in their eſtates, forfeiting, rob-
, ſpoiling, pillaging their goods, caſting them out
heir habitations, interdicting any to reſet them un-
he pain of being treated after the ſame manner: So
he continued and habitual trade of theſe and many
r acts of tyranny, we did diſown, and do yet adhere
r revolt from under the yoke of his tyranny.

nd for the ſame reaſons we diſown the uſurpation of
es Duke of *York*, ſucceeding and inſiſting in the
: footſteps of tyranny, treachery and cruelty, and
uring to bring theſe lands in ſubjection again to the
: of Antichriſt, being a profeſſed Papiſt, and there-
by many laws of ths land incapable of bearing any
——And here we ſtand as to the point of magi-
y.

oncerning the miniſtry, we own the lawfulneſs and
neceſſity of that ordinance, againſt Quakers and all
ppoſers; and hold it our duty to obey and encou-
all faithful paſtors, and highly to honour them in
for their work's ſake. And we hold it unlawful for
man, though never ſo well qualified, to take upon
the work of the miniſtry without licence and ordi-
on by the laying on of the hands of the Preſbytery,
ry competent number of theſe to whom Chriſt hath
nitted the power of the keys. And we hold, that the
r of church-government and diſcipline, and every
of the miniſterial function does not appertain to
:, Prelate, magiſtrate nor multitude of believers,
nly to the officers of Chriſt's appointment, as the
ct and receptacle of all ſuch power.

'e therefore profeſs our ſincere reſpect unto, and
own and embrace all ſuch miniſters as are clothed
Chriſt's commiſſion in his orderly and appointed
; all ſuch as are clothed with righteouſneſs and ſal-
n, confirming and adorning their doctrine by their
practice;

practice; all such as are found, spiritual and orthodox in their doctrine, holding forth the word of life in incorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned, and are faithful in the discharge of their commission, *crying aloud, and not sparing, shewing Jacob his sins, and Israel his transgressions*; constant and instant in their work, *in season and out of season, reproving, rebuking, exhorting with all long-suffering and patience*, making full proof of their ministry.—Yea further, we will withdraw from no ministers upon such insufficient grounds as their infirmities, their different judgment or practice in things that are either indifferent or not material, or not contradictory to the testimony of the church of Scotland; their ignorance of the state of our testimony, having no occasion to be informed thereof, which hath made them heretofore stand back from concurrence with us; and even their real scandals, not attended with obstinacy, but confessed and forsaken.

But we judge we have sufficient ground to withdraw from all who cannot instruct their being clothed with Christ's call, in his orderly way, as the curates, *&c.* From all who have subjected their ministry to the disposal of strange lords, and taken a new holding from, and upon a new architectonic and usurped power in the exercise thereof, by accepting a new grant, licence and warrant from the usurper of their Master's crown; as the indulged, *&c*: From all such who pervert and corrupt their ministry, by maintaining errors, either in doctrine, worship, discipline or government, contrary to the Scriptures and our Confessions and principles of our covenanted reformation and contradictory to our present testimony founded thereupon and agreeable thereunto; From all ministers guilty of gross compliances with the public enemies of this covenanted and reformed church, who have broken the covenant, destroyed the reformation, usurped the prerogatives of Christ, and are still, and by all means seeking the extirpation of all the owners of the cause of God: From such ministers who take the defence and patrociny of these courses, and palliate and plaister them, strengthening the hands and hardening the hearts of these who are engaged in them, so that none doth turn from these wicked things: From such ministers as are unfaithful in the exercise of the ministerial function, or in a smooth, general, flattering way, applying or rather misapplying their doctrine to the times:

times: From ſuch as are ſinfully ſilent, in deſerting their duty and lying bye from the public work of preaching the goſpel, when the people's urgent neceſſity and preſſing call doth make it indiſpenſible, when people are deſtitute of all public warning, in the times when ſnares are moſt abounding, and the poor flock in the greateſt hazard to be turned aſide: From ſuch as are ſchiſmatical and pragmatical dividers of the church and wideners of the breaches thereof, already broken and divided, ſowing diſcord among brethren, and promoving their contentions: Finally, from all ſuch as are ſcandalous and diſorderly, either in their miniſterial or perſonal walk: From all miniſters that deſerve theſe characters, we think we have ſufficient grounds from ſcripture and acts of aſſemblies, to withdraw our communion.

And therefore, as we hold ourſelves bound in conſcience and duty, with all due reſpect to the miniſtry, and love to their perſons, to bear witneſs and teſtify againſt the defections of the generality of the miniſters of the church of Scotland, ſince the overturning of our reformation, and introduction of Prelacy; their fainting, and not giving a teſtimony for the church's liberties againſt its deſtroyers at their firſt introduction; their leaving their charges at their command; their deficiency in not giving a teſtimony when the covenant was broken and burnt, nor when the ſupremacy was eſtabliſhed; their general lying bye from their work, the poor people thereby wanting warning; ſome accepting of the indulgence, others not witneſſing againſt it, but pleading for it as no defection, or for union with the indulged; their meeting in Preſbyteries for the rebuking and cenſuring of the more faithful, who did witneſs againſt that ſin; their laying bonds on ſome young men not to ſpeak of it; their pleading for the Tyrant's intereſt at Bothwel; their accepting of the Cautionary Bond, to obſerve his orders in preaching after Bothwel; their perſuading to, or not diſſuading from taking many inſnaring bonds and oaths impoſed upon priſoners and others; their leaving the work of preaching the goſpel in the fields when they were moſt called to the duty, in a time of abounding ſnares from the right and left hand, and reproaching and condemning others who did jeopard and loſe their lives in that work; their complying with the enemies in bonding with their courts, (ſome to that length, as to come under obligations to forbear the exerciſe of their miniſtry) and

hearing of their curates; their joining with such confederacies and associations that did open a door for the introduction of malignants and sectaries, contrary to our covenant-engagements; and the like steps of defection, which we desire to mourn for. So, for these and the like defections we must withdraw from, and discountenance many of our ministers, whom otherwise we love and honour.

And seeing in these times of distempering confusions, we are now deprived of the remedy of these settled judicatories whereunto we might recur in the case, and yet are bound in our capacities to witness against these defections, whereby the wrath of our God is so much kindled against the land; therefore we judge it lawful, reasonable and necessary, in this declining and disordered state of the church, to leave that part of the church which hath gone astray into such defections, whether ministers or professors, as to a joint concurrence in carrying on the public work, (and let them return to us, but we not to them) and to adhere to the other part of the church, ministers and professors, though fewer and weaker, who are standing stedfastly to the defence of reformation, witnessing against the declinings, until the defections of the backsliding party be confessed and forsaken; wherein we altogether deny we can be charged with positive separation from the church of *Scotland*; yea, nor negative separation, if it be considered actively: We only acknowledge a separation, passively considered, in our being left alone in the time of our greatest straits, and forsaken by the rest; endeavouring, the mean while, with many failings and much weakness, to retain and maintain the covenanted work of reformation in all its parts, as it was attained unto in our best and purest times; and chusing rather to stand still and walk alone, than to go along with others in declining and offensive courses.

Now, having also given you, in all well-meaning plainness, this declaration of our testimony, we shall not trouble you further, but conclude with a humble desire, That, as ye would weigh what we have said in the balance of truth and charity, so you would acquaint us with your sentiments of the same, and deal freely in admonishing us wherein you think we err, or go beyond, or come short of our duty. Your correspondence should be very acceptable and comfortable unto us: So, recommending

mending you to the grace and mercy of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we rest

Your affectionate friends and brethren in the Lord,

Subscribed in our name, and by our direction, by the clerk of our General Meeting,

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

A few days after this meeting, there were some causes of fasts drawn up, which were thought necessary to be observed by the Societies, wherewith they were to be acquainted; which was accordingly done. The causes follow.

The first was the 14th day of *April*, to be kept a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer unto the Lord for these causes.

1. The great dishonour done to God, and gross abominations contained in the late proclamation; such as, (1.) The casting and annulling the penal laws and statutes made against Papists. (2.) The introduction and toleration of Popery, and free liberty granted to Quakerism. (3.) The snares and restrictions offered to such ministers as the adversaries call moderate Presbyterians. (4.) The blasphemous encroachment of the tyrant upon the prerogative of God, in making and rescinding oaths at his pleasure; and in place of the former, now subbstituting a new oath, which is the sink of all their abominations, wherein he proclaims himself absolute and sovereign, (due only to God, and to no mortal) and will have acknowledgment as such, and men's consciences to be entirely surrendered to his lustful rage.

2. The danger wherein the faithful remnant do stand through the wickedness of the enemy, belching out cruel threatenings of utter destruction to all who will avouch, own or countenance the faithful and free preaching of the gospel.

3. The lothsome lukewarmness and indifferency of our societies in falling slack in religious duties, in not laying out themselves more in their stations for promoving the work of the Lord, and in forbearing (many of them) to carry arms at our solemn meetings, for the defence of the gospel, their brethren, and themselves.

It was alſo appointed that the 12th of May ſhould be kept by our ſocieties as a day of faſting and prayer to the Lord, for the cauſes following.

1. That the Lord would give us a right way of conſtituting and ſettling elderſhips, and that he would accompany with his bleſſing and power, theſe labourers whom he had ſent forth to the public work, that their labours might be in mercy, and with ſucceſs.

2. That he would carry on the buſineſs of the vindication, and make it effectual for gaining its end: And alſo that he would preſerve theſe of our miniſters who for the time were neceſſarily called out of the land, and reſtore them unto us, fraughted with his Spirit.

In the year, 1687, The Cockatrice-egg was laid; which, if the Lord cruſh it not, threatens the production of the baſiliſk of popery itſelf; and that ſleep-drink of this Antichriſtian intoxicating toleration was then brewed in hell, blinked in *Rome*, and propined to Scotland, as a preſervative for the cup of the Whore's fornications; which did more bewitch and intoxicate the bulk and body of the Proteſtants and Preſbyterians of all ranks and capacities, into a ſtupid ſubmiſſion to Antichriſt's encroachments; a ſecure compliance with his deſigns to introduce popery and ſlavery; or a ſenſeleſs ſurceaſe from all oppoſition to, or teſtimony againſt them, than any former attempt of *Babylon's* policy, or effort of her power, could ever effectuate in Scotland. When a toleration is offered, accepted, addreſſed for, and peaceably and thankfully improved, according to order; flowing from a blaſphemous fountain, abſolute power; which all are to obey without reſerve; conveyed through a treaſonable channel, ſuſpending, ſtopping, and diſabling all righteous ſtatutes penal, againſt Papiſts; deſigned for ſuch ſinful ends, as the ſubverſion of the proteſtant, and the peaceable introduction of the popiſh religion; producing ſuch miſerable effects, as, the encouragement of all wickedneſs, and error, extinguiſhing all zeal againſt them, and increaſe of defection, diviſion and confuſion; offered in ſuch ſcandalous terms as palpably encroach upon the doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline and government of Chriſt's free kingdom, and plainly preclude all acceſſion to any faithful proteſtation againſt theſe encroachments, conſiſtent with the improvement of the liberty; and obtruded with ſuch ſhame-

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ul ſecurities, as rob the church of all her legal charters of laws and covenants eſtabliſhing her reformation, and eave her nothing in lieu thereof, but a blind promiſe of one, whoſe principles oblige him to keep no faith; nd ſuch a promiſe as does not eſtabliſh the religion to-erated under the notion of religion; but tolerates it on-y, as a thing to be ſuffered. Yet this was generally complied with by the miniſters and profeſſors through-out the kingdom; and all ſuch as did not ſay a confe-deracy with them in this, were houted at, and flouted as ſigns and wonders, on all hands; and more than ever expoſed to the reproach of tolerated and indemnified friends, who had now purchaſed to themſelves peace, at the rate of ſelling truth and ſhifting duty, and more than ever threatned by the perſecuting enemies. For, in all their proclamations of peace and liberty to others, they thunder many menaces againſt them.

The firſt proclamation, February 12th, 1687. tole-rating the moderate Preſbyterians to meet in their pri-vate houſes (excluding barns) *&c.* to hear the indulged miniſters allenarly, 'Certifies, That field-conventicles, 'and ſuch as preach at them, or who ſhall any way aſ-'ſiſt or connive at them, ſhall be proſecuted according 'to the utmoſt ſeverity of laws made againſt them.' The ſecond proclamation, June 28th, the ſame year, buſk-ing the hook better, that they might bite more kindly, allowing all to ſerve God after their own way in any houſe; ſo that, they take care that nothing be preach-ed, which may any way tend to alienate the hearts of the people from the government, *&c.* makes expreſs proviſion, that no meetings be in the open fields: For which, now after this royal favour, there could not be the leaſt ſhadow of excuſe left. Which meetings are ſtrictly prohibited, and all laws and acts of Parliament left in full force and vigor, with a further command to all judges, magiſtrates and officers of forces, to proſe-cute ſuch as ſhould be found guilty of the ſaid field-con-venticles, with the utmoſt vigor. There was alſo a third proclamation, October 5th, declaring that all perſons, preachers and hearers, preſent at any meeting in the o-pen fields, ſhall be proſecuted with the utmoſt rigor and ſeverity that their laws will allow. 'As alſo, all diſſent-'ing miniſters, who ſhall take upon them to preach in 'houſes, without obſerving theſe directions preſcribed '(*viz.* That nothing be preached or taught, which may

'any

'any way tend to alienate the hearts of the people from 'the government, and that their meetings be peaceably 'and publicly held, and that they ſignify and make 'known to ſome one or more of the privy counſellors, 'ſheriffs, ſtewarts, baillies, juſtices of peace, or magi-'ſtrates of burghs royal, what place or places, they ſet 'apart for theſe uſes, with the names of the preachers, 'ſhall be ſo proſecuted.'

This proclamation was emitted after, and as it would ſeem, in anſwer to the addreſs of ſome miniſters dated at *Edinburgh*, July 21ſt, that ſame year, given forth in the name of all the Preſbyterian miniſters: Wherein, after a raphſody of fulſome flatteries for the toleration, they beſeech, that theſe who promote any diſloyal principles or practices (as they diſown them) may be looked upon as none of theirs, whatſoever name they may aſſume to themſelves. A ſuperplus of ſuperfluous ſolicitouſneſs for theſe who adhering unto the teſtimonies of the church of Scotland, againſt toleration and tyranny, which they call diſloyal principles and practices, would reckon it both a ſin and ſhame to be reputed of their confederacy.

Againſt all the indignities done to Chriſt, and injuries done to the church, Mr. *Renwick* and his brethren thought themſelves obliged to teſtify and witneſs; and not only declare againſt the ſin of the givers, and of the accepters of ſuch a toleration; but to warn alſo the people of the hazard of all their acceſſion to it, participation with it, or approbation of it, in their frequenting theſe meetings, under the allowance and protection of it, as being all the badges of their complying with it, or ſign of their approving it, which either could be required of them, or given by them: And to keep their meetings for this end more publicly in the open fields, ſince they durſt not truſt thoſe, who were ſtill thirſting inſatiably for their blood, nor give them ſuch advantages as they were ſeeking to prey upon them, by ſhutting themſelves within houſes; and looked upon this as their teſtimony for the cauſe of Chriſt, for the intereſt of the Proteſtant religion, for the covenanted reformation, and for the laws and liberties of the country, all undermined and ſubverted by this toleration.

In the beginning of the year, the other two had neceſſary occaſions calling for their departure forth of the land

land for a time; and then the whole ſtreſs and burden of that whole work lay upon him, and the whole force of the perſecution from all hands was bended againſt him, and increaſed daily, as his zeal, freedom and faithfulneſs in witneſſing againſt the toleration increaſed; eſpecially in the obloquies and oppoſitions from the tolerated miniſters, againſt him, increaſed apace; who ceaſed not to cry out againſt him, ſometimes to the offence of their hearers, and all that heard the report of it. One of them at *Glaſgow*, in a tranſport of fury rather than zeal, expreſſed himſelf to this effect, "He would not have been ſo grieved, if Mr. *Renwick* "had ſtabbed firſt his father and then his brother, as "now to hear him ſo rail againſt the liberty." It had been more pertinent for him to be grieved for the wounds and wramps, ſtabs and ſtrokes his mother the church of Scotland hath received, and given by himſelf and others her untender children, by accepting of this falſly ſo called liberty, which hath given her *Joab's* ſalute and cruel courteſy, a ſtab under the fifth rib, and then left her in thrall and bondage.

It might have been expected rather now, when the ſtorm was over, that thoſe, who lurked under the lee, and durſt not ſet their face againſt it, ſhould have pitied at leaſt, if not praiſed one, that endured the whole rage of it, in following the duty which they had ſhifted; than that they ſhould come out of their warm holes, and upbraid and inſult over their weary and weather-beaten fellow-ſervant. But the miniſters now generally coming home from abroad, and out of their quiet chambers, and beginning to preach, ſet themſelves to cry out againſt Mr. *Renwick*, and the poor perſecuted people that heard him, being, as it would ſeem, more concerned to give a proof of their loyalty to pleaſe their new friends (enemies to their old Friend and Maſter Chriſt) than of their love and zeal to him, whoſe ambaſſadors they were, in reſenting the wrongs done to his glory: And in this, they were abetted, encouraged and inſtigated by many profeſſors; ſome of whom, in their calling miniſters, have admoniſhed them not to forget to preach againſt Mr. *Renwick*, *&c.* which, when one miniſter, a ſtranger to that method, and a ſtranger in the place where he was called to preach, *viz.* in *Glaſgow*, refuſed, taking it ill, that they ſhould offer ſuch inſtructions to him, and aſked if that was their way of calling

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miniſters; they anſwered very preſumptuouſly, it was deſired, and expected, and cuſtomarily uſed; and all did ſo that preached there. They forgot here the old charge, and made themſelves guilty of it, which they have always held up againſt thoſe whom they would have all to preach againſt; that they laid impoſitions on miniſters: But in this, they turned impoſers themſelves, or elſe have falſly accuſed others on this head.

Some alſo, as ſoon as their meetings were ſcarce well ſettled, began to ſhew their teeth, and very magiſterially enquired after the number and names of thoſe that heard Mr. *Renwick*, that Intruder, that Jeſuit, and encouraged to the delating them to the magiſtrate, a very unhappy and unhandſome way of diſcovering their zeal againſt Jeſuits, to encourage and aſſiſt a crowned Jeſuit in perſecuting them whom Jeſuits exclude from favour. Nay, ſo fooliſh as well as furious, was the fervor of ſome, both miniſters and profeſſors, that they were not aſhamed to reproach him beyond all bounds, either of wit, honeſty or modeſty; affirming, That he was frequently at maſs, and was ſeen at *Haggs*, *Fetterwires*, and ſeveral other Papiſt's houſes. A lie, at which, the father of lies, and the father of Papiſts rejoiced, in that, when he had prevailed ſo far, as to get them to connive at the maſs, who ſhould have been its greateſt oppoſers; he had ſucceſs alſo, to make them believe ſuch a lie, that he, who cried, the land was polluted by offering one maſs in it, was a frequenter of maſſes himſelf. But, by believing of lies, that idolatry hath had its riſe and advance in the world.

ACCORDING to appointment, a General Meeting conveened upon the firſt day of June, 1687.—After prayer, and modelling of the Meeting according to their uſual cuſtom.

The following concluſions and reſolutions were agreed upon.

It was reſolved that Mr. Lining's home coming ſhould not be ſtopt, but that he ſhould be left to his own liberty.

And it was concluded that a letter of information of affairs among us ſhould be ſent to M. William Boyd. This was not done till afterward.

It was alſo reſolved that any letters which ſhould be ſent abroad, the double of them was to be brought to the next

next meeting, that ſo theſe letters which they deſired to be written in their name, that they had not time nor conveniency then to write, might be ſeen and heard by the whole meeting afterward.

It was alſo appointed, that one ſhould go to Ireland to conduct Mr. David Houſton's wife and family from thence to this land; and 5l. Sterling was allowed for their charges. This was accordingly done, and ſhe came over not long after this time.

In this interval matters continued as is before related.

In this ſad time, A General Meeting conveened at *Carntable*, upon the 3d of *Auguſt*, 1687. After prayer and modelling of the meeting—

It was reſolved to write a letter to Mr. Hamilton, in anſwer to one they received from him, wherein he gives an account of his travels to Helvetia and Switzerland, ſhewing what reception his meſſage met with in Berne, Baſile, Geneva, *&c.* and the ſtate of religion in theſe places, *&c.* which ſhall be here inſerted.

To the honourable Mr. Robert Hamilton.

July 6th, 1687.

Honourable and Dear Sir.

YOU may know from manifold experiences, that *through much tribulation we muſt enter into the kingdom of God.* The way to the heavenly Canaan lieth through a waſte and howling wilderneſs. Our pilgrimage is through a valley of tears, and over mountains of difficulties: But as we have a good and comfortable guide, ſo he can bring meat out of the eater, and ſweet out of the ſtrong, and make the flinty rocks give water to us; yea, he can make our bitter waters ſweet unto us, and in abundance of ſorrow give ſuper-abundance of joy. We doubt not but you have often found this, which helps and animates you in obedience to the will of God, to undergo ſo many perplexities and diſcouragements.

We received your letters. In that which ſhews your purpoſe of travelling through other churches, we obſerve the various and ſingular troubles which you did meet with at Leewarden; your conflicts in that place have been ſharp and multiplied, and we reckon it our

part to be burden-bearers with you, though we be far ſhort of this, as of all other duties. But we hope you have both peace and joy in your lot, conſidering the precious and honourable cauſe for which you are redacted unto it. And we are greatly refreſhed with the report of the tenderneſs, zeal and ſtedfaſtneſs of theſe few worthy friends at Leewarden, who have been encouraging to you, and took a ſhare with you of all your afflictions. In the letter which gives a relation of your travels through ſome other churches, as we ſee your care to lay out unto them our priſtine reformation and preſent ſufferings; ſo alſo to ſhew us in what ſtate affairs are in amongſt them; whereby we judge ourſelves greatly obliged unto you, for that might be greatly to our advantage if we could improve it. Oh! we underſtand that hateful profanity, deteſtable carnality, vile ſuperſtition, deplorable defection, lothſome lukewarmneſs and infatuated ſecurity are much abounding in theſe churches. The generality both at home and abroad, ſeem to have conſpired together to let go piety, and to cleave to policy. When policy is kept as piety's ſervant, it helps to ſecure it: But when it is advanced as maſter it does much to undo it. The rule of ſcripture-ſimplicity and carnal wiſdom are ſquared very unlike to one another.

O what can we expect but a deſolation upon many lands! Chriſt hath a great conqueſt to make in the earth, and there muſt be a ſtrange ſhaking and overturning of kingdoms, that his kingdom may get place, Hag. ii. 6, 7. In ſuch a caſe we ſhould be careful to hold faſt that which we have, Rev. iii. 2.: We have a great word of teſtimony delivered unto us, which (we are hopeful) ſhall yet empty thrones and pulpits. O how worthy is it of all that we can witneſs for it! and how unworthy are we of it if we ſhall deſert it! In ſuch a caſe we ſhould ſtudy to be wholly and only for the Lord God of Hoſts. The profanity, carnality and indifferency of the generality ſhould provoke us to holineſs, ſpirituality and zeal; but alas! in the midſt of all this we have our deep ſhare of the ſpiritual plagues that are abounding in this day: It is not with us as ſometimes it hath been. O Lord, pour out thy ſpirit upon us. In ſuch a caſe we ſhould be mourning for all the abominations committed in the earth, eſpecially in the churches. O happy ſhall they be who ſhall be found marked among

mong the mourners in Zion, for they ſhall be ſpared, Ezek. ix. 6.

O! where is zeal to God? Where is zeal for his concerns? Where is tenderneſs now to be found? when there is ſo little holy indignation, ſo little ſorrow and mourning for the magnitude and multitude of the tranſgreſſions of this generation. In ſuch a caſe, we ſhould be laying our own things amongſt our feet and preparing to meet our God who is *coming out of his place to puniſh the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity*, Amos iv. 12. Iſa. xxvi. 21.

The information which you give us of the ſad overthrow, yea almoſt extirpation of the ancient and famous *Waldenſes* in the valley of Piedmont, is very grieving and affrighting to us. O what may other churches expect when ſuch things are done unto them! O that all churches would take warning at their ſad and lamentable coſt, of the ſin and danger of compounding with or truſting enemies, whoſe offers are ſnares, and who know not to keep oath or promiſe either to God or man. We bleſs the Lord for any kindly acceptance you got in any place of your travels: We deſire, that in our name you may thank theſe (whether in *Geneva* or *Switzerland*) who have received your information, or ſhewed you kindneſs. And when you write, ſignify unto them that we purpoſe (according to your deſire) to keep up a correſpondence with them, and to ſend them letters and informations; but apologize for the delay, conſidering our ſcattered condition and the weighty affairs at preſent among our hands which we cannot defer.

We have few particulars to inform you of at the time; the adverſaries are reſtrained from that meaſure of outrage whereunto once they were given up; they change their methods, but they do not change their natures; the eyes of many are like to fail with waiting for a liberty and free toleration ſuch as is given to England, and we hear that the enemies are divided about it. They may be divided about the means, but they are united in the end and deſign. Many miniſters who formerly were lying bye from their work are now beſtirring themſelves more about it, and frequently preaching; but they do generally declare (or rather diſcover) themſelves more fully than before, by loading us with falſe imputations, and by preſſing people in their letters and ſermons, not only not to concur with us in our preſent teſtimony, but to

flee from us. Yet the more that they are of this ſtrain, they gain not the more ground. We may ſay, by the good hand of the Lord our number is rather increaſing than decreaſing. We are doing our endeavour to have elders elected and admitted amongſt us.

Now, worthy and dear Sir, we hope we need not put you in mind to ſtudy all neceſſary freedom and tenderneſs toward them of foreign churches, and patiently to wait upon any of them ſo long as there may be hope; by your frequent converſing among them you will know better what may be for their advantage and the advancement of the kingdom of Chriſt than we can tell you.—The Lord be your leader and guide. The eyes of many are upon you: O ſtudy that every word and action may be ſo expreſſed and done as you may not be aſhamed to avow it, if it were before the whole generation of mankind, whatever be their different humours, perſuaſions and inclinations; and alſo, as you may have peace in it before God. There lieth much advantage to the cauſe in our expreſſing ourſelves in ſuch a form of ſound words as may pertinently ſignify the matter, faithfully declare our minds, and not ſavour of prejudice, pride or paſſion, or in their own nature tend to irritate theſe who do oppoſe themſelves. We would ſeek the good of every ſoul; and though as to many we miſs our end, yet we ſhould carry ſo towards them, as may leave a conviction upon their conſciences that it was their good we were ſeeking. Whatever others are in their way, we are the ſame by nature, and we ſhould pity them and lament over them, and yet hate the garments ſpotted with the fleſh, and carefully keep ourſelves from partaking of their ſins.——Now, we do heartily and jointly commend you to the all-ſufficiency and faithfulneſs of your God, not ceaſing to pray for you; and that any work you have been or may be inſtrumental to begin abroad, may be carried on by the good hand of the Lord. We are,

Honourable and dear Sir, your ſympathizing friends, and obliged ſervants in the Lord.

Subſcribed in our name, and by our deſire, by the clerk of our General Correſpondence,

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

It

It was likewiſe reſolved that every member of our ſocieties ſhall be deſired to provide themſelves of arms, and bring them alongſt with them for their own and their brethren's defence, when they got the opportunity of hearing the goſpel, and to our General Meetings.—This reſolution was judged neceſſary, in regard that there was ſome ſlackneſs amongſt ſeverals at this time in this duty, that ſo they might be ſtirred up to more forwardneſs thereafter.

It was alſo reſolved that a letter ſhould be written to Mr. Boyd, ſhewing that in anſwer to his letter, dated *March* 2d. we had ſent 31. ſterl. which we deſired to know if he had received, and that his letter without date came not to us till *June* 1*ſt*, at which time, being met together, we had ſent him other 31 ſterl.—and ſhewing, that our hearing of his being licentiate had put us in ſome amazement, he not having acquainted us with his purpoſe, (though he had tranſmitted ſeveral letters to us) which was contrary to his undertaking when he went abroad. And as to the calling him home we left it to his choice as we did when he went abroad.

It was likewiſe reſolved that a letter ſhould be written to John Haddow who was then at Utrecht; which was done. One thing which moved the meeting to reſolve upon this, was their deſire to have differences betwixt Mr. Hamilton and him removed, but it was not ſucceſsful as afterwards will appear.

It was alſo reſolved that a full diſcharge ſhould be given to Mrs. Jane Hamilton of 160 Gilders which ſhe brought home, having got it from ſome abroad, to be given to the ſocieties.

Moreover, it was reſolved by the meeting, that James Wilſon ſhould be deſired to go to Ireland and converſe with ſuch miniſters as he ſhall be recommended unto. This was done.

And it was reſolved that the 16th of *Auguſt* ſhall be obſerved by our ſocieties, a day of faſting and prayer unto the Lord in the behalf and upon the account of the baniſhed; and of humiliation and mourning for the iniquity of the preſent toleration: And alſo, to ſeek the Lord's counſel how to carry in the preſent circumſtances.

The toleration was granted and embraced, as is already ſaid, with which the ſocieties could not join, nor countenance

countenance in the leaſt; ſo they thought it their duty to frequent field-meetings, though interdicted under ſevere penalties, for which they were loaded with reproach by theſe that were at eaſe; they had alſo the rage of the perſecuting enemies bent againſt them. This, though weighty in itſelf, nevertheleſs did not diſcourage them from ſetting about, and doing of that which they judged neceſſary and called for at their hands, according to their ſtation, in their preſent circumſtances.

A MEETING having conveened at *Auchengilloch, Oct. 5th*, 1687.—After prayer and modelling of the meeting —it was reſolved and concluded by them, That Mr. Lining ſhould go abroad another ſeaſon to an Univerſity, in order to the perfecting of his ſtudies, and that he ſhould be maintained by the ſocieties.

Mr. Lining came to this land in July laſt, and was himſelf at this meeting, and being now to leave them again for a time, it was thought fit, for their ſatisfaction, to deſire him to ſhew ſomewhat of his mind and reſolution concerning the work he was intending to ſet about, and to ſignify his jointneſs with them in the cauſe and teſtimony the ſocieties were contending for. Whereupon he wrote a paper and delivered it to them containing the ſame *. Preſently after this he went abroad.

THE caſe of the land at this time cannot be expreſſed in few words; however a little hint in general may here be given. The ſubtle enemy gained much of their end in granting the toleration; for Papiſts were encouraged, and ſeverals of them put in places of power and truſt: idolatry was erected in ſundry places and altars ſet up, hereſy, blaſphemy and error were tolerate, and profanity paſſed without puniſhment. Adverſaries were ſeeming to ſmile upon ſome, yet raging againſt others. Many were at eaſe, lurking under the ſhadow of this pretended liberty, but ſuch were troubled who could not comply therewith. The edge of zeal in not a few was blunted, and (alas!) there was great ſilence in many miniſters as to the giving warning of the public ſins and duties

* This paper appears to have been deſignedly ſuppreſſed, and is not now to be found. There is no further account of what was done at this meeting.

ies of the day. But Mr. Renwick and his brethren, as they durſt not homologate the toleration, nor join with it in the leaſt, but as they had opportunity, hewed the evils thereof, ſo they thought it their duty to preach in the open fields (which was ſtrictly interdicted under moſt grievous penalties) where they ſet the trumpet to their mouth and gave faithful warning of the ſins and ſnares, duties and dangers of the time. Theſe meetings the ſocieties frequented, at which their ſouls were watered and refreſhed in hearing the goſpel: For which, both theſe miniſters, and people were much perſecuted by enraged and cruel enemies, and ſadly miſrepreſented and reproached by many of their brethren, inſtead of that ſympathy which was called for at their hands.

In the interval, not long after the laſt meeting, as alſo before it: Mr. James Renwick (whoſe pains and labours, hazards and perils were great, in going about his Maſter's work) did ordain ſeveral elders, in diverſe places of the country, who were nominated by the ſocieties.

ACCORDING to the appointment of the laſt Meeting, a General Meeting conveened at *Frierminion*, December 7th, 1687.—After prayer and modelling of the Meeting the following reſolutions were condeſcended on.

It was concluded that the Vindication ſhould be ſold at eight-pence per book, and at ſeven-pence unſtitched. The Informatory Vindication being printed, and ſeveral of them brought home, it was thought fit that a rate ſhould be ſet on them, that the price might be alike to all who ſhould buy of them.

It was alſo concluded by the Meeting, that until the next Meeting they ſhould not be offended at any who ſhould call, or hear Mr. William Boyd: And that ſuch as had freedom to hear him, ſhould not be offended at ſuch as had it not*. This reſolution may ſeem ſtrange, yet it was thought fit at that time, in regard that upon the one hand, there being ſome exceptions amongſt ſome, againſt Mr. Boyd (who not long before this meeting was come

* Mr. James Renwick denied his conſent to this concluſion, and alſo declined to preach with him, and was much perplexed about that affair, as he ſhews in his LIV and LV Letters, Page 195,.....198.

come home) especially as to the way of his license, which he obtained from the ministers at Groningen, he having taken an engagement at it, which was offensive to not a few, and the more because he would not show it. Nevertheless, being loath to break among themselves upon this head, and out of tenderness to Mr. Boyd, they judged this resolution might be helpful, hoping they might get more clearness in this particular afterward, and that the scruples of some might be removed.

It was likewise concluded that Ja. Ca. was to borrow in the name of the Meeting two hundred Marks, which was to be paid again by the Books that were to be brought home (*viz.* the Hind let Loose) or otherwise, if necessity called for it.

And it was resolved that a Letter should be written to Mr. Robert Hamilton then at Leewarden. Accordingly it was drawn up and sent; the tenor of it followeth.

Much honoured and worthy Sir,

GOD hath determined for you no small share of the sufferings and trials of this poor afflicted church: And we judge that in this point; we would be undutiful toward him, and ingrate toward you, if we remembered not the same, with some measure of sympathy. You have many proofs of the Lord's goodness and power to reflect upon, in his bringing you through the inundations of former troubles, that have raged and swelled upon you: Which experiences may minister help to your faith, in present boisterous and pressing tempests, for God is faithful and will never forsake them that seek him, nor let them be ashamed of their hope, that put their trust in him; wherefore resort unto your magazine, where there is store of Christian armour, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, taking care for nothing, but to keep a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward man; which will yield no small peace, tranquillity and serenity of spirit, whereby you shall sit Noah-like, in the midst of the floods.

Being met together this day, we communed and consulted anent calling you home, and were all desirous that ye should come: But before we would proceed to any conclusion, we thought fit to write to you, desiring to know

know your own mind, and clearneſs anent it; and whether or not ye find any door yet open abroad, for your being further uſeful there, in behalf of this church; ſo we deſire you will be pleaſed to let us have your anſwer before the end of February, and we ſhall agree upon that which we may judge moſt for your encouragement and the advantage of the cauſe, and let you know of it timeouſly thereafter.

We thought fit likewiſe to acquaint you, that we are pinched with the ſenſe of the want of ſuch a number of miniſters, as may make up an ordinary and competent judicatory (together with the elders) for exerciſing acts of poteſtative miſſion, and may preach the goſpel more plentifully, whereof there is no ſmall famine.

And in our meeting we have communed anent Mr. Douglaſs, as we have not ſlighted your objections, ſo we have not proceeded to call him, yet we cannot conclude that they are ſo relevant and ſufficient, that we ſhould enquire no more after him, eſpecially, ſeeing we hear that he agreeth in a great meaſure with our teſtimony, and keeps himſelf abſtract from contrary parties: And hath deported himſelf exemplarily for temperance, and even for ſome years abſtained from the uſe of that wherein it was reported that he was exceſſive before: And we reſolve to carry ſo towards him, as he may not be diſcouraged, and none other offended. Moreover, what we may determine at the next meeting concerning him, we ſhall give you notice.

No more at the time, but deſiring you would ſalute in our name all your friends, We are,

Much honoured and worthy Sir,
Your real and ſympathiſing friends,

Subſcribed in our name, and at our deſire,

By MICHAEL SHIELDS.

It was reſolved by the Meeting that every Correſpondence ſhould appoint two, or three men of their number, to go through the Societies in the bounds, and gather up the account of the ſufferings in that place; and that the ſame ſhould be brought to the next Meeting.

Accordingly somewhat of this was done. And it was appointed that the first Thursday of January, 1688, should be observed by our Societies as a day of fasting and prayer unto the Lord, that he would be graciously pleased to preserve our ministers, bless their labours, and add to their number, and also that he would bring down the throne of iniquity, and give us godly and faithful magistrates.

Lastly, It was resolved that the next Meeting should meet at *Blackgannoch*, upon the 7th day of March, 1688.

THE case of the land in general continued to be sad, enemies were advancing in their wicked designs; defections were growing, and hardness of heart, and impenitency increasing; security, lukewarmness and indifferency were much abounding, and the zeal of not a few blunted. And as the whole country, for the most part, enjoyed outward peace and quietness; nevertheless the societies were in trouble, and exercised under several damping discouragements; as they could not join with the toleration, or any other of the enemies pretended favours, so they thought it their duty and great privilege to call and hear these ministers who preached in the open fields; and for this the cruel enemies manifested their rage and malice against them, and the tongues of many (especially ministers) were much exercised to reproach them.

But the saddest stroke which in this interval they met with, was the apprehending and execution of Mr. *James Renwick*, a faithful minister of the gospel, whose painfulness and labours were signally countenanced of the Lord; and he was helped and honoured to seal these truths with his blood, which he had been preaching, owning, and contending for, in his life. It did not a little dash and confound enemies, and silence reproachers of him, when they saw, and heard of his Christian carriage, zeal, courage, confidence, and cheerfulness in his sufferings, and at his death. But albeit to die was his gain, yet the same was many poor peoples loss, being deprived of a faithful, and painful pastor, and a zealous and seeing watchman; and yet as his death was confirming to poor people in these truths he had been suffering for, and encouraging to them to continue in the same; so it might have been said, that by it, the enemies gained

ed nothing, nor was the truth a loſer, the former having got a daſh thereby, and the latter a witneſs.

In this ſad time, a General Meeting conveened at *Blackgannoch*, upon the 7th of March, 1688.—After prayer, and modelling of the Meeting,

It was reſolved that the laird of Kerſland and James Wilſon ſhould be deſired to go and converſe with Mr. Darroch a miniſter in Kintyre.—Accordingly after the meeting was done,

It was alſo reſolved that a Letter ſhould be written to Robert Hamilton, who was then at Leewarden, and another to John Haddow at Utrecht, which were accordingly drawn up and ſent.

One thing moving the Meeting to write at this time to both theſe gentlemen, was their deſire to have differences removed that were betwixt them, that ſo they might be helpful to one another in that work of printing an account of our ſufferings which was then deſigned to be ſet about. But as theſe differences was not removed thereby; ſo albeit there was pains taken in gathering accounts of the ſufferings of many, and of enemies cruelty and barbarity, &c. yet it went not on, as to the writing of what was intended, not only in regard there were ſeveral things wanting, to make the account full and compleat; but eſpecially the Revolution, which fell out this year, affording things which occaſioned other work.

A copy of the Letter to Mr. Hamilton follows.

Much honoured Sir,

OUR kindneſs to, and ſympathy with you in all your trials, (which hath not been few) upon truth's account, yet remain, though the ſignifications thereof be but ſmall, and not correſponding to what evidences you have given, both at home and abroad, of your concernedneſs with our broken and bleeding church, of your zeal for the propagation of its teſtimony, and of your ſympathy with the witneſſes and ſufferers of Chriſt therein; and in particular with us your companions in tribulation for the word of his patience, though we be unworthy of that ſignature. But we hope what you have done, or are doing of this kind, is upon a more noble account then expectations of recompence from any

creature, or more especially from us, who are not in a capacity to do it equivalent to the extent of its merit.

So we desire you would put a more favourable construction upon our silence in not writing to you, than to think the same proceeds from forgetfulness of you; for as puzzling difficulties, and damping discouragements have been many and great, albeit little regarded by some, so at this time they are neither few nor small, from all hands and as little taken notice of by these at ease as what formerly we met with.

However for your information and satisfaction, in order to have your sympathy and advice, and also to stir up others not to forget us in this our low condition, we find it necessary to give you a short account how matters are with us, which if our eye, or our ear could affect our hearts, might be full of lamentation and mourning, but yet as these who have hope; for we are bereaved by cruel and bloody hands of two faithful ministers, and valiant standard bearers; Alas! our stroke is heavy, and our wound deep and wide; and yet concerning this, we may sing of mercy as well as judgment, yea of mercy in judgment; seeing the Lord helped and honoured the one (Mr. James Renwick) willingly and cheerfully to lay down his life at the Grass-market in Edinburgh for the cause of Christ, which is a greater confirmation to the same, and to the owners thereof, and proves a greater dash to the backsliders who were waiting for his halting, and helps more to fill up the cup of enemies, now near the brim, than his life could have done: And the other is now Christ's prisoner at Dublin in Ireland, suffering cheerfully (as we hope) for his borne down truths.

Through the loss of which worthies, as truth wants living witnesses and valiant champions for it upon the earth, so we are deprived of our faithful guides and leaders, for our unfruitful and unthankful carriage under the free preaching of the gospel by them dispensed; a loss which we can never enough lament, and know not what way to get it supplied. All doors for a cleanly ordination of ministers at home seem to be shut, and if we find none abroad open, our case will be deplorable. Therefore it is our earnest desire, that you would lay out yourself to see if a cleanly and approven ordination for Messrs. Alexander Shields and Thomas Lining can be obtained, either by the ministers of Embden or in a-

ny other place, and write to us about the ſame with the firſt occaſion ye can get. And albeit our ſorrow and lamentation over the loſs of our faithful miniſters ſhould be great, and our deſire to have others in their ſtead preſſing and urgent: Yet, as we would keep the ground the Lord hath helped us to take up, and look to our ſelves that we loſe not theſe things that we have wrought; we deſire only to countenance ſuch whom he will own in their walking in his way, and keeping up and contending for the teſtimony of the day. The conſideration whereof hath put us to much pains and many perplexing thoughts about Mr. William Boyd, the laſt whereof was this day, (being the day of our meeting) a ſhort hint whereof we ſhall give you.

The meeting deſired to know his mind concerning that at which they left in their laſt meeting, *viz.* If he was clear to preach for the not countenancing of the tolerated miniſters, as was the practice of the reſt of his brethren, eſpecially he who ſealed the cauſe lately with his blood?

Mr. Boyd anſwered, His mind about that was much about the ſame as formerly; yet after ſome janglings and debatings, he came a greater length than ever, in that he was for withdrawing from and diſcountenancing the accepters, addreſſers for, and improvers of this toleration: But as for ſuch, though they came not up the full length of owning all the parts of our teſtimony, and did not join with us, nor preach in the fields, yet were againſt this toleration, free of defection and owned our covenants and work of reformation, he was not clear to give his judgment concerning hearing of them. It was told him, that of ſuch we were not ſpeaking, and if there were any ſuch in Scotland or in any other place, we would be glad to know of them.

After this it was told him, that it was reported in ſome places of the country, That when he was licenſed at Groningen he had given an engagement to the miniſters there not to preach ſeparation from theſe miniſters in Scotland from whom we had withdrawn upon ſufficient grounds.

This he denied, but confeſſed he gave in a paper to them of his principles and reſolution.

However, there was a delay put to the joint calling of him until the next meeting, that we might get a proof of his practice being conform to the profeſſion of his principle

principle concerning discountenancing of the tolerated ministers; and that we might endeavour to get a sight of the paper given in by him to the ministers by whom he was licensed; which he said he had not, but only a draught thereof, out of which the paper he gave in was taken, and that he knew not well where it was; and also that a day for prayer about him might be kept by the societies, which is to be the first Thursday of *May*.

In the mean time, it was concluded, (as at the last meeting) for avoiding of confusion and division, that those who had clearness to call and hear him, should not be offended at those who had none; and those who wanted the same, should not be offended at those who had it.

Thus you see how it stands with Mr. Boyd and us. We desire ye will endeavour, if ye can, to know what is the nature of that paper given in by him to the ministers of Groningen, or to get a double of it from them and send it to us; but you would do it in a cautious way, lest the ministers there be more stumbled at us when they discover our jealousies of him.

There is another thing we judge expedient to acquaint you with. It hath been our design and desire more than two years to collect an account of the sufferings of this despised remnant, with what the rest of the land have suffered under the domineering tyranny of the late deceast tyrant, and of the present Usurper, to the end it may be printed; but though our endeavours in this hitherto have not answered our design and the pressing call to the duty, yet it is expected the next meeting will put a period to it. This we think a part of our generation-work, and a duty laid upon us, as we would have the cause of Christ, which we own and suffer for, handed down and transmitted to posterity, and not be guilty of robbing them of such a rich treasure as the fragrant and refreshing acccount of the sufferings of the martyrs, confessors and witnesses of Christ in this age is, and will be to them who come after us.

When this account is collected and put in some order and dress by way of a martyrology, we intend to send to John Haddow in Utrecht. That which moves us to this resolution of employing him, is his fitteness for waiting upon the press; but more especially because of his offer to print the same, though it should extend to a large volume, upon his own expences; which we cannot well refuse,

refuſe, not knowing another way to get it done. So to the end that this ſo neceſſary a work may be the better effectuated, it is our ſerious and hearty deſire that theſe differences betwixt you and him* (which to us are matter of ſorrow and unpleaſant to hear of) may be removed, and unity in the Lord obtained, at leaſt ſo far as that you and he may concur in proſecuting this affair; and that you may ſend him theſe of the martyrs teſtimonies you have, and what account you have of what fell out before Bothwel, at it, and ſince; which we know your concernedneſs put you to ſeek after and get, which will prove a great help to the perfecting of that work, ſo profitable to the preſent and ſucceeding generations. We intend to commence it from the beginning of this tyranny, and inſert all the teſtimonies in Naphtali, with what account we can gather from thence and other collections relating to the times before Bothwel, which we intreat you to help us in; as alſo, we have thoughts of inſerting all the dying ſpeeches of thoſe that ſuffered ſince, though differing from us, with animadverſions upon their miſtakes, that ſo it may be a complete ſyſtem of all the ſufferings in our day.

We ſhall deſiſt, wiſhing the bleſſings of the everlaſting covenant to be your mercy. Mind us when at the throne of grace. Salute all your friends in our name. Write to us. We are,

Your real friends in the Lord,

Subſcribed in our name, and at our appointment, by

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

The letter to John Haddow was of the ſame tenor with the former, except that after ſhewing the neceſſity and utility of a martyrology, it runs thus.—

"And

* Of this John Haddow and the differences here ſpoken of, ſee Mr Hamilton's long letter foregoing. There is extant a diſdainful letter of John Haddow's to Mr Hamilton upon this occaſion, demanding by virtue of a commiſſion from the meeting, the teſtimonies, &c. in his cuſtody. As he had now by fair pretences ingratiated himſelf into eſteem and credit ſince Mr Renwick's death. He was afterward a captain in Lord Argyle's regiment,

" And when the ſame (*viz.* accounts and teſtimonies) are gathered and put in ſome dreſs and order, which we cannot do as is requiſite under our many diſadvantages, but muſt devolve the ſame upon your induſtry. Only becauſe we intend to commence it from the beginning of this tyranny, we ſhall endeavour in the firſt place to diſpatch what relates to the time before Bothwel, with the teſtimonies in Naphtali, whereof much muſt be referred to your knowledge; then we are to ſend the ſame to you, thereby to give you the trouble of poliſhing, printing and publiſhing the ſame.

" Sir, This is a great charge we lay upon you, both troubleſome and expenſive; and would not have the confidence to impoſe it, were it not from neceſſity of the work, which we cannot otherwiſe get done, and emboldened by your chearful undertaking of, and inſtigating thereunto with encouraging promiſes of improving your intereſt among friends with you, to defray the expences thereof, which if lent, we hope will not be loſt.——

" And to the end ſo neceſſary a work may be the better effectuated, and to have all who own the teſtimony of the day of one mind in the Lord, working with one hand, and lifting with one ſhoulder. It is our earneſt deſire, that what differences (to us matter of ſorrow) are betwixt you and our worthy friend Mr. Hamilton, may be chriſtianly removed, and oneneſs in truth and duty obtained, at leaſt ſo far as to concur in expeding of this work, for he may be ſerviceable to you therein. We have written to him about the ſame, we deſire you may do the like in a friendly manner, *&c.*"

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

In *May* following Mr. Robert Hamilton returned an anſwer to the General Meeting's two laſt letters to him; the tenor whereof follows.

Worthy Friends,

AS the ſufferings of Chriſt abound in you, ſo the God of comfort, even the conſolation of Iſrael, make your conſolation alſo to abound by Chriſt Jeſus. Zion's loſs, and the loſs of the poor remnant cannot well be expreſt; ſo I confeſs at preſent I am neceſſitated

not

not to mention it. It is like it will be as profitable for both you and me to hold it up before him that comforteth those that are cast down, as to attempt to hold it out to others.

In answer to yours of the date *Dec. 7th*, 1687. As to my home-coming, I finding both your indistinctness in it; and friends here their distinctness as to my staying, as also, the Lord seems both by his dispensations and otherwise to call me to sit still, though he knows how I am still with you.

As for Mr. Douglas, when I consider his former miscarriages at home and abroad, his foul deserting of, and long lying bye from the work of the Lord, his not coming out to help the Lord against the mighty, it gives me great impressions that he shall not be much your temptation, neither that the Lord has much further work, if any for him, in his vineyard.

As also, I think the Lord is calling you to walk circumspectly in that particular, his so signally parting you and him, requires no less distinctness and clearness in closing and joining with him again, which seems as yet to be hid from my eyes.

As to your second letter written *March 7th*, 1688. And first, as to Mr. Boyd, as both his personal qualifications as a Christian, or ministerial as an officer, are so little satisfying, and that both first and last discovered by his tract of carriage and management, that I durst not for my own part either have had a hand in licensing, nor now in the least, of calling or owning him: and amongst other things this I have marked, that whatever drawing there has been to hale him in, it has been but as the trailing of one backward, he still setting his back on the work and workers, as these Ezek. viii. 16.

As for his seeming yieldings and distinctions in the last meeting, they are but a trick to get footing amongst you, now when Great Renwick is out of the way, who he found would stand in the way of his designs, who neither could nor would while alive, engage or join with him *.

* How just these sentiments concerning Mr. Boyd were, as also how true the report was that he had a recommendation or testificate from some of the last ministers, in order to obtain a licence, must be left with the Reader who is acquainted with his after conduct.

But further, I fear it may be a too visible tempting of the Lord, to meddle with him before he be cleared, at least of his licensing; and why not call him to send over a letter to the ministers of Groningen to deliver to me or to any intrusted, an account thereof, with a double of his paper, which he says he gave unto them of his principles and resolution? I shall only add one word, Isa. xxviii. 16. *He that believeth shall not make haste.*

As for your serious and hearty desire, "that the differences betwixt John Haddow and me might be christianly removed, and an oneness in the Lord obtained." I acknowledge your suit hath no little weight with me; so that if my dissatisfaction was grounded upon any personal interest, I assure you there should be no stop in it: But as it is founded upon what he hath done and is doing, both against what he seems to profess, and is his duty to own, I cannot see for the present how an oneness in the Lord can be obtained; and for mine own part I must say it, I never found his practice savour of piety or uprightness, neither his judgment of straightness; and so for my own part, I cannot win to a consent that either she should be intrusted or employed in so material, weighty and concerning a business, and far less to a delivering to him any papers with me, that might contribute to the promoval of a design, which otherwise I look upon as a most noble and necessary design. For, besides that I have no ground to confide in him, but the contrary; so I look upon him as every way incapable for such a work, and not without ground to suspect that his charges must flow from a sectarian chest, and its stile, if not more, from a sectarian brain, Ferguson, or such like.

And therefore, as I desire to construct of this your motion as flowing rather from zeal and tenderness, than any biassed design; so I hope you will construct no worse of me, and will take in good part my freedom with you in this and other particulars; for though I be charged by some of flattery towards you, and of passion and prejudice toward antagonists, yet the Lord is my witness, how I have walked betwixt both, not as pleasing men, but (so far as weakness and infirmity will allow) setting the glory of God before mine eyes, and in this way I have found, and am finding much peace, so that I dare not change my old way and method for an seeming advantage.

vantage. But I hope I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak more of this particular when I meet with our dear friend Mr. Alexander.

As to your deſire anent him and Mr. Thomas, as it is weighty in itſelf, (being one of the greateſt matters to me in the world) ſo it is not a little weighty as to my management of it; for I find that to make a motion of it here, were to ſtop it; and therefore, as I doubt not but ye will ſeek it to hold it up amongſt all of you before the throne continually, for light, counſel and aſſiſtance, according to Mat. ix. 38. ſo it is my earneſt requeſt that ye may endeavour ſecreſy therein, for if it come amongſt antagoniſts, there is little hope of ſucceſs.

As to ſome particulars which I humbly judge will be requiſite as to the carrying it on, I have ſent in a line to Mr. Alexander; and though I cannot be poſitive to ſay, either that I can do it, or where, yet I think it will be expedient that you immediately ſend over Mr. Alexander with a commiſſion to Mr. Lining to ſet about the trial of it *. And for me, I ſhall not be wanting in it. I ſay again, ſecreſy both here and at home is abſolutely neceſſary.

You ſee then what way the Lord is taking with you, training us in every ſtep, to live by faith. Be not diſcouraged, *In the mount of the Lord it ſhall be ſeen.* Let us but follow, and not run before him, and he will provide. That place Pſalm lxviii. 17,—24. at this time has been ſweet to ſome. There has been a tempting of God in the hearts of many, and a luſting after miniſters; they aſked meat for their luſt, Pſal. lxxviii. 18. but it is to be feared that as he has given them in his anger, ſo he will take them away in his wrath; and ſuch beacons are ſurely not ſet up to us for nought. It is true, when we ſee the Lord ſending out, and fitting faithful labourers, we are to meet and embrace them, but till then we are to ſtand ſtill, for the Lord will have his officers both of

* Mr. Alexander Shields did not go, and Mr. Lining was ordained before the letters which were ſent by the next meeting arrived. How clear views Mr. Hamilton had of the things and perſons ſpoken of in this letter, was evident to many afterward, who at that time took but little notice of it, or were diſſatisfied with it. And though Michael Shields doth not mention it and ſeveral other of Mr. Hamilton's letters, yet having the originals written with his own hand, it was thought good to inſert them, for the Reader's ſatisfaction.

his own chooſing and levying, and only to run on his commiſſion, his errands and work. And as I think, this is the ſureſt, and ſafeſt every way, for folk now a-days, are ill to ken, and it is not every one that the Lord will now employ.

I ſhall only add a word as to Mr. Lining, his piety, and tenderneſs, ſince ever I knew him, was never ſuſpected by me, though I ever judged that a more public, conſtant, reſolute, bold and valiant ſpirit was requiſite in him, for the work of our day; but knowing that this was his own burden and exerciſe, and that you have had ſome times experience of him ſince his parting from me, gives me the more freedom to act therein on your demands.

Now worthy friends, look to the Lord himſelf for your direction, upholding, encouragement, and upmaking, for come what will, it ſhall be well with the righteous, and all ſhall end in a public teſtimony of divine favour to theſe who wait upon the Lord. Though he ſhould ſhake heaven and earth, yet he will be the hope of his people, and the ſtrength of Iſrael.

I hope ye will not forget me; thus commending you to the word of his grace, I am,

Worthy friends, your undoubted and ſympathiſing friend in the Lord,

ROBERT HAMILTON.

MAY *7th*, 1688.

It was likewiſe reſolved by the Meeting that a Letter ſhould be written to Mr. Alexander Cameron (brother to Mr. Richard) then at Utrecht, and another to Mr. John Niſbet, then alſo there, which were both drawn up and ſent repreſenting our low and deſtitute condition, the great deſire to have the goſpel preached to us, and ſhewing that our intereſt in them induced us to deſire to know what help we might expect from them.

The ſum of the Letter to Mr. Cameron follows.

Reverend Sir, beloved in the Lord,

WE may ſay in our caſe, *is it nothing to all you that paſs by? behold and ſee, if there be any ſorrow like unto our ſorrow, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted us in the day of his fierce anger*, &c. We are hunted, cruelly per-

perſecuted, killed all the day long, and counted as ſheep for the ſlaughter, yet without pity, and inſtead of ſympathy which we might expect from all ſpectators, and demand of all concerned in the cauſe of Chriſt; we are filled with contempt and ſcorn and reproach, not only from the proud, but from friends at eaſe, and with the ſame contempt and contradiction, in the ſame words and arguments, and from the ſame grounds from the bulk and body of profeſſed friends, that we meet with from all the Atheiſts, Papiſts and malignants in the generation. And it were the more ſupportable if this oppoſition were only levelled at us;—but it is our cauſe and teſtimony that is the mark that all their arrows from all airths ſhoot at, which we are perſuaded cannot but wound and wrong the declarative glory of Jehovah, and his Chriſt: For we know of nothing that we contend and ſuffer for, that is not founded upon, and conſonant to the law and the teſtimony, the written word of God, and the conſtantly confeſſed, and recorded principles of the reformed and covenanted church of Scotland, in its doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline and government, againſt Popery, Prelacy, Eraſtianiſm, Sectarianiſm, tyranny, and all union, and communion with, and toleration given, or taken to, or from the men of theſe abjured courſes. And we ſeparate from nothing, and from none upon the account of any thing that is not condemned, and commanded to be withdrawn from, by the acts and conſtitutions of this covenanted church in her beſt and pureſt times.

Among all the calumnies caſt upon us there is none more grievous than that odious one, that we have caſt off all the miniſters of the church of Scotland, which is more weighty now, when by this late lamentable ſtroke of holy providence, we are deprived of all our actual ordained miniſters, that ventured upon all hazards, to declare to us faithfully the whole counſel of God, and concurred with us in our teſtimony. Of this charge we think, not only what is ſaid in our Informatory Vindication doth ſufficiently exoner us, but alſo our practice in ſeeking out, calling and hearing all miniſters, qualified as the word of God, and conſtitutions of the church of Scotland require them to be, cloathed with Chriſt's orderly commiſſion, free of ſcandals, miniſterial and perſonal, free of errors, defections and compliances, and diſcharging their commiſſion faithfully. This in ſome

meaſure

meaſure we have eſſayed, ſpeaking to ſome, writing to others, and we reſolve there ſhall be none in the nation, or out of it, belonging to it, adhering to, and aſſerting Preſbyterian covenanted principles, ſo qualified as we have declared, and as all will grant miniſters ought to be, and willing to preach the everlaſting goſpel among us, but we ſhall ſearch for him, treat with him, invite and call him to declare to us all the counſel of God. And we hope this ſhall not be altogether fruitleſs with thoſe that are not implicitly prejudiced againſt us, and are not altogether unwilling to venture upon the difficulties of our lot: We confeſs there are many diſcouragements to deter from concurring with us—any whom the ſimple ſenſe of duty, ſympathy with our caſe, and zeal for the cauſe will not drive out to us. But we hope the Lord will hear our cries for faithful miniſters, and when the poor and needy ſeek water, and their tongue faileth for thirſt, he will not forſake nor diſappoint the expectation of a deſtitute people.

We cannot indeed, in our preſent circumſtances, join with, or partake of ordinances from any miniſter that either hath addreſſed for, or accepted of, or doth improve this toleration, in obedience to, or obſervance of the court modifications, preaching under the ſconce of it, without a witneſs againſt it, even though he be not fixed in a particular place: But we refuſe not to call and hear any miniſters that are free of all theſe degrees of acceſſion to it. And can clear himſelf of, and relinquiſh that and all other defections, and compliances in our day, albeit he hath not yet, or is not able to preach in the fields.

In this manner of ſimplicity and ingenuity, we uſe not to hide, cover or cloak, but freely diſcover our principles and practice to all, expecting ſome at leaſt, will be ſo free and faithful as either to approve or ſhew the grounds of their diſapproving and condemning our way; but we have this ingredient in our ſorrows, as bitter as any, that though all cry out againſt us, and condemn us, as following an erroneous courſe; yet none will take the pains, by word or write, to admoniſh or inſtruct us, how or wherein we err. Yea though we have ſent to many miniſters, both the Vindication, and the Teſtimony againſt the toleration, (which you may ſee from John Haddow) ſome would not look upon the Vindication, and none will ſhew us their mind of either.

Sir,

Sir, we expect more of you, in whom we claim more then a common intereſt and plead a nearer relation and reſpect, both on account of your faithful and famous brother, a renowned miniſter and martyr of Jeſus Chriſt, who owned and ſealed with his blood theſe truths we contend and ſuffer for; and who had great hopes of you that the Lord would engage and ſpirit you to own the ſame: and upon your own account, for the ſavoury report we have, of the Lord's grace conferred upon you, fitting you for his ſervice in the work of the goſpel: and for that we know you were once with us, and we hope that when you ſhall make a nearer enquiry into our way, you ſhall not be far from us now.

However our love to you, and confidence in your candor doth oblige and embolden us to take the freedom to let you know how you have diſpleaſed and diſcouraged us joining with that Aſſociation party, in a conjunction with ſome, who were your brother's murderers (at leaſt had a great acceſſion to it) and betrayers of the cauſe; and that you have ſo long ſtood at ſuch a diſtance from us,—withdrawing your countenance and correſpondence in our darkneſs and diſtreſs.

We pray you, take more cognizance of our caſe, and inſpection into our cauſe; and ſignify your mind unto us, wherein you ſee us right or wrong; and do us the favour to let us know what we may expect of your concurrence, which we earneſtly deſire, pray for, long for, and are ambitious of.

In expectation of your anſwer, commending you to the care, keeping, and conduct of the great Shepherd, the Rock of Iſrael, We reſt, *&c.*

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

To this Letter Mr. Cameron returned anſwer in a Letter directed to Michael Shields, wherein he ſhewed ſympathy, and ingenuity in telling that the Societies and he had not the ſame light in ſeveral things in their Teſtimony againſt the toleration, and therefore he ſaw not how he could be ſerviceable to them; and delayed to give any anſwer with reſpect to his joining with Argyle and his Aſſociation, until he came home, which would be about the beginning of winter.

The

The Letter to Mr. Niſbet was near the ſame in ſubſtance with the above, to which, ſo far as I remember, he returned no anſwer.

It was further reſolved by the Meeting that the laſt Thurſday of March ſhould be obſerved by all our Societies, for prayer, humiliation and faſting, upon account of the great ſtroke we met with, in being deprived of two faithful miniſters of the goſpel, and alſo, for our ſecurity and ſtupidity under all our ſtrokes.

It was in like manner reſolved that the firſt Thurſday of May, ſhould be kept, and ſpent by our Societies in earneſt cries unto the Lord, in behalf of Mr. Boyd, that he may be ſent forth to the work of the miniſtry, and ſpirited for the work of the day, and may be faithful and valiant in proſecuting the Teſtimony, as it was left by the witneſſes of Chriſt now removed.

And it was appointed that the next General Meeting ſhould meet at *Lothers* upon the firſt Thurſday of June.

Sometime after this Meeting Mr. Shields with others being met together after deliberation, it was thought fit that the Societies ſhould be deſired to obſerve a day for prayer in behalf of Mr. Thomas Lining; the time being appointed and the cauſes drawn up, the Societies were acquainted therewith, as followeth.

The laſt Thurſday of May was agreed upon to be kept by our Societies, a day of prayer to the Lord, that he would be graciouſly pleaſed to fit and furniſh, and ſpirit Thomas Lining for the great work of the miniſtry: And that a door might be opened for a lawful, cleanly, and approven ordination, and that he might come home to us with the Lord's bleſſing, and be a faithful and fruitful labourer in the Lord's vineyard.

ACCORDING as it was appointed by the laſt Meeting, our General Meeting conveened at the *Lothers* upon the 7th day of June.—After prayer, and modelling of the Meeting,

It was reſolved by them that all our Societies lay out themſelves in their reſpective bounds, to collect money, according to their ability for helping to relieve ſome of our brethren under bondage and ſlavery in Barbados. And that they ſhould ſend what they got collected, to Edinburgh—Accordingly after this Meeting ſome money for the foreſaid ends; and the perſons in bondage

(who

(who were laſt baniſhed) were relieved thereby, as ſhall be ſhown afterward.

This day there was little other thing done, in regard of news which came to it that Mr. David Houſton (who was taken in January before, had been kept long in cloſe priſon, and badly uſed) was brought priſoner out of Ireland, and to be carried priſoner to Edinburgh, where it was feared they would take away his life.

This being known, excited the Meeting to think upon a way to relieve him from theſe bloody murderers.—Whereupon ſome ſtayed together ſeveral days, and others went to acquaint their friends about it, that they might be in readineſs to aſſiſt in the reſcue. But he did not come at the time he was expected; Nevertheleſs ſome few days thereafter, he was relieved at *Carbelpath*, where ſome ſoldiers were killed.

This action of reſcuing Mr. David, was diverſely talked of, ſome condemning it, others approving the ſame. But albeit Mr. David after this, was diſcovered, not only to be ſhort in his naturals; but alſo ſome began to be jealous that there was too much ground for ſome of theſe things he was charged with*. And likewiſe that ſince, the Societies have diſcountenanced him; yet conſidering under what notion they looked upon him then, not only as a faithful miniſter, but a zealous ſufferer for the teſtimony of Chriſt, and as one drawn unto death, and perſecuted innocently by adverſaries, as they thought themſelves obliged in point of duty to endeavour his reſcue, ſo they cannot be juſtly blamed for the ſame.

Upon the 9th day of June, many of theſe ſent to this General Meeting (who had not gone home, but were waiting for the coming of Mr. David, as is ſaid) and ſome others did meet together near *Coge's-head*, where by them after deliberation, ſome things were concluded on.

* Some old accounts ſhew that by bad uſage in priſon, and the hurt he received when he was relieved, his feet being bound under the horſes belly, in the ſcuffle he fell, and his head trailed ſometime on the ground, before he could be relieved, by reaſon of which, he loſt his teeth, and conſequently diſtinctneſs of ſpeech: But chiefly as he ſhewed publicly his diſſatisfaction with the meaſures that after ſhortly were fallen upon, *viz.* ſupplicating the Convention of Eſtates, raiſing of Angus's regiment, conjunction with the miniſters, *&c.* theſe cauſed his brethren to ſlight him, and many of the people followed their example, which much diſcouraged the good old man, he went to Ireland and *lived a few years, and died* there.

It was resolved that a Letter Testimonial, and Recommendation should be written, subscribed, and sent to Thomas Lining then at ——— (in the Netherlands) in order to his obtaining of ordination.—Accordingly it was drawn up. But (so far as I remember) he was ordained before it came to his hand.— A Copy of which follows.

To our much respected, and dearly beloved Brother, Mr. Thomas Lining.

THE Unanimous Call, and earnest invitation of some Select Societies in the Southern Shires of Scotland, suffering for the ancient Testimony; united in the approven Confession, and adhering to the Covenanted Reformation of this reformed church, for his obtaining and exercising the office of preaching the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ among us; with an humble Address, and earnest supplication to all the godly and faithful ministers of Christ, to whom he may apply himself for that effect, that they may confer upon him, and confirm him in the full power of the ministerial office.

WE Undersubscribers in the name, at the desire, and with the consent of all the suffering Societies in the Southern shires of Scotland, met together at our General Correspondence at the *Cogt's-head*, 9th of March, 1688.——Considering, and with regret reflecting upon our deplorable, and almost desolate and desperate-like case, still more decaying and declining to the worse (under the indignation of our holy God, punishing us for our own, and our fathers backslidings, falling from first love, breach of covenant, unfaithfulness under many wonders of mercies and gospel privileges) how now after all our sad sufferings and persecutions unto bonds, banishments and blood, and many weary wanderings in extremity of hazard and hardship, we have sustained from a popish, prelatical, and malignant faction, for professing and confessing an adherence unto the covenanted Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government of this reformed church, by them overturned: Yea, and now when all others are at ease under the shadow and protection of the present toleration, offered unto, and accepted by men of all persuasions, on terms destructive

ſtructive to, everſive of, and inconſiſtent with the conſtant Teſtimony of the church of Scotland, and the liberties, laws, conſtitutions, and covenants both of the church and nation (which becauſe we are excluded from, and dare not partake of) we are not only killed all the day long, and counted as ſheep for the ſlaughter, but, (inſtead of ſympathy that ſufferers might expect in ſuch a caſe) exceedingly filled with contempt, with the ſcorn of them that are at eaſe, and with the contempt of the proud. And which is more inſupportable than all burdens, we are in great meaſure reduced to a famine of the faithfully preached goſpel, being by men's violence of late deprived of two faithful miniſters, the one a now glorified martyr, the other a confeſſor yet in bonds, whereby the ignorant among us are in hazard of periſhing for lack of knowledge, the unſtable in danger of ſeduction, through abounding errors crept in at the gate of this toleration, the doubtful in danger of deſperate halting, the mourners in danger of diſcouragement, and the poor and needy of ſtarving in hunger after the bread of life, which, they have none to break unto them: And the teſtimony for the prerogatives of our head, and king, and privileges of his kingdom againſt all encroachment made thereon, hitherto propagated, like to be buried in oblivion, while there is no ſtandard bearer valiant for the truth upon the earth.

Upon theſe accounts, in this preſſing neceſſity of danger and diſtreſs, ſeeing through the injury of the times, perſecutions and iniquity of its defections, we can have no acceſs to provide ourſelves at home with miniſters, except we ſhall ſay a ſinful confederacy with them that ſay a confederacy, and come under inſnaring obligations to abandon our covenants, cauſe, and teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt, in a ſurceaſe from all oppoſition to the open attempts of Antichriſtian enemies to introduce Popery in our land.

We can no longer forbear unanimouſly to call, and ſeriouſly to invite you, our much reſpected, and dearly beloved brother Mr. Thomas Lining,—much longed for in the Lord, to endeavour to obtain a Poteſtative Miſſion unto the miniſtry, from ſuch faithful miniſters of the goſpel (holding the Head Chriſt and the foundation ſure, and maintaining the univerſal teſtimony of Chriſtians, and the general teſtimony of Proteſtants, againſt the greater and leſſer Antichriſt, not contradic-

ting ours; nor declining from their own reformation by defection or ſchiſm, but wreſtling againſt corruptions not yet reformed) as after trial of your ſufficiency, ſhall in Chriſt's appointed way confer the ſame upon you; and come over to exerciſe the office of preaching the everlaſting goſpel of Chriſt, to declare the whole counſel of God, and aſſert, and maintain the teſtimony of Jeſus among us: which we have the more confidence to urge and obteſt, becauſe you being ſequeſtrate into the ſtudy of that holy calling, at our deſire and by our conſent and ſuffrage; as we have heretofore ſent you our Letter Teſtimonial, which here we confirm, atteſting after long acquaintance the ſatisfying evidences you have given to us of your blameleſs, Chriſtian and exemplary converſation, fervor and faithfulneſs in religion, ſoundneſs and ſeriouſneſs in the principles, profeſſion, and practice thereof; ſtrengthening the hopes we have conceived of your qualifications wherewith the Lord hath fitted you for the work of the miniſtry; ſo having ſuch a peculiar intereſt and concern in you, and upon many grounds ſatisfying to us, ſuch an eſteem of you as determines us to chooſe and call you for our miniſter when the Lord ſhall clothe you with his orderly commiſſion.

We have therefore ſolemnly ſet time apart, with faſting and humiliation, to pray that our heavenly Father, the Father of mercies, and our Head, the King of the church, the Lord of the harveſt, now when the harveſt is great, and the labourers few, may fit, furniſh, ſpirit and ſend you forth among us to labour in his harveſt. And in the believing expectation of an anſwer of peace in this matter, we take the confidence to recommend you to the reverend Preſbytery of ———, humbly beſeeching, earneſtly requeſting and obteſting them in the bowels of Chriſt, that in ſympathy with our diſtreſſed caſe; the fellow members of the ſame body in pity to them that are hungering after the goſpel, in their love to their maſter Jeſus Chriſt, and zeal for the propagation of his kingdom, and continuation of his teſtimony, now like to fall here, where ſometimes it was diſplayed with power and glory, they may by the power they have received from Chriſt, after trial, ordain you a miniſter of the goſpel, and commit unto you, and confirm you in the full power of diſpenſing all the ordinances of Jeſus Chriſt.

In

In witneſs of which, our unanimous call and earneſt requeſt, we have appended our ſubſcriptions, ſo many as we thought ſufficient to gather. - - - - - - - - -

It was alſo reſolved by the meeting, that Colin Aliſon ſhould go to Kintyre to deſire and invite Mr. Daroch to come to us, in order to have a conference with him, and to bear his expences by the way.

Accordingly Colin and James Inglis went the length of Greenock, but hearing he was gone to Ireland, they returned.

And it was reſolved, that the laſt Thurſday of *June* ſhould be obſerved by our ſocieties a day of faſting and prayer unto the Lord for Mr. David Houſtoun; and in general, for the lamentable loſs we ſuſtained by being deprived of his miniſtry; and in particular that our petitions be accomodated to the emergents of providence with reſpect to his being relieved.

It was alſo reſolved that the laſt Thurſday of *July* ſhould be obſerved by our ſocieties a day of faſting, mourning and humiliation for the ſad want of the exerciſe, and the right exerciſe of zeal and public ſpirit for God, appearing not only,

1*ſt*, In our deadneſs under goſpel-ordinances, and indifferency under the want of them, little hunger after them, little profiting by them, and little ſenſe of both. But,

2*dly*, In our great inclination to backſliding from, and not putting a due eſtimation on the matter of our teſtimony, not being concerned to contend with earneſtneſs for it, and the carnal paſſionate way of others in debating with thoſe we differ from.

3*dly*, Our remiſſneſs and ſlackneſs in keeping ſocieties, frivolous excuſes to ſhift them; our indifferent way of performing duties in them, many diſorders in them, and little zeal and tenderneſs to remove them.

4*thly*, The abounding of offences among us, particularly the ruſhing of many into offenſive courſes to procure marriage.

5*thly*, Together with the juſt puniſhment of our many offences, the manifold reproaches caſt upon the way and cauſe of God, that ought to be as a ſword in our bones, and that they are caſt upon us not only from enemies, but from many miniſters and profeſſors; and that we have greater ſenſe of reproach on ourſelves than on the

cauſe;

cauſe; as alſo, that many are weakened and diſcouraged in duty, or ſcarred from it by reproach.

6thly, Chiefly our want of zeal againſt Popery; little indignation againſt, or fear of the manifeſt appearances of the approach and eſtabliſhment of it in this land, and the little ſerious wreſtling for the ruin and fall of Babylon, and that the Lord would divide and overturn the builders and ſupporters thereof, which is a neceſſary duty recommended to be minded at all times, eſpecially on this day of faſtiug.

7thly, And in a ſpecial manner, the little extent of our zeal, little minding the dark places of the land, little concernedneſs with the caſe of England or Ireland, though they be in the ſame covenant with ourſelves; little ſympathy with the ſufferings of other churches, as France, Hungary, and Piedmont; for which cauſe we are juſtly puniſhed with the want of ſympathy from all.

It was in like manner reſolved that the laſt Thurſday of Auguſt ſhould be obſerved by all our ſocieties a day of faſting and mourning for our ſad ſhort-coming in enſwering our profeſſion under the croſs, appearing by many lamentable evidences.

1ſt, The ignorance of many in ſocieties, even in the fundamental principles of religion, with the little pains they take to inform themſelves, and the little grief that others ſhew in the ſenſe of it, while they rather inſult over it than mourn for it.

2dly, Our idleneſs and trifling away our time, our infrequency in ſecret duties, and little edifying diſcourſe with others.

3dly, Many diſcoveries of lightneſs, looſeneſs, gaudineſs and other miſcarriages unbeſeeming the goſpel and the cauſe of Chriſt.

4thly, Much worldly mindedneſs, covetouſneſs, and carking carefulneſs about worldly things.

5thly, Our little faſting in ſecret, or privately in families, our ſuperficial and hypocritical way of performing duties, and mocking of God in our humiliations.

6thly, Our hardneſs of heart under all theſe diſpenſations we have met with, both of judgment and mercy; little ſenſe of the wrath of God againſt the land, and particularly againſt ourſelves, and little enquiring into the cauſes of it, or the acknowledgment of the effects of it.

And

And it was appointed that the next General Meeting ſhould meet at ——, upon the firſt Wedneſday of *September*.

In the interval betwixt the laſt meeting and this; as it was given out, the Duke of York's Queen was with child; ſo it was ſaid ſhe was delivered of a ſon *June* 10. who was made prince of Wales; (for which there was a day of rejoicing kept at Edinburgh, and at night with fire-works). But there were ſeveral pregnant demonſtrations that this was a mere impoſture and cheat put upon the nation. And albeit the Papiſts did look upon the having a prince, bred and brought up in their religion to ſucceed to the three crowns as a moſt feaſible way to ſettle themſelves in their vain hopes of bringing this notion under the yoke of Popery and ſlavery, yet herein they were mercifully diſappointed, and the wicked enſnared in the work of their own hands.

As is hinted above, Mr. Houſtoun being reſcued, and ſome ſoldiers killed in that action; the ſame made great noiſe, and the cruel enemy was not a little vexed thereat; who, to demonſtrate their rage againſt poor people for doing their duty, emitted a declaration ordaining courts to be kept immediately in the weſtern ſhires, in order to find out the actors and abettors of thoſe who had been at the reſcue; which courts were accordingly kept in theſe ſhires, yet few or none who were active in that buſineſs were diſcovered, though in ſome places of the country the perſons who ſat in theſe courts were very ſevere and ſtrict in their inquiſition.

About this time there was a great ſearch in Edinburgh, the occaſion of which was variouſly talked of, but the conſequences thereof were lamentable: many being involved in ſin and dreadful perjury. One queſtion commonly enquired at people, was, If they owned the covenants? which was done not only by Claverhouſe and Col. Douglaſs, who were the principal inquiſitors to whom theſe who were taken, were brought; but alſo by many ſingle ſoldiers in their ſearchings up and down the town.

This Meeting (according to the appointment of the laſt) was to have been upon the firſt Wedneſday of *September*; but it was thought fit to anticipate the ſame, by reaſon of ſome letters that had lately come from the Netherlands,

therlands, ſhewing that Mr. Lining was to be ordained. But for the better anſwering the ſame, there behoved to be a General Meeting to ſend ſome letters, particularly one to the miniſters of Embden, and another to Robert Hamilton, for which cauſe advertiſements were ſent to the ſocieties to ſend their Commiſſioners for a General Meeting at *Camp's-head-heights*, upon the firſt day of *Auguſt*.

ACCORDING to which appointment, A General Meeting did meet, day and place foreſaid: After prayer, *&c.*

It was reſolved that theſe who had not collected money and ſent it in to Edinburgh according to the appointment of the laſt meeting, for helping to relieve ſome of our brethren in bondage in Barbadoes, ſhould be deſired to lay out themſelves in collecting what money (in regard that which was already got would not do it) they could get, and ſend the ſame into Edinburgh, againſt the 22d or 24th of this month of *Auguſt*; and Dr. Furd and Michael Shields were deſired to receive the money and deliver it unto, and make the tranſaction with the perſon who was to undertake for their relief.

Accordingly this was done; and the money was delivered to the foreſaid perſon, who gave ſcurity either to redeem the perſons, or to give back the money again; in performance whereof he ſent a bill for it, to his correſpondent in London, and he ſent another to a gentleman in Barbadoes, who helped to tranſact for the relief of the ſaid perſons; moſt part of whom came home not long after. John Ruſſel and John Stewart (two of the baniſhed who had been relieved by the reſt and ſent home to give an account of their condition unto friends, in order to relieve them) were active to get money collected and ſent away: Likewiſe they wrote a letter to James Baxter and another friend, to be communicated to the reſt; the ſubſtance of which follows.

Dear Friends,

YOUR friends have done their endeavour to get you redeemed,——and for that end have given in here 4300 Merks Scots, which in Barbadoes is to be anſwered by a man of credit,—according as every one can be agreed for with his Maſter. So ye are deſired to

do

do your utmoſt both for your own and the relief of your comrades,—and it is thought fit that you keep it as cloſe from your maſters as you can, until you make the bargain with them, leſt they getting notice that money is come for your relief, do heighten your price, and ſo the ſum be not ſufficient, though it is all that can be got, and ſome have ſtretched themſelves very far. We hope the perſon who is to give the money, will give you his advice and aſſiſtance.——

The perſons to be relieved are you two, James Douglas, Thomas Brown, John Buchanan, Alexr. Bailie, Geo. Paton, Geo. White, Gilbert M'Cully, Robert Mitchel, John Wight, John White, George White and Agneſs Kier. As for John Aitken and William Hannay, their relations have taken another way for their relief.

If there be more of the money than purchaſes your relief, apply it to the ſupply of your neceſſity in your home-coming. But you are deſired to keep account of the way how you diſpoſe of it. — — — — — —

It was alſo reſolved by the meeting, that a ſupplicatory Letter ſhould be written and ſubſcribed by ſome elders, and ſent to the venerable Claſſis of the miniſters of Chriſt in Embden, repreſenting to them our lamentable caſe, and imploring their help.

This Letter was accordingly drawn up, and ſubſcribed by ſeveral elders, and ſent to the ſaid Claſſis; but it came too late as to Mr. Lining's ordination, he being ordained before; to get which done Mr. Hamilton was chiefly aſſiſting. A copy of the letter follows.

To the Venerable Claſſis of the Reverend, Learned and Godly Miniſters of Chriſt in Embden: *Some ſocieties of profeſſors and confeſſors of Chriſt, wounded with perſecutions, broken with diviſions and loaded with reproaches, ſuffering for the Preſbyterian and covenanted reformation of the Church of* Scotland; *Do wiſh Grace, Mercy and Peace.*

Very Reverend, very Learned and Godly Fathers, beloved and honoured in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt,

AS it is the greateſt rejoicing of all the lovers of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in ſuch a doleful day to hear of

any church's enjoying pure ordinances, in unity, verity, peace, purity, plenty and power, ſtanding faſt in the liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made them free, wreſtling againſt corruptions and defections; aſpiring to a growing reformation, contending for the faith delivered to the ſaints, and maintaining the teſtimony of Jeſus againſt all obloquies and oppoſitions of adverſaries: So in this cloudy and dark day the light and luſtre of the church of Embden, meriting ſuch a character, (like a city ſet on a hill which cannot be hid) hath not only affected the eyes of other reformed and ſuffering churches, congratulating your happineſs, and adoring the mercy of the divine majeſty on your behalf; but the favoury report thereof reaching us alſo, hath filled our hearts with much joy, even when mourning under all the grievances of perſecution, defection, diviſion and confuſion, that ever any part of Chriſt's myſtical body was made to groan under.

We have heard how early that reverend church of yours embraced the reformation, what famous and faithful champions the Lord hath ſtirred up from time to time to advance and aſſert it; to what a degree of beauty and holineſs, truth, order and union did it arrive, maugre all difficulties; How much the Belgic and other reformed churches were obliged to it for communication of light, and eſtabliſhment in doctrine and diſcipline; what a ſanctuary it ſometimes was to many of Chriſt's exiles, perſecuted for religion out of the United Provinces, France and our own Britain. But all this is not ſo comforting and confirming to us under our preſent calamities, (ſeeing we know by lamentable experience at home, how eminent a church may be in all theſe prerogatives, as Scotland ſometime was, and yet by falling from firſt love,—forgetting firſt works, may afterward forfeit all that glory) as that we are informed that you are ſolicitous not to loſe that deſerved renown, and ambitious to imitate—your predeceſſors zeal for the cauſe of Chriſt and propagation of his kingdom, and love to his people, whereof you give an ample demonſtration in your exemplary ſympathy with all afflicted churches; a grace which this day, to us at leaſt, ſeems to be very rare.

Which conſiderations, together with the preſſure of our neceſſity, which gives boldneſs to the moſt baſhful, and courage to the greateſt cowards, do embolden and encourage

encourage us (though unknown and very obſcure in our outward caſe, yet as poor afflicted members of the ſame body, for edifying of which ye are placed in the miniſtry, and as ſuffering ſubjects and confeſſors of the ſame King and Head, whoſe glory and intereſt you are by office tenderly to regard) to ſupplicate for a ſhare not only of that ſympathy which ye ſhew to others, but of that ſuccour which may ſuit the ſtraits of ſuffering people, hungering after goſpel-ordinances; that cannot obtain the comfortable benefit of ordained miniſters of Chriſt from whom they may receive them: Which requeſt we are hopeful your zeal for your Maſter's glory, deſire for the enlargement of his kingdom, love to all the members of his body, and pity to the perſecuted for his ſake, will not ſuffer you to refuſe, after you underſtand the caſe of theſe who ſend ſo far for your help.

We doubt not (right reverend) but your learning and concern in all the churches, hath furniſhed you with information of the great things God hath wrought for the ſometime famous, faithful and fruitful church of Scotland. How from the very firſt emerging of the reformation from the depths of Popery, nothing was then left unreformed that ever flowed from the man of ſin. Here, not only the reformation in doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline and government was calculated and advanced according to the pattern of the New Teſtament of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, and advanced to that height and pitch of purity, unity and order, that other churches were emulous of ſuch attainments; but alſo confirmed and ratified by national and ſolemn Covenants, ſeveral times renewed by all ranks, from the King to the pooreſt boor; wherein we came under ſolemn and ſacred obligations and vows to the Moſt High, to preſerve and perſevere in that uniformity of doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline and government, and to extirpate, and never re-admit any corruption or novation contrary thereunto: Particularly Popery, Prelacy, Eraſtianiſm, ſchiſm or defection, or any thing contrary to ſound doctrine and the power of godlineſs; And how then the Lord was with us in his ordinances and providences, while we were with him.

But ah! now, how far are we from that? Whence, How, and whether have we fallen? How now, *doth the city ſit ſolitary that was full of people? How is ſhe become as a widow, that was great among the nations*, and prin-

boſs among the provinces, how is ſhe become tributary? Thus now, doth the enemies roar in the midſt of the congregations? they ſet up their enſigns for ſigns, they have broken down the carved work at once, they have laid our Jeruſalem on heaps, the dead bodies of the Lord's ſervants, have they given to the fowls of the heaven; their blood have they ſhed like water round about; we are become a reproach to our neighbours, a ſcorn and deriſion to them that are round about us; and now they ſay let us cut them off from being a nation. We doubt not likewiſe but this fatal cataſtrophe, making ſuch a noiſe in the world, hath come to your ears: How, by whom, and by what means, and it cannot but be notour, even to ſtrange nations, for what cauſe Scotland hath been redacted to this deſolation, and diſſolution, at which all nations may ſtand aſtoniſhed and enquire, wherefore hath the Lord done this? what meaneth the heat of this anger? They need not a monitor to anſwer, becauſe they have forſaken the covenant of the Lord their God.

A popiſh, prelatical and malignant faction, formerly under reſtraint, and forced at leaſt to feign ſubjection, taking advantage of the nations wearineſs of the Sectarians Anarchy, and of the Cromwellian Uſurpation, and thereby through pretenſions of peace, and corrupting flatteries, mounting themſelves upon the ſupreme orb of the government, did undermine both the ſtate and the eccleſiaſtic goverment, and then breaking all bonds, did in open and audacious defiance both of God and man overturn all thoſe righteous eſtabliſhments, and upon the ruins thereof, did introduce and erect an abſolute tyranny in the ſtate, and re-introduced the old Antichriſtian yoke of abjured Dioceſian Eraſtian Prelacy, (which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear) and a blaſphemous ſacrilegious ſupremacy, diveſting the only head of the church of his prerogative royal, and his ſpouſe of the privileges wherewith he had endoted her: And by theſe means having involved the nation in the moſt heaven daring rebellion againſt the Moſt High, and attended with the groſſeſt aggravations that readily have been recorded in any church where goſpel light hath ſhined ſo bright: They have now by the late opened gate of this univerſal toleration (an unheard of device in Scotland) offering a kind of liberty to all forms and ways of religion except the old Covenanted Reformation, and at-

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tempted to re-eſtabliſh Popery, with all its retinue of idolatries, ſuperſtitions, errors and abominations.

Againſt all theſe inſolent encroachments, there hath not wanted, through grace, a ſucceſſion of faithful miniſters and elders, and people, who have kept up, and continued a teſtimony, and ſealed it with their deareſt blood, and all ſorts of ſevereſt ſufferings, until by means of enſnaring Eraſtian indulgences granted by them, and received in recognizance of their deſpotick ſupremacy, giving a licence to ſuch miniſters as were nominated, elected, and judged qualified by the ſecret counſel of the kingdom, to exerciſe their miniſtry in ſuch places as they confined them to, impoſing reſtrictions, and inſtructions to regulate, direct, and bound both matter, and manner of the exerciſe of their functions: And all this without advice or conſent of the church.

Our miniſters were firſt divided; and then after the fatal diſcomfiture of a party of our brethren, appearing in defenſive arms, for religion and liberty, lives, laws, and privileges, about nine years ago, were further, almoſt univerſally, drawn by craft, or driven by cruelty into manifeſt, and manifold defections, from the cauſe and covenant of God, prefering peace to truth, and eaſe to duty, conſulting their own intereſt, rather than the intereſt of Chriſt, abandoning the neceſſary teſtimony of that day, in that clamant caſe of confeſſion, leaving the people without a warning or witneſs, in the midſt of many errors, ſnares, and temptations, and refuſed many reiterated calls to come and declare to them the whole counſel of God.

Since which time we have been as ſheep in the midſt of wolves, a prey to all devourers, killed all day long, and counted as ſheep for the ſlaughter, proſcribed, forefaulted, miſerably oppreſſed, inter-communed, interdicted of all harbour or ſupply, comfort, or communion with any, chaſed, murdered, impriſoned, tortured, execute to the death, or baniſhed and ſold as ſlaves, in ſo arbitrary, illegal, and inhumane a way, that in ſome reſpect ours may be compared to any perſecution, primitive or modern. And, which hath been to us an affliction more inſupportable than all theſe miſeries, we have been groaning under a famine of the faithfully preached goſpel, and what through mercy we have obtained of it, was got in the peril of our lives, becauſe of the ſword of the wilderneſs, where in the open fields, expoſed to all weathers,

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we could not be without fears of bloody assaults of murdering enemies, incessantly hunting to prey upon us, and mingle our blood with our sacrifices.

All which time we have had but four ordained ministers labouring among us, three of which have been successively crowned with the garland of martyrdom: one of late this same year, and the fourth, hath been long a confessor in bonds, for the same cause of the Covenanted Reformation, which hath redacted us to more difficult, deplorable and desperate-like circumstances than ever. For we are both expressly excluded from the pretended benefit of this toleration, by provision of laws, acts and edicts, left in full force against us; and also finding ourselves obliged by the word of God, and our covenants, in our capacities to witness against the indignities done to our God, injuries done to the church, and invasions made upon our religion and liberties by this popish toleration. We are exposed to the rage of enemies, and obloquies of all, for our witnessing against this toleration, flowing from a fountain of absolute power, which all are to obey without reserve, and which all recognize and homologate, that accept of it; conveyed through such a channel as suspends, stops, and repeals our righteous laws made against papists, and in favours of our Reformation, projecting for its declared ends, the undermining of our religion, and introducing and establishing popery and slavery; for its visible and palpable effects, the increase of error, the encouragement of wickedness, the advancement of defection, the augmentation of divisions, and the abounding of all abominations; reaching in its extent, to the bringing in all these errors, and corruptions which we are obliged and sworn to extirpate, and allowing protection to all idolatry, blasphemy and heresy, and to every thing except the good old way of truth faithfully and freely declared: And offered unto, and accepted by our declining brethren on terms eversive of, inconsistent with, and destructive unto the known confession, constantly asserted principles and testimonies of this church; encroaching upon all the powers, our Lord hath conferred upon his church, both the dogmatick power modelling the doctrine, and the diatactick power disposing the order, and the critick censuring the disorders, and the exousiastick authorising the officers of the kingdom of Christ: All which are invaded, invalidated and violated by this toleration.

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Finding ourſelves obliged, we ſay, ſo far at leaſt, to witneſs againſt this new device to deſtroy what remains undeſtroyed of the work of God in our land, as to refuſe to ſay a confederacy with them that ſay ſuch a confederacy, and to ſtand aloof from all acceſſion to, participation of, or communion with ſuch a confederacy: We are therefore flouted at, as ſigns and wonders, and exceedingly filled with contempt, with the ſcorn of them that are at eaſe, and the contempt of the proud; and proſecuted with all rage and reproach, not only of the open and avowed adverſaries, but alſo from profeſſed friends, who have it for their work induſtriouſly to render us and our teſtimony odious both at home and abroad. But all this affliction imbittered with more ingredients of grief, and grievances then we have language to expreſs, we think we could, through grace, not only with patience, but alſo with complacency, comport with, ſo long as it ſhould pleaſe our gracious Father to meaſure it out to us, if we had faithful miniſters, ſent, and ſpirited of God, cloathed with his orderly commiſſion to preach the everlaſting goſpel to us and to declare the whole counſel of God, and proſecute and propagate the teſtimony, ſo that we might get it tranſmitted to poſterity.

Now (right reverend, learned, and godly) being in ſuch a caſe (as may be obvious from the few foregoing hints) that we have neither acceſs to ſolicit, nor clearneſs in point of ſucceſs, to ſeek unto, nor prevail with our tolerated miniſters for our ſuccour in this caſe, except we ſhould loſe theſe things which we have wrought, deſtroy theſe things which we have been eſſaying to build, condemn what we have ſuffered for, contradict what we have been contending for, and ſo abandon a good cauſe, and loſe a good conſcience, and comply with the preſent corruptions; ſince they neither can, nor dare anſwer our deſires in this matter: And ſo far are they from being willing to do it, that they are oppoſing all they can, and incenſing the enemies againſt us†.

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† How humbling it ought to be to all ſaints, to conſider that many of theſe who ſent this Letter, and particularly the principal penman who in a ſhort time after this, did concur, join with, and receive ordination from theſe ſame men here ſpoken of, even without any evidences of repentance for, reſentment of, or relinquiſhing, but on the contrary defending their former compliances, and retaining their rooted prejudice againſt theſe people and their Teſtimony, muſt be left with the reader.

Therefore we muſt addreſs ourſelves with this ſupplicatory epiſtle to your venerable conſiſtory, begging, and beſeeching you in the bowels of Chriſt, to confer your helping hand in this caſe of neceſſity, that with that power you have received from Chriſt, you may admit unto, and confirm in the miniſterial function, and ſend forth, fully inſtructed with the commiſſion of Chriſt's ambaſſadors, to diſpenſe the ordinances of Chriſt unto us, ſuch as either now, or ſhortly hereafter we ſhall recommend unto your wiſdom and faithfulneſs: And particularly at the time we humbly recommend our beloved brother, and much longed for in the Lord, Mr. Thomas Lining, candidate from the Univerſity of Utrecht, to whom we have ſent our Letters Teſtimonial, teſtifying our experimental acquaintance with and high eſteem of his blameleſs profeſſion, zealous confeſſion of the truths of Chriſt, exemplary converſation, and practical godlineſs, and other qualifications fitting him for that function wherewith we are deſiring him to be inveſted, ſo far as is incumbent to us to know, or cognoſce upon, with our unanimous call to him for procuring his poteſtative miſſion in the miniſtry.——We therefore earneſtly requeſt, intreat, invite, and obteſt you, for the love of Chriſt, for the glory of God, for the propagation of his goſpel, for the edification of his people in ſuch a ſtrait, that after due examination and trial of his qualifications, gifts, graces, and ſufficiency for our edification you may be pleaſed in the order appointed by the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in the New Teſtament, to confer upon him, and confirm him in the full power, ordination, and commiſſion, of an ordained miniſter of the goſpel of Chriſt, to preach, adminiſter the ſacraments, and exerciſe diſcipline and government according to Chriſt's appointment.——Earneſtly deſiring the help of your prayers for us in our low caſe.

We conclude with our apprecations of grace, mercy, and peace, counſel, conduct, ſucceſs, and perſeverance to you from the God of all grace and glory, And ſubſcribe ourſelves, *&c.*

It was further reſolved that a Letter ſhould be written and ſubſcribed by Michael Shields, and ſent to Mr. Hamilton then at *Embden*, acknowledging the ſenſe we have of his being helpful to us in our low condition.—Which accordingly was done.—A copy of which followeth.

To

To the Right Honourable, and much Honoured Gentleman Mr. ROBERT HAMILTON, *now ſojourning in* Embden.—*The United Societies of ſome Preſbyterians, perſecuted for the Teſtimony of the Church of* Scotland, *do wiſh grace, mercy, and peace.*

Right Honourable, and much honoured in the Lord,

WE are under many obligations to acknowledge with thankful hearts, to the praiſe of God, and alſo with grateful remembrance of your care, diligence, zeal, and labour of love (and that ſo much the more that you have been upon our account ſo much expoſed to rage and reproach, from all hands) that you have been very happily and honourably inſtrumental many times, and many ways, in ſtrengthening and ſuccouring us, in our loweſt ſtraits, and procuring help from ſtrangers, when we could not ſee whence to hope for it: And that your exile for the cauſe of Chriſt hath not been ſo unpleaſant to you, though attended with many afflicting circumſtances, as it hath been profitable to us, in repreſenting our caſe and vindicating our cauſe to ſtrangers, and procuring to us pity, and ſympathy from them, when we could get none at home.

Eſpecially, and chiefly, it can never be forgotten by us, yea it will be memorated by them that are yet unborn, when you, and we are gone, how ſeaſonably your hand was made uſe of, by the gracious diſpoſal of our glorious Head and King, the mighty One of *Jacob*, as inſtrumental in ſending to us a welcome meſſenger of peace, and glad tidings, fully inſtructed with the goſpel of grace, our ſometimes honoured miniſter, and now a glorified martyr for the word of God, and teſtimony of Jeſus, Mr. James Renwick, whoſe praiſe ſhall be here perpetuated, as long as our Lord ſhall have an intereſt here to be contended for, or zeal for the ſame ſhall continue with the confeſſors of it.

O how were our hands ſtrengthened, our hearts revived, refreſhed, comforted, and confirmed in the ways of the Lord, even in the midſt of our fiery furnaces, afflictions, perſecutions, neceſſities, and diſtreſſes, when we could at any rate have acceſs to the enjoyment of his miniſtry, in the Glens, Fenns, Mountains, Muirs, Moſſes and remoteſt retirements of our wilderneſs, while

he was carrying the Lord's banner of love, and the standard of truth displayed among us, crying aloud and not sparing, as a voice crying in the wilderness, faithfully warning us of the sins, snares and dangers of the times; and bearing witness for the truths and duties opposed by enemies and abandoned by friends in our day: which, while alive, he fruitfully confirmed by his ministerial, and ambassador-becoming practice: Approving himself as the minister of God, in much patience, in necessities, afflictions, distresses, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings, by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand, and the left, by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report, as a deceiver, and yet true, as unknown, and yet well known, as dying, and behold living, as chastened, and not killed, as sorowful, and yet always rejoicing, as poor, yet making many rich, as having nothing, and yet possessing all things: And when dying, he faithfully crowned all, by overcoming through the blood of the Lamb and the word of his testimony, not loving his life unto the death for the truths of his princely Master, which he sealed with much patience, meekness, humility, constancy, stedfastness, courage, and resolution, love and zeal, as was confounding to enemies, convincing to neutrals, confirming to halters, comforting to friends, and admirable to all.

But now, alas! Sir, we are made to know the worth of such a minister, by the word of him; the want now, is as sorrowful, as the enjoyment for a while was joyful: Our detestable indifferency, our stupid sluggishness, our unthankfulness, unfaithfulness, unfruitfulness under, and contempt of the gospel, have provoked the holy Lord to remove him, and deprive us of his ministry: And the same procuring causes have promerited, and protracted this long, lasting, and weary famine of gospel ordinances, under which we still languish, wherein we are redacted to many mournful miseries, for want of ordained ministers.

Hence the ignorant are perishing, and like to be a prey to all errors now abounding, and encouraged under the wings of this toleration; the zealous for want of guides in hazard to run upon right-hand extravagancies;

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the lukewarm, (which are the greateſt number) in danger to decline to left-hand defections; backſliders waxing bold, and bleſſing themſelves in their apoſtacies, conformities and compliances with the time's ſins, ſnares, errors and corruptions. The generality are ſaying a confederacy with, and walking in the way of the people of this generation; and the Lord is become *a ſtone of ſtumbling, and a rock of offence*, a gin and a ſnare to both the houſes of Iſrael, whereby many are fallen and broken, and ſnared and taken. The malignant and prelatic party are inſulting over us; the tolerated Preſbyterians are inveighing bitterly againſt us; the halters between two opinions are inclining and declining ſtill to the worſe; many deeply exerciſed ſouls are diſtracted under legal terrors, while they have no comforter; many tempted with Satan's darts and the time's ſubdolous ſnares, are entangled and overcome, while they have no counſellor; *The poor and needy want water, and their tongue faileth for thirſt*, deſiring the ſincere milk of the word, and cannot find it ſincerely, publicly, powerfully and faithfully preached; innumerable children coming into, and going out of the world, and of ſeveral years old, wanting baptiſm. The harveſt is great, but labourers are few, and the few that are, are outwearied with work and many wreſtlings under inſupportable difficulties.

In the mean time, the perſecution is very hot, and in many reſpects harder and heavier to conflict with than before the toleration, which as it hath brought eaſe to ſome, purchaſed at a dear rate of ſelling truth and ſhifting duty, ſo it hath brought greater bondage and heavier burdens to us, who as we are excluded, ſo dare no more partake of it than we durſt of former ſnares offered under the notion of favours, from the ſame party, for the ſame ends. Priſons are daily filling, ſome threatned with death. One hath lately been murdered in the fields. Courts are holding up and down the country for taking up a roll of our names, offering all their liberty to go either to the Maſs, or to the Quakers, or to the Prelatic curates, or to the tolerated meetings of Preſbyterians; but interdicting under the pain of death, either to countenance our meetings in the fields, whither their fury hath forced us, or to converſe or ſupply us with ſo much as a drink of water; and that which is more bitter, our tolerated brethren, gentlemen and mi-

ny miniſters alſo, are preſent and aſſiſting at theſe courts, informing againſt us, and inſtigating our perſecutors against us. The gentlemen putting us from our tenements and habitations under them. But words are wanting to utter our grievances. But, Sir, we hope you are not a ſtranger, unacquainted or unconcerned.

In a word therefore, the deſign of all this confuſed repreſentation of our dolorous caſe, is to recommend to your wonted care and ſedulous and ſerious diligence this weighty caſe of procuring the ſupply of a faithful ordained miniſter, clothed with our Lord's commiſſion, and poteſtative miſſion to diſpenſe all his precious goſpel-ordinances,—who may in ſome meaſure fill and ſucceed in the room of our renowned RENWICK, now removed. —And as we pray the Lord of the harveſt, that he may conduct and countenance you in this endeavour with his formerly experienced aſſiſtance and propitious favour, and incline the hearts of his ſervants in the land of your exile to pity us and grant your requeſts; ſo we hope your repreſentation and interceſſion with that reverend, and venerable Preſbytery of the godly miniſters at Embden in the behalf of ſuch as we earneſtly recommend, may be bleſſed with the like ſucceſs that your faithful labours in this kind had with others heretofore, ſo as to induce them to concur in this great work and duty of pity and charity.

We requeſt you therefore to lay it to heart, and laying it upon, and before the Lord, to lay out yourſelf as our intruſted orator, to recommend to theſe reverend, learned and godly miniſters, our beloved and honoured brother, Mr. Thomas Lining, that according to our ſupplicatory letter to them, which we deſire you to preſent and deliver to them in our name, with all ſubmiſſion they may confer upon him, after due trial, the full power of miniſterial ordination, with impoſition of hands, according to the order of Chriſt.

We deſire alſo that his call and teſtimonial lately ſent from us, may be preſented to the Preſbytery, with excuſes of its informality. Withal proteſting and obteſting you, that you carefully beware that nothing be done in that affair in ſubſtance or circumſtance, which may directly or indirectly reflect upon, or ſeem to admit any receſſion from, or allow any novation not conſonant to our covenanted reformation, acts of General Aſſemblies, Confeſſion of Faith, Books of diſcipline, Propoſitions

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concerning church-government and ordination of miniſters; and that therefore you inform yourſelf both as to the members of that reverend and renowned Claſſis who may perform that action, that none may be intermixed who are not ſound and ſtedfaſt in the Proteſtant and reformed teſtimony againſt Popery, Prelacy, Eraſtianiſm, Sectarianiſm, hereſies, ſects and ſchiſms, corruptions and defections, and all reproved novations.

And as to the way and manner of celebrating that ſolemn ordinance of ordination, that it be according to Chriſt's order, and not vitiated with human inventions, either of Prelatic encroachments, or ſectarian proſtitution of the power of the keys. And as to the ſubſcription required of the candidate, that it be nothing diſſonant from, or not confirmatory of the church of Scotland's teſtimony and confeſſion, *&c.* withal, that you take care that his proteſtation may be admitted againſt any thing in that church, either in doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline or government, rites or ceremonies which are condemned by the ſtanding conſtitutions of the church of Scotland, according to the word of God. And that you put the reverend, learned and godly miniſters in mind, that as we preſume their tenderneſs and piety will put a favourable conſtruction on theſe our neceſſary cautions that we commend unto your proſpection, as proceeding not from any jealouſy we have of them, but from our ſolicitouſneſs that we be neither impoſed upon nor reproached upon occaſion of this our addreſs to them, as former experience obliges us to provide againſt: So we hope and deſire that they will be pleaſed in their written teſtimony declaring and confirming his ordination, to ſignify their approbation of this our application to them, that we have done nothing but what might be incumbent on us in our circumſtances in ſeeking foreign ordination. And to teſtify ſome weighty reaſons, that in granting it they have done nothing but what is lawful and expedient to them in their capacity, with a diſclaim of any arrogation of power over the church of Scotland; further than to extend their cumulative help *hic* and *nunc* in this circumſtantiate caſe of neceſſity, that ſo, both they may have clearneſs to juſtify what they do in his matter, and we may have confidence to anſwer them that reproach us.

We intreat alſo, that with all earneſtneſs you may endeavour to obtain from the ſame venerable Claſſis, the

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ſame acceſs and opened door for the benefit of another brother, Mr. Alexander Shields, yet labouring among us as a probationer in the miniſtry, when he ſhall be ready, and we in caſe to ſpare his departure from us for that effect.

We add no more, but recommending you and this weighty affair to the gracious conduct and diſpoſal of the infinitely wiſe Jehovah; we ſubſcribe,

Your afflicted brethren and companions in tribulation for the cauſe of Chriſt,

Subſcribed in our name, by
MICH. SHIELDS.

From the wilderneſs of *Camp's-head-heights, Aug. 1ſt*, 1688.

It was likewiſe reſolved by the meeting that Patrick Walker ſhould be deſired to go (and another perſon with him) to Fife, and ſpeak with ſome perſons there who deſired conference. Theſe perſons were of them who had been with James Ruſſel, and were now deſirous of information how matters were among the ſocieties.—This was done accordingly.

It was alſo appointed by the meeting, that the firſt Thurſday of October ſhould be obſerved by the ſocieties a day of humiliation, mourning and faſting before the Lord for the many heinous ſins committed at the courts which were kept in ſummer in the five weſtern ſhires; and in particular for the renouncing of our holy covenants by many, eſpecially in Edinburgh, in the time of the ſearch there upon the 25th of *July* laſt.

And the next General Meeting was appointed to meet at *Wanlockhead*, upon the 24th of *October*.

AMONG the ways, means and methods to pave an eaſy entrance to the introduction of Popery into this land again; that of granting of the toleration hath been conducible, as the ſad effects thereof evidenced; for with it did the whole land comply, and under its ſhadow and ſhelter did they live peaceably and quietly, except the United Societies, with which, as they did not join, nor could, conſidering the fountain from whence it flowed, abſolute power claimed by a creature; the channel thro' which

hich it did run, which was the ſuſpending and diſabl-g of our penal laws; the reſtrictions and limitations herewith it was clogged, and the end for which it was anted, which was to make way for the introduction Popery; ſo they were perſecute with the ſame rigour formerly, being ſo dealt with both before, and ſince e laſt meeting.

And to the end that the coming to light of any thing at tended to the diſcovery of the juſtice of their cauſe ho were ſuffering, might be hindered, and their vindi-ation from miſtakes and reproaches caſt upon them, opt; a proclamation was iſſued forth, diſcharging the nporting, vending or ſelling of ſome books, as Lex ex, Naphtali, Jus Populi, &c. and among others was ne called the Hind let Looſe, (ſome of which had fal-en into their hands) wherein the teſtimony maintained by the United Societies is vindicated, and their ſuffer-ings for adhering to the ſame juſtified, and as the ſuffer-ings of the perſecuted are defended, ſo the cruelty, treachery and tyranny of the perſecutors are diſcovered. This did gall them, when they beheld their evil deeds vidently characterized, and——————laid pen before the world; and that they might fear or ex-ect any oppoſition to the carrying on of their wicked de-gns, and bringing to paſs of their curſed projects rought to a great height already) from the five weſt-rn ſhires, of whom they always feared the greateſt hin-rance thereunto, eſpecially theſe people therein, who ad been always great oppoſers of, and non-compliers ith their wicked courſes; it was determined by them hat the country people in that bounds ſhould be diſ-rmed: Whereupon ſecret orders were ſent to the ſol-diers lying in the weſt to go through and ſearch for arms; which was exactly obeyed, and many of them gotten; whereby the people were laid open to be a prey to any butchering cut-throat who might aſſault them.

After this, a cruel circuit court was intended to be kept in theſe ſhires, and gentlemen pitched upon to be the members thereof, and in ſome places they were be-gun. The end of their appointment was to find out and puniſh thoſe who had been acceſſory to the reſcue of Mr, David Houſtoun.

If theſe courts had gone on, the ſame would have ended much to to the affliction of the United Societies; but the Lord, who oftimes gives to his people enlarge-

ment

ment out of bondage, at a time and in a way unexpected and not looked for, did at this time both prevent the fears of his own people, and the designs of his enemies.

When the proud, insolent and cruel enemies had none to wreak themselves upon but these societies, the Lord raised up against them opposites more mighty and strong, whereby they got other things to think upon and other work to do, than always to be employed in persecuting a poor, wasted and distressed people. For, when the news of the landing of the Dutch under the command of the Prince of Orange was noised abroad, great was the diligence and preparation for opposing them. Proclamations were put forth for the rendezvousing of the gentlemen, heritors and militia, ordering beacons to be set upon the top of some hills to give warning of the approach of ships, when they should be seen; and commanding all to be in readiness betwixt 16 and 60. The standing forces, being about six regiments of horse, foot and dragoons, went into England, being sent for by their king. At this time the country was full of commotions and rumours of war; every one looking for changes and revolutions, some hoping for, and others fearing the same; and almost all were expecting the ensuing of these calamities that attend war, as its inseparable companion. However, the generality of people were desiring, yea longing for the landing of the Dutch, though many knew not for what they desired them.

In the mean time of these reelings, as above mentioned, our General Meeting did conveen upon the 24th of *October*, at *Wanlockhead*, in the shire of Nithsdale.—Where, passing things of lesser moment, there deliberated upon, I shall give a short (but true) account of the most material things there spoken of, and agreed unto.

Mr. Thomas Lining having gone abroad in 1684, in order to the perfecting of his studies, that when opportunity should offer he might seek and get ordination; being desired thereto by a General Meeting—to whom he left a subscribed testimony, declaring his principles and resolutions. He went first to Leewarden, where he remained more than two years, living privately in the family with Mr. Hamilton, and getting teaching from one Mr. Gerkima, a minister in that place who shewed him

him much kindneſs. The reſt of the time of his being abroad, he ſtaid at the Univerſity of Groningen and Utrecht, except that he came home in *July* 1687. And having ſtaid until *October* thereafter, before his departure, at a General Meeting he left a paper containing his mind and reſolution about ſome things; a true copy whereof followeth.

Very dear Friends,

AT my departure from you, I ſhewed you my mind (at the deſire of the General Meeting) anent the controverſies of our time, and likewiſe my willingneſs to go abroad to the end I may be fitted more for my generation-work, which the Lord might call me unto: ſo now at this preſent time, I declare my mind to be the ſame about things in controverſy as formerly it was, and that I am willing and deſirous, when lawfully called and ſent, to ſerve the Lord as a Labourer (though unworthy of that piece of honour) in his vineyard; and do engage myſelf not to ſubject myſelf to an examination for licence and ordination, but to ſuch perſons or Preſbytery as ye ſhall be ſatisfied with, providing your exceptions be juſt and valid; and that I ſhall acquaint you before therewith, that I may both have the help of your prayers in ſuch a weighty buſineſs, and your friendly advice, providing that correſpondence with you be not ſtopped by wars or ſome ſuch extraordinary impediment.

This alſo I leave as an evidence of my concurring with you in the Lord's cauſe as it is preſently ſtated againſt Popery, Prelacy, lawleſs toleration and tyranny, and all ſinful compliances and defections.—As witneſs, written and ſubſcribed with my hand, *Oct. 5th*, 1687.

Sic Subſcribitur,

THOMAS LINING.

Mr. Lining after his going abroad, ſtaid for ſome time in the univerſity, at length obtained ordination the end of *Auguſt*, or the beginning of *September*, 1688. from the claſſis of Embden. Application for that effect being made to them by Mr. Hamilton.

After his ordination he took voyage preſently for Scotland, where he arrived in *September* laſt, and came to this meeting; who, before they would give him a joint

and unanimous call, were desirous to know the way of his ordination, and what ministers they were who ordained him. This they judged necessary, in regard that the ministers in the Netherlands had been called either Erastian, depending upon the magistrate, or Cocceian. —Therefore he was desired to give some account of his ordination at Embden, for the satisfaction of all concerned.

Whereupon he declared before the meeting, that he had diligently made enquiry about the ministers there, and found by several discoveries, (which he instanced) that they were neither Erastian, depending on the magistrate, nor Cocceian; and that they had accepted of our call and letters testimonial, which were sent by the last meeting; that they had continued his trial and examination upon all the heads of divinity for 21 days; and thereafter they had ordained him with solemn imposition of hands, indefinitely, without a relation to any particular church: For which he produced their testificate, subscribed by Mr. Petrius Ritzius preses of the Classis, (as also a letter from Mr. Hamilton.)

When Mr. Lining had given this relation, he went out a little, and the meeting, after deliberation, resolved upon giving him a call: Whereupon he was elected and called by the elders and brethren of the meeting to be their minister.

Here follows the substance of Mr. Hamilton's Letter.

Worthy Friends,

THE Lord hath been trying his poor church, and especially in that land for a long time, and hath made great discoveries there, beyond what the wit of man could ever have done, so that now both right and left hand enemies are fairly discovered and stated under the banner of Antichrist, in a direct opposition to God and his Anointed, and that both as he is king in his own church, and hath the sovereignty over his mystical body; and as King of the world, whose incommunicable prerogative it is to be absolute; so that he hath fairly stated his own cause, and seems to be in an open way to vindicate the same, with its followers, to the conviction of some, and the comfort of others, the shame and confusion of opposers: All which, I think, says, that he is to bring on ruin upon an apostate, backsliden secure and rebellious

rebellious generation. Hitherto he has been ſmiting the lintle of the door and ſhaking the poſts, but now ſeemingly he is to ſlay with the ſword, that he that fleeth, ſhall not flee away, and he that eſcapeth, ſhall not be delivered.—Hitherto he has been been holding a bitter cup to the heads of his own, making them to drink the brim thereof, not to deſtroy, but to ſave them, and that they might ſee what metal they are of, and that to their everlaſting joy and conſolation: But enemies muſt drink the bottom with the dregs, and be made to ſee that they have been digging their own graves, and alſo to ſee and read to their conviction and torment, ſincerity, truth and faithfulneſs manifeſted in theſe whom they have been reproaching, ſpoiling, torturing and murdering.

The Lord will be magnified in the generation of the righteous. He will ſtill exalt his glory in all Scotland's confuſions, reelings and ſtorms, as ſpecial cures win a name to a phyſician, and great victories gain honour to the principal agents; ſo the Lamb and Lion of the tribe of Judah, the King of ſaints, by carrying his little, little flock through ſpecial trials, will magnify the glory of his power, love and conduct, to the conviction and aſtoniſhment of the world, like ſome ſkilful phyſicians that make their ſervants ſwallow ſome ſtrong poiſon, that they may ſhew their ſkill, and inhanſe patients to themſelves: So our wiſe Lord puts his people to great plunges and difficulties, that he alone may be employed and glorified in them, and in the eyes of all on-lookers, in his wiſdom, power, mercy and faithfulneſs in carrying them ſweetly and cleanly through, without making ſhipwreck of faith and a good conſcience. By this he advances his name, and makes it great to the ends of the earth,—and thereby gaining multitudes to himſelf at once, that will be as ſo many heralds to ſound forth the praiſes of his greatneſs and goodneſs from generation to generation.

I ſhall ſay no more, but labour to keep the good, the good old way, ſeeking to be found in his way when he cometh, keeping the word of Chriſt's patience, ſtanding faſt to your poſt, and cloſe to your Maſter, in readineſs to follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goes, for the winds are now like to be let looſe, and it is to be feared many ſhall be blown away with them, although not one grain of his true wheat ſhall be loſt, being preſerved by the power of God unto ſalvation: He is to do a great

work in the earth, and he will not be unmindful of his own: Improve what you are getting to his praiſe, and credit him for more, and then it may be but an earneſt of what the land and his followers may expect. He has been much ſeen in managing of your laſt affair, and to my poor capacity is fitting our worthy friend Mr. Thomas Lining, for the work he is calling him to. O praiſe him, for he is doing great things for you.

I hope ye will not be unmindful of me, ye know my caſe in a great meaſure:—my deſign is, if the Lord will, upon the firſt breaking out of wars to viſit you, and take a ſhare of your lot, and again I lay it upon you to pray the Lord may open a door for me; and if not, that I may be kept faithful in every lot that I may be tryſted with, to the glory and praiſe of his rich grace.

The bearer will ſignify my diligence at *Groningen*; as to that affair of Mr Boyd, I ſhall labour to fulfil your requeſt; as for any further, I refer you to the bearer.—— Praying the Lord may be a ſun, and a ſhield unto you all, I am, as ever,

Worthy friends, yours in the Lord Jeſus,

SEPT. 4*th*, 1688. ROBT. HAMILTON.

THE next thing the Meeting took to their conſideration was to conſult upon what would be our duty when the *Dutch* ſhould land, of which there were great expectations that it would preſently occur.—Whereupon the queſtion was propounded firſt in general thus.

What ought to be done in caſe the *Dutch* with other confederate Proteſtants ſhould make an expedition into this kingdom, providing their declaration, and ends of the war were right?—Next it was divided into ſeveral branches for the better underſtanding thereof.——As

(1.) Whether duty and ſafety did call for a riſing in arms, or to ſit ſtill and hide?

(2.) If there ſhould be a riſing reſolved, when this ſhould be attempted?

(3.) Who ſhould be admitted to concur?

(4.) Whether there ſhould be an aſſociation with the *Dutch*, or continuing in a ſeparate body?

(5.) Whether there ſhould be any treating with them in

in ſuch a ſeparate appearance, or if any, how far might we proceed?

Theſe things being thus propounded, after mutual conference and debatings, concerning every one of them, the mind of every member of the meeting, to each of theſe propoſals being enquired.—Who after deliberation, did give it, the reſult of which was theſe concluſions following.

As to the *firſt*, It was reſolved that duty and ſafety ſeemed to require riſing in a poſture of defence, to avoid ſnares, and ſeemingly ineluctable deſtruction, when all would be required to ſide themſelves, and declare whom they were for, and concur with ſome party, for it would be a reproach, when now the quarrel would be ſtated for religion and liberty, if they who have borne arms hitherto for the defence thereof, ſhould now lay them by as indifferent.

To the *ſecond*, It was reſolved that our appearance in that poſture ſhould not be ſudden, for that would be to expoſe ourſelves as a prey, nor that it ſhould be at all, if the expedition ſhould only be in England. But that it ſhould only be attempted in the forementioned circumſtances, when the expedition in that kingdom were ſo far advanced as all the country were in a combuſtion, and generally preſſed to declare themſelves on what ſide they were. And to this effect, it was agreed that our gathering ſhould be toward that place of the country commanded by the *Dutch*, and that ſome ſhould be appointed to wait at Edinburgh, to give intelligence to all quarters, when they ſhould land in Scotland: And there to appoint time and place of another General Meeting, which might conclude whether the caſe required a gathering in arms or not.—Accordingly ſome were choſen for the foreſaid end, who alſo went and ſtayed there.

The *third*, Being much doubted, and debated whether compliers with the enemy, might be admitted to join in arms; it was reſolved in this method. That firſt a declaration containing the cauſe, occaſion, and ends of our appearing be emitted. Then a day of humiliation appointed to mourn for all the ſteps of defection and compliances; wherein all joiners ſhould be enjoined to confeſs their reſpective acceſſion to the ſins mourned over: and then that the covenant ſhould be ſolemnly renewed with application to all the breaches of it, old and late, in our day, engaging all joiners againſt all compliances.

pliance in time coming. After all which, if compliers ſhould declare their agreement with the declaration, join in the humiliation, confeſſing their compliances, and ſubſcribe the covenant, engaging againſt all compliance for the future, they might then be admitted. This is not to be underſtood of them who had forfeited their lives who were not to be admitted. And concerning theſe who were guilty of ſome groſs ſteps of defection and compliance; it could not be determined if they ſhould be admitted or not: But it was provided that if they were, it ſhould only be as ſingle ſoldiers and not to be officers.

As to the *fourth*, It was concluded unanimouſly that we could not have an aſſociation with the *Dutch*, in one body, nor come formally under their conduct, being ſuch a promiſcuous conjunction of reformed Lutheran malignants and ſectaries, to join with whom, were repugnant to the teſtimony of the church of Scotland.

As to the *fifth*, After ſome debate it was agreed, that they might be treated with, ſo far as to keep ſome correſpondence with them, to co-operate together againſt the common enemy, to inform them of their motion, to take amunition from them, and to admit ſome of them to come and teach us the art of war, but not to take them for our officers, nor come under their conduct *.

The next General Meeting was appointed to be at ——.

In the interval of after this meeting nothing was expected but confuſions and commotions. The United Societies were waiting when opportunity ſhould offer for reducing their foreſaid reſolutions into practice.

In the mean time they enjoyed peace, and got a breathing from that cruel perſecution under which they had long been groaning.

Upon the 5th of November, The prince of Orange with his army conſiſting of about 14,000 men, did land in England; not long after their landing there were ſtrange revolutions in that kingdom, in bringing to paſs of which

* There is no mention of their appointing any faſt-days here, as was ordinary formerly. From this time forward many old men who lived in that time, date the beginning of their declenſion from their former principles and practices, faithfulneſs, zeal and tenderneſs.

he Lord's right hand and arm did gloriouſly ap-
d the hand of man very little.—That huge ar-
,000 Engliſh, Scots, and Iriſh did melt away,
; of all, not giving ſo much as one ſtroke. The
mes, was tumbled from his throne, and made
is Queen and greateſt courtiers glad to hide
es, ſome of whom were taken. In Scotland
ges and revolutions were neither few nor ſmall.
oke which was given to Papiſts and their idola-
not the reſult of long contrived counſels, nor
or effectuate by wiſe or great men, but done in
by children and others not much eſteemed, tho'
l their quarrel was eſpouſed by others.
ſs that which was done at Edinburgh, Decem-
—The like ſtroke they met with at London,
e ſame time, as if the ſame had been before
l: Behold on a ſudden a very wonderful altera-
who not long before, claimed an abſolute pow-
prerogative royal, which all were to obey with-
ve, was made to flee, and could get few to o-
yea deſpiſed by many of theſe whom he exalt-
wicked were enſnared in the work of their own
nd the counſel of the heathen brought to nought.
ho formerly were perſecute are now in quiet,
e who had been perſecutors, are in fear, and
nide themſelves. Theſe who formerly were a
many, are now feared for theſe whom they
aid before. Theſe are the doings of the Lord,
ld be wondrous in our eyes.
s reeling time, the Societies were not idle, for
ſome of them were active in what was done a-
piſh idolatry at Edinburgh, but what was done
ind in other places of the country, was done
moſt part by them; and they were willing to have
re, if it had been in their power: zeal againſt
and their idolatry, at this time was very lively
i: But that which was moſt the occaſion of their
g was the alarming noiſe of the Papiſts burning
bright which did run through the country:
pon they looked upon this as an opportunity for
appear for the defence of religion, the country,
nſelves.
dingly they did appear in great numbers (being
forward to it, of any in the country) eſpecially
dale and Galloway, (in which places they de-
ſtroyed

ſtroyed the relicts and monuments of idolatry, which they got in houſes belonging to papiſts) and ſome of them, *viz.* in Clydeſdale ſtayed together in arms until the General Meeting, which conveened upon the 3d of January, 1689. at Douglas, in the ſhire of Clydeſdale.

THE which day the meeting being ſet there was a paper of apology, *&c.* agreed unto,—which they concluded ſhould be forth-with publiſhed intending thereby to apologize for, and ſhew the cauſe of their riſing, and continuing in arms, leſt they ſhould be miſconſtructed; and to clear themſelves of ſome aſperſions caſt upon them, particularly that of robbing of the Curate of Carluke, for which they were blamed; and to declare their reſolution to diſperſe, that ſo the country might ſee that they deſired not to be burdenſome, except when neceſſity called for it. And alſo by this to ſignify their adherence to the cauſe for which they had been ſuffering.

This paper was publiſhed at Douglas the 4th of January, 1689. where (after Mr. Alexander Shields had prayed and ſung a part of a pſalm) it was read: There were preſent Meſſrs. Thomas Lining, William Boyd, and David Houſtoun, and about 300 armed men, as alſo ſeveral of the inhabitants of the town; immediately after which, the armed men went out of the town, except thoſe who were concerned to ſtay upon the account of the General Meeting; and that the paper might be the better ſeen by all concerned, ſeveral copies thereof were written that night, which were ſpread abroad through the country.

Immediately after the diſmiſſing of the armed men, the General Meeting conveened again, to whom was given in a paper by theſe men repreſenting the ſocieties of Nithſdale, containing ſome articles for the better regulating of companies in that juncture. This was judged neceſſary to be given in for preventing of diſorders, which in this confuſed time might fall out among them while they were in arms, and whereof ſome had ocurred already.

It was read and conſidered by the meeting, and they deſired captains and lieutenants of companies to meet together in order to the condeſcending upon theſe or the like articles, and to endeavour to get the ſame put in practice, that order might be kept and offences prevented.—

ed.—But nevertheleſs the ſame was not done, although : was judged neceſſary.

It was moved by ſome, that the meeting might conſi- er upon the drawing up and ſending an addreſs, with n account of our grievances ſuſtained by us under the ate tyranny, to the Prince of Orange, which the cir- umſtances ſeemed to call for at our hands; whereupon : was reſolved that the ſame ſhould be written and rought to the next meeting, who were to conſider u- on the time and method of ſending them. The doing f this was judged neceſſary, that as thereby we would cknowledge the Prince to be a honoured inſtrument of reaking the heavy yoke of oppreſſion from off our ecks; ſo we would take opportunity to put him in nind of the great and wonderful things the Lord did for him, which called for ſuitable returns at his hands; withal truly repreſenting our cauſe, for adhering where- unto we had been ſuffering theſe years paſt; and laying open our caſe before him, which he might be ignorant of, being a ſtranger; and craving his aid and help for re- dreſſing of our grievances.—What followed upon this ſhall be ſhewn afterwards.

There was a letter preſented and read at this meet- ing, ſent from James Dick, Robert Dun, Robert Cath- cart, &c. in Carrick and Galloway, (who formerly had ſeparated from and oppoſed Mr. James Renwick, of whom ſome account is already given) directed to Kerſ- land; in which they deſired ſome might be ſent to con- verſe with them, in order to union.

The meeting having a deſire to have differences re- moved in a right way, reſolved to ſend ſome men to hear what they would ſay. So William Harris, John Mack in Evandale, William Rigg and Andrew Roſs in Car- rick, were choſen for that effect, who were deſired to give account of their diligence to the next meeting.

Accordingly theſe men met with thoſe of Galloway and Carrick at Sanquhar, *January* 23*d*, where Robert Cathcart, in name of the reſt, propounded firſt, That ſeeing we joined with ſuch miniſters as were altogether extraneous of the church of Scotland, there could be no accommodation be thought on, till either we diſowned them, or elſe that they ſhould ſubmit themſelves to the miniſters of the church of Scotland;—and they deſired we would make addreſs to theſe miniſters of the church of Scotland;—as to other propoſals (though they ſaid

they had more) they refuſed to give them, ſeeing we could not agree about the firſt.

When the meeting heard this account, they wondered what theſe men could mean: if they intended union, the requiring of that which they ſought as the foundation thereof, was not the way to attain it. For, to diſown our miniſters (except they would do that which in conſcience they could not do, as matters are now circumſtantiate) would have been provoking to God, and afforded matter of mocking of us to men.

The laird of Earlſtoun having heard of the proclaiming of the Prince of Orange's declaration at Glaſgow by Mr. Boyd and ſome others with him, was offended thereat. And to evidence his diſlike thereof, wrote (being at that time priſoner in Blackneſs) to James Wilſon, deſiring him in his name, to proteſt before the General Meeting againſt that deed. Which James Wilſon did, acquainting the meeting that he had Earlſtoun's letter for it. With which proteſtation ſome of the General Meeting joined. And the whole meeting declared their diſſatisfaction with the reading of that declaration, which as it was a deed raſhly gone about without common conſent; ſo, though they would not meddle with it as it was the declaration of the Prince of Orange who was a ſtranger; yet to eſpouſe the ſame as their declaration ſo abruptly, they thought it too lame and defective, for there was no mention made in it of the covenanted work of reformation.

Upon the account of the late emergents, the meeting thought it their duty to ſet apart ſome time for prayer and thankſgiving; as follows:

It is earneſtly deſired that Tueſday the 15th of *January* may be kept a day of thankſgiving for the wonderful providences of God towards us in breaking in ſome meaſure the yoke of perſecution, and animating ſome to the deſtroying of the monuments of idolatry in the land, *&c.*

Alſo, that in the ſame day we may be earneſt in prayer, that we may find favour in the eyes of thoſe whom the Lord hath made inſtruments of our relief.

The generality of people in the five weſtern ſhires, conſidering the providences of the time, which were indeed wonderful,—did look upon the ſame as an opportunity put in their hands of ſhaking off the yoke of abjured

ed Prelacy, under which they had been long groan-
g, and the caſting out of the kirks theſe intruding hire-
gs the curates, reſolving never to ſubject to them, and
do all which lies in their power to hinder the intru-
n again.

Accordingly many curates were put from their kirks
ich they had long poſſeſſed. Thoſe who were moſt
tive in this, were of the United Societies, who at this
ne ſhewed not only zeal and forwardneſs in that, but
o in deſtroying Popiſh idolatry; and herein they were
lped of the Lord to carry Chriſtianly, as was acknow-
lged by their very enemies; for though they ſhewed
ich ſtrictneſs in ſearching for idolatrous things in hou-
where they got intelligence of their being hid; yet
ey did not wrong any thing in the houſe, nor take
ght out of the ſame; witneſs that which they did at
aquair; neither did they convert any of theſe idola-
ous things (though ſome of them were of great value)
private or public uſes, but brought the ſame to public
ercat-croſſes; aud there before many witneſſes deſtroy-
them by fire.

Theſe things which were done at this time by the U-
ted Societies (mountain-men or hill-men as they were
en called) made ſuch a noiſe through the land, that
e very report thereof occaſioned a great terror among
apiſts, malignants and Curates, and they were much
raid of them.—Here is a change to be remarked!
-Theſe men, high and great in their own eſteem,
me of whom feared neither God nor man, are now a-
aid of theſe poor people whom before they contemned
nd deſpiſed.

In this reeling and unſettled time, according to the
ppointment of the laſt meeting, A General Meeting
id conveen in the town of Sanquhar, in the ſhire of
Nithſdale, upon *January* 23*d*.—An account of what was
eliberated and reſolved upon by them, with the way
f managing the ſame, I ſhall here ſet down.

Alexander Gordon of Earlſtoun, after his being pri-
oner a long time (*viz.* ſince *May* 1683) was at length
et at liberty out of the caſtle of Blackneſs (being among
he laſt who was liberate after the Revolution) in a way
nd upon terms no-way diſhonouring to the cauſe for
hich he had been ſuffering, the ſame being without a-
y engagement by word or writing to theſe who were his

perſecutors, or his freedom ſo much as ſought by him; yea when coming out of the caſtle, he took inſtruments in the hands of the clerk of that place that he was the ſame as to his principles when he was going out, as when he came in there. Being at liberty he was deſirous to ſee his friends and old acquaintances in the Weſt, whereupon he came to Sanquhar, and he was deſired to be preſent at the meeting. When he came in, and had ſat a little, he roſe up voluntarily of his own free choice, and without being deſired he ſpake to the meeting to this effect.

That after long abſence the Lord in his providence had ordered their meeting together again, they knew his errand in going abroad, and how he fell into the enemies hands, and what trials and toſſings he had endured, while among their hands: That for a while after he was taken, it was not ſo right in matters between God and his ſoul, as it was afterward. And when it came to the trial, he did not carry as it became a priſoner for truth, for he did petition the enemies, in which petition were all the evils imaginable which (he ſaid) was diſhonourable to God, and offenſive to his people: When he had ended, he removed a little. When the meeting had communed among themſelves concerning him, they were ſatisfied with his ingenuity which appeared in his confeſſing of what he had done wrong when a priſoner, the certainty whereof, they knew not before. However ſeeing ſeveral, and various reports of his carriage that then were ſpread abroad, and credited by many: And that they had been blamed of being partial upon his account,

It was thought expedient to go to him in private, and enquire at himſelf concerning ſome things wherewith he was charged: And for his own exoneration, and their ſatisfaction, to deſire him to be free; which, with his anſwers to each of them follow, as they were propoſed by two men to him. After apologizing that they hoped he would not be offended at their freedom, they deſired he would be pleaſed to ſatisfy them in giving anſwers to ſome few things.

1ſt, If after he was apprehended, he had any hand in diſcovering the plot in England, for which he was much blamed? He altogether denied his having any hand in this.

2dly, If

2*dly*, If ever he ſaid before the enemies, that he would take the Teſt, as was reported he did? This he alſo denied: And ſhewed what way he was miſtaken in it, which was thus. One time when Edward Aitken who was taken with him) and he were before Queenſberry, who aſked at Edward if he would take the Teſt, or (ſaid he) Earlſtoun hath ſaid he will take it; whereupon Edward ſaid to Earlſtoun, will ye take the Teſt? To this Earlſtoun did not anſwer, but turned about to Queenſberry, and ſaid, would ye have him be like the witches? To which he ſaid, was that to renounce his baptiſm? So the ſpeaking in that manner, and not giving an anſwer to Edward made him ſuppoſe that Earlſtoun had ſaid, he would take the Teſt.

3*dly*, If he made any farther diſcovery of the plot, after it was found out, as it was ſaid he did? This he likewiſe denied, except one time when threatened with the boots, by the council, unleſs he would make a diſcovery thereof, he told them he could tell them no more then what they had got already, but that he heard ſome of themſelves had a hand in it. In like manner he denied that he told of Mr. Haddow's quarters in London (as was reported he did) neither knew what way it was diſcovered unleſs they had got a direction of a letter to him, among his papers which were ſeized on at Shields.

4*thly*, If he knew what was the nature of the petition given in by him to the council; He declared, he knew not, which made his doing thereof the more heinous, but he ſaid there were all kinds of evils in it. The men returned and acquainted the meeting with what Earlſtoun had ſaid to them concerning thoſe things they were deſired to aſk him about. So it was concluded by them, as moſt expedient, that he might be deſired to be preſent at the meeting, though not a member thereof. This was thought fitteſt that none might have reaſon to charge them with partiality, in admitting him, while they would not have done ſo with others. So he came in.

After this, when the meeting was ſpeaking about addreſſing of the prince of Orange, Earlſtoun declared his diſſatisfaction with the reading of his declaration which occaſioned ſome debate between him and Mr. Boyd. Thereafter continuing therein a little ſpace, Earlſtoun entered his proteſtation againſt receiving into the meeting any who had eſpouſed a malignant intereſt; as he ſaid,

theſe who had read the Prince's declaration had done, ſeeing by their reading thereof, they had owned him, and eſpouſed his quarrel, while in the mean time, they knew not well what he was for; neither had he given conditions on his part, nor ſecurity for religion. The meeting ſhewed their diſlike of the reading of the Prince's declaration. *(Yet they admitted the readers to be members of the meeting)* However, Earlſtoun would not ſtay in the meeting, though he was earneſtly deſired; his going away was ſomewhat grievous to them.

The meeting conſidering the confuſions which were at the laſt meeting and other meetings before; for avoiding the like at the time, they concluded, That the miniſters and elders ſhould go apart by themſelves, and conſult and deliberate upon matters incumbent for them. [Let none from this be ſo far miſtaken, as to think that before this time miniſters and elders did ſit as members of General Meetings, for they were only preſent there to give their advice and counſel, which was neceſſary to be ſought, and requiſite for them to give.] That theſe that had command over companies, as captains, lieutenants, *&c.* ſhould meet together, and deliberate upon matters relating to them. And that the General Meeting ſhould meet by themſelves, and conſult about matters wherein they were concerned; and in things doubtful to ſeek advice from the miniſters. This reſolution was put in practice upon the morrow; and for that night they parted *.

Upon the morrow, *January 24th*, the General Meeting conveened, when it was unanimouſly concluded by them, That it was a neceſſary duty to renew the covenants. Some of them agreed to this only for themſelves, not having the minds of their ſocieties therein. Others deſired that their ſocieties might be acquainted therewith, that they might have time to think upon, and prepare for ſo grave and ſerious a work. And others ſpoke not only for themſelves, but for their ſocieties alſo.

How-

* The reaſon of this foregoing concluſion appears to have been occaſioned by Earlſtoun's Proteſtation againſt Mr Boyd, *&c.* which ſeverals adhered unto; and others who favoured what Mr. Boyd had done, condemned the Proteſtation, which cauſed hot debates; therefore they found it neceſſary for carrying on their deſigns more ſecretly, without appriſing the people thereof, to follow this method: whether there was partiality in the caſe of Earlſtoun, and Mr. Boyd, the Reader will judge.

However, they all referred the drawing up of the ſteps of defection and breaches of covenant, and fixing upon the day for that ſolemn action, to the miniſters; with which they (the miniſters) were acquainted.

The miniſters and elders condeſcended upon the 3d of *March* for ſaid work. The reaſon of appointing it ſo ſoon, was to have it before the down-ſitting of the Convention of Eſtates, which was to be upon the 24th of *March*; for then affairs might come to ſome ſettlement, and it would not be ſo proper for us to do it as in this interregnum, and time of anarchy.

But betwixt and that time, there was a faſt-day agreed upon, *viz.* The firſt Thurſday of *February*, which our ſocieties were deſired to keep as a day of faſting and prayer, for preparation to our intended ſolemn renewing the covenants, that we might be helped to a right ſight and ſenſe of the breaches, and a right underſtanding and impreſſion of the duties thereof.

As alſo, there was another General Meeting appointed to meet at *Crawford-John*, upon the 13th of *February*, 1689. Againſt which time, the acknowledgment of ſins and breaches of covenant, *&c.* were to be drawn up, and there to be read. And likewiſe our addreſs to the Prince, with our grievances, to be drawn up, and then and there to be deliberated upon and condeſcended unto.

The miniſters and elders fearing that diſorders might happen in putting out of the Prelatic curates from the kirks in the way and manner lately practiſed, whereby the cauſe might be wronged, and the owners thereof reproached: For preventing whereof, they agreed upon a paper to be given in by the people of each pariſh to the Curate, which they expected would make him afraid to preach, or ſtay any longer there; the tenor of which was:

"WE, belonging to the Pariſh of ——, having now long groaned under the inſupportable yoke of Prelacy, and having ſuffered a long continued tract of manifold cruel oppreſſions and perſecutions for many years, upon the account of our not owning and ſubmitting unto the intruſion of Epiſcopal Curates; and withal, being touched with ſuch zeal to the houſe of our God, that we cannot endure any longer to ſee it made and continue to be a den of thieves, who have not entered in at Chriſt's door,

door, but by the way of men's uſurpation; And remembering the obligation of our ſolemn covenants to endeavour the extirpation of Prelacy; and being reſolved to proſecute it by all approven means to the utmoſt, as the Lord ſhall enable us, Do therefore, to prevent other tumults, warn you —— to furceaſe and deſiſt from preaching and all other miniſterial exerciſes in the kirk of—— and to depart from the cure and benefice of the ſaid kirk and to deliver up the keys of the ſame, under certification, that if you refuſe, you ſhall be forced to do it."

This paper was brought to the meeting and there read; the moſt part of whom agreed therewith, and reſolved that copies ſhould be given by people in the pariſhes where Curates yet were.—This was put in practice in ſeveral places.

The General Meeting conſidering the great want of men of known integrity, ſkilled in the exerciſe of arms, —deſired that diligence be uſed to find men ſkilled in that exerciſe, (providing they had not been active in carrying on the late perſecution) who might be employed to exerciſe companies for wages.

The captains and lieutenants agreed upon ſome things which they ſent to the General Meeting; as

1*ſt*, That the ſocieties of every ſhire ſhall appoint officers, according to the number of men that they can join with in that ſhire.

2*dly*, That theſe officers meet together for conſultation before the General Meeting that the country be not burdened, nor the meeting confuſed, and that they chooſe ſome among themſelves to preſent to the General Meeting what they have concluded.

3*dly*, That the officers who ſhall come to ſaid meeting, ſhall have a commiſſion ſubſcribed by all the company.

There was a letter directed to our miniſters from our friends in Ireland, read at the meeting giving ſome relation of their condition; alſo a man of their ſociety gave an account of their caſe, and of their earneſt deſire to have ſome of our miniſters to come and preach the goſpel to them.

The Meeting concluded upon writing a letter to them; which accordingly was done, and carried by Mr. *David* Houſtoun miniſter.

It contained our ſenſe of their preſent caſe, and deire of ſympathy with them, alſo apologizing for the not oming of ſome of our miniſters to them at the time,— ut that afterward they might come over: However iſhing the labours of Mr. David Houſtoun who was oming (and did go preſently after this) might be bleſed with ſucceſs, withal refuting that calumny of his nd our ſeparation, as alſo, ſome general account of the onderful providences which have occurred of late, with ur deſires that they may be helped to carry rightly nder their preſent lot, *&c.**.

There was a propoſal by ſome, deſiring advice of the eeting what method to uſe at this time, to get the reitution of what was moſt injuriouſly taken from them y perſecutors; and payments of debts from theſe who efuſed to pay the ſame, in the time of perſecution, duing which ſpace neither had they freedom to go to the law to purſue therefore, nor ground to expect redreſs though they had gone.

The Meeting perceiving that ſome was too bent to take redreſs of theſe wrongs raſhly at their own hand in doing whereof ſome diſorders might be committed, whereby the cauſe, their brethren, and themſelves would ſuffer reproach, for preventing whereof they they thought it expedient that ſuch perſons as were in the foreſaid caſes, ſhould not at their own hand take redreſs; ſeeing there were now ſome hopes of getting theſe, and other hings redreſſed in a legal and orderly manner. Howver this was agreed to, that theſe who had been ſo ronged might go to their injurers, or theſe who had bts owing to them, might go to their debtors, and in riety and civility ſeek reſtitution, and payment, which obtained it was well; but if refuſed, they might uſe re ſharpneſs, in telling them they would get it from ra another way.

B b b The

* This Letter is printed at length in the volume of Mr. Renwick's Letters, Page 421. ——In which it is obſervable that they apologize for the not coming of ſome of their miniſters to them, and in the mean time they were ſending Mr Houſtoun, and had no more actual miniſters ſave Mr Lining. They likeweay that Mr. Houſtoun and they were ſeparate, yet it is plain that he ſhewed diſſatisfaction with ſeverals of their new meaſures and managements, and probably they feared more oppoſition, which made them willing to want him, as they were ſtrictly to renew the covenants, and to ſupplicate the Convention of Eſtates, by which it appears that the majority were now changing their old, and adopting new principles and practices.

The Meeting conſidering that the prince of Orange being to indict the calling of a convention of eſtates, and that the election of Commiſſioners for ſhires and burghs was preſently to be ſet about, did find themſelves called for their own exoneration to do ſomewhat according to their ſtation and capacity to hinder the wrong chooſing of theſe Commiſſioners, in the ſhires where they lived; whereupon it was reſolved that friends in every place of the country, lay out themſelves to ſpeak to theſe gentlemen (whom they could get acceſs unto) who had a vote in the ſaid election,—that fit and qualified perſons, well affected to the cauſe might be choſen.——Though this reſolution was not put in practice, yet the equivalent, if not a better, was done; the occaſion of which was this.

Some people in Leſmahagow, being deſirous to have the concurrence of our friends in that pariſh in repreſenting grievances to the enſuing convention deſired them to draw up a paper for the ſame, and to employ whom they pleaſed to write it, and they would join therewith: whereupon they ſent to Mr. Shields (who was then in Cumnock,) to ſeek his advice therein.——He and ſome others, did look upon it as expedient and very neceſſary in this juncture to give in a paper ſubſcribed, to the gentlemen who were to conveen at Lanerk for electing of Commiſſioners for the ſhire of Clydeſdale, deſiring them to make choice of men well affected to religion, and friends to the country, and ſuch as in the time bygone were not actively ſeeking the ruin of both, &c. The paper was written by Mr. Shields. And the man returned with a copy thereof to theſe who ſent him. They all agreed with it, and got it ſubſcribed with very many hands. As alſo it was thought expedient that copies of ſaid paper ſhould be ſent through the ſhires where our friends dwelt, to the end that the ſame, or like paper, might be agreed upon, and given in by each pariſh, ſubſcribed by as many hands as could be gotten, to the gentlemen meeting for electing Commiſſioners for the ſhire, as the convention of Eſtates.

This accordingly was put in practice; for moſt part of all the pariſhes in the five Weſtern ſhires, did agree upon the foreſaid or the like paper, which being ſubſcribed with very many hands, who choſe two or three men in name of the reſt, to give it in to the gentlemen. Who accordingly went and delivered it to them.

THE time betwixt the laſt meeting and this was not long, the ſame being haſtened upon theſe accounts: That the Acknowledgment of ſins, and breaches of Covenant, and Engagement to Duties, might be ſeen and conſidered, and copies thereof gotten, and that the day for the ſolemn renewing of the Covenants might be the more deliberately fixt on; likewiſe, to conclude upon our grievances and addreſs, to be ſent to the prince of Orange. The delay of either of theſe, was not thought expedient.

In this interval, the country, as before, was in an unſettled ſtate, as is uſual in an interregnum——Although the late tyrannical government was overturned, and the power and ſtrength of its adminiſtrators broken; yet a right and lawful government in its room, was not as yet ſet up, and conſtitute: Papiſts and malignants continued ſtill in great fears, they having of late gotten ſuch a ſudden and unexpected ſtroke, which had ſo amazed and confounded them, that they had not as yet recovered and gathered their ſpirits: Many Curates were put from their kirks, ſo that in all the five Weſtern ſhires, ſcarce one of them durſt preach in a kirk. Severals of them went into Edinburgh for ſhelter; Where Prelate Paterſon and his brother Sir William, did inſtigate ſeverals of the college of Juſtice to riſe in arms, as was ſaid, to defend the City, but in effect to defend the Biſhops, and Curates againſt the Weſt country-men, whoſe coming they expected, and of whom they were much afraid.

Accordingly the writers did form themſelves into four companies under four captains, and continued muſtering and keeping guard, until they were diſbanded by a declaration which the prince of Orange emitted, after he had accepted of the adminiſtration of affairs, which in this juncture devolved upon him until the ſitting of the convention of eſtates, by ſome noblemen, and gentlemen who met at St. James's, after his arrival there.

This diſbanding made them a little to droop, and grow faint; who while they were in arms boaſted that they would defend their Biſhops and Curates againſt the Mountain-men (ſo termed they the Societies) who in the mean time enjoyed great peace and quietneſs.

ACCORDING to the appointment of the laſt Meeting, a General Meeting did conveen at *Crawford-John*, in Clydeſdale, upon the 13th of February, 1689.

After the meeting was modelled and prayer ended the paper containing a memorial of our grievances to the Prince of Orange, agreeed upon at the laſt meeting to be drawn up, was preſented to the meeting and read, (which becauſe of its length, and the ſame being to be ſeen in a paper by itſelf, I here omit). When it was read, they were enquired at, What they would do with it? who unanimouſly reſolved that the ſame ſhould be ſent with an addreſs to the Prince, with all diligence, and ſome fit perſons choſen to go with the ſame.—— They appointed Kerſland and Mr. Alexander Shields, to go with the addreſs and grievances, and Dr. Furd or James Wilſon to go with them.

The Acknowledgment of Sins and Engagement to Duties (which was deſired by the laſt meeting to be drawn up) was read at this meeting, who declared their willingneſs to ſet about the renewing of the covenants. But that ſuch a great work might be the better gone about, it was judged expedient and fit that copies of the Acknowledgment of Sins, *&c.* ſhould be written and ſent to the Societies, to the end they might ſee and conſider the ſame more ſeriouſly before the renewing of the covenants.

Whereupon ſome copies were immediately written, and ſeveral ſocieties did ſee the ſame.—Eight or nine men who were choſen by the meeting, going aſide privately, appointed the time and place of the renewing of the Covenants; leſt being too public it ſhould be oppoſed, *viz.* at *Borland-hill* in the pariſh of *Liſmahagow*, upon the 3d of *March* next.

As the renewing of our covenants is a very great and ſolemn work, in doing whereof formerly much of the Lord's preſence and out-lettings of his Spirit was found and felt by his people; ſo at this time it was done in as public and ſolemn a manner as the preſent circumſtances would admit of, and ſomewhat of the Lord's preſence and countenance was experienced by ſeverals there preſent.—A ſhort account of the management of that work I ſhall here give:

Upon Saturday, *March* 2*d*, (the morning was very tempeſtuous, whereby ſeverals were ſtopt from coming) Mr. Shields lectured a little upon Deut. xxix. 1. *&c.* in the Kirk of *Liſmahagow*, but it could not contain the people: Wherefore they came out to a place not far from

from the Miltoun, where a tent being ſet up before, Mr. Shields continued in his lecture, and then preached.—His text was Deut. xxix. 25. *Then men ſhall ſay, Becauſe they have forſaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers*, &c. When ſermon was ended, (wherein he ſhewed the people ſeveral of the ſteps of defection this land was guilty of, and how they had forſaken and broken our covenants, and turned away from following the Lord) he began to read the Acknowledgment of Sins, *&c.* and continued until night coming on, ſtopt him.

Upon the morrow, being the Lord's day, *March* 3*d*, the meeting conveened at Borland-hill, about a mile and an half from the kirk, where was a great multitude of people. Mr. William Boyd preached firſt upon Jer. l. 5. Then Mr. Thomas Lining upon —— — —.

When Mr. Lining ended his ſermon, ſeveral perſons (whoſe names were given up before in a paper, and the defections and ſcandals by themſelves they were guilty of, and willing to acknowledge publicly; ſuch as, hearing curates, paying of the Ceſs, and taking the oath of Abjuration, *&c.*) as they were called upon by him roſe up, and before the congregation they ſhewed their ſorrow and grief for theſe ſins: To whom he had a diſcourſe ſhewing the heinouſneſs of the ſame. Likewiſe ſome in the ſame manner manifeſted their grief for being guilty of extremes on the right hand in going a great length with that impoſtor John Gib. To whom alſo Mr. Lining ſhewed the ſeveral aggravations that were in that ſin and ſcandal: Yea, ſeveral perſons whoſe names were not given up, roſe of their own accord, and acknowledged their being guilty of ſeveral ſteps of defection; and ſome confeſſed their being guilty of perſonal ſcandals, as theft, *&c.* And more would have done the like if they had been ſuffered; but time would not allow thereof.

This being done, Mr. Lining read before the congregation the Acknowledgment of Sins, and Engagement to Duties, and next the Covenants National and Solemn League, which were fairly written at length, with ſome alterations which the circumſtance of the times of neceſſity called for, ſuch as, when they mention the *King*, in place thereof is put the *Civil Magiſtrate*. Then after debarring all from holding up their hand, in ſwearing the covenants, who had not made conſcience of mourning before God for all the breaches thereof, and for

all

all their ſins and defections, the oath was adminiſtrated by him, and taken by many in the meeting with hands lifted up.

After this, the Meeting was diſmiſſed. At night, Mr. Shields exerciſed upon — — —, in the Kirk of Lanahagow, where (after he had done) the covenants were ſubſcribed by ſeveral hands *.

Our miniſters had laid down reſolutions of renewing the covenants in other places of the country than at this place and time above-mentioned; but they got not the ſame put in practice; for they coming into Edinburgh at the down-ſitting of the Convention of Eſtates, and ſeveral occurrences falling in, (of which that time was fertile) a ſtop was put thereto, and they diverted from ſetting about that great work.

But to return; the General Meeting that night parted, with a reſolution to meet the day following. Accordingly upon the morrow, *February 14th*, they conveened again, and concluded upon theſe things following:

1ſt, It was concluded that a Letter ſhould be written and ſent to Mr. Robert Hamilton, giving him an account of our affairs, and excuſing our being ſo long in writing to him; and alſo to acquaint him that we would be glad of his company among us, yet not knowing what work he might be called to abroad, which might be for advantage to the cauſe, we could not deſire him poſitively to come home, but leave it to himſelf as he thought it his duty.

This Letter was written and ſent to Mr. Hamilton; the tenor whereof followeth:

To the honourable Mr. Robert Hamilton.

Crawford-John, February 14th, 1689.

Right Honourable Sir,

WE ſhall not much apologize for our long forbearance to write to you, but rather take with a fault

* This roll is ſubſcribed only by one miniſter (Mr. Lining) and the two probationers (Meſſrs. Shields and Boyd) and twelve as elders, and eighty nine private men; as many were diſſatisfied. Theſe things in the margin in the printed copy are ingroſſed into the body of the roll. Mr. Shields in public ſaid, From this day ſhall be dated either our reformation or deformation. — Which of the two followed, muſt be left with the reader to judge.

fult in the ſame: However, as we may ſay, it
he want of affection to you which hath hinde
nce the laſt time we wrote; many reelings
ons have occurred, and our ſhare thereof hat
he leaſt, which oftentimes proved diverting fr
eſſary a duty. We acknowledge indeed, we are
rays obliged to you, and among other things, fo
ng yourſelf ſo much for procuring the ordination of Mr.
Thomas Lining at *Embden* now preaching the goſpel a-
mong us, we hope, with ſucceſs, to the praiſe of the
iches of free grace. But, as oft-times we are remiſs
n giving ſignifications of our thanks to them who well
leſerve the ſame, eſpecially to you; and when given,
hey are inſignificant; ſo we hope, though you want
his from us, it will not demur you from laying out
yourſelf further in your ſtation for propagating the teſ-
timony of Chriſt, nor make you repent of what you have
done already, for which you will not want a reward.

Knowing you will be deſirous to know how matters have gone here theſe few months bygone, we ſhall briefly relate only ſome of the moſt memorable paſſages which have come to paſs in and about this wonderful Revolution, eſpecially thoſe things wherein we are more nearly concerned. To give a full and particular account of all the reelings and overturnings which have been brought about this little while bygone, would ſo far exceed the bounds of a letter, that it might fill a volume. However, by what is here given, you may ſee much of the Lord's mercies towards this poor land, in his ſtately ſteps of providence. Many, wonderful and ſtrange are the revolutions theſe few months have produced, whereat we ſtand aſtoniſhed, and adore the Lord's holy and infinite ſovereignty in his way of working in and among the children of men; the Lord hath put a new ſong in our mouth, bu talas! we cannot ſing it. He hath in a way very wonderful, diſappointed the fears of his people and hopes of his enemies, when they were ready to ſpring their mines and accompliſh their long intended and wicked enterprizes; behold, on a ſudden their deſigns are cruſhed, and themſelves taken in the pit which they were digging for others, and they were enſnared in the work of their own hands.

In *September* laſt, ſome ſoldiers got ſecret orders to go through the five weſtern ſhires and take from the people all their arms; which was obeyed: Whereby the

country

country being disarmed, were unfit to defend themselves against the assaults of bloody Papists; but since, they are generally better provided than before.

About this time there were courts of inquisition to be kept in the West, and some of them begun, wherein some professing lairds were to have a hand, in order to the finding out of those who had a hand in rescuing Mr. *Houstoun*, and about going to field-meetings; which if they had gone on would have tended much to our bondage. But the news of the coming of the Dutch put a stop to this threatened storm; whereby, and by the soldiers going to England, we got a little respite. In this juncture, when nothing but wars were expected, we thought it duty to deliberate upon what was called for at our hands. Whereupon, after serious deliberation and consideration, we resolved not to ly bye, but to act against the common enemy, yet in a distinct body from others with whom we could not associate.

But when nothing was looked for but wars and confusions, behold, in a way very strange, all turned to rumours of peace. The Lord who is terrible to the kings of the earth and cuts off the spirits of princes, made the tyrant to tumble off his throne and run for it, and his army to desert him; whereby an eminent testimony was given against that absolute power arrogated by that poor mortal man. Likewise there was a testimony given against, and a dath unto Popery, yea more than had been for several years before: Many monuments of idolatry were destroyed; and severals of them burnt in public places, in doing whereof severals of our number were active; the heads, hands and quarters of our martyrs were taken down and buried, and prisoners for truth set at liberty.

When this was going on, there was a report spread through the country of the *Irishes* being at *Kirkudbright*, and raising fire and sword, which proved so alarming, that in a few days many hundreds were in arms in the west, especially many of our number appeared: But the report proving false, most part of us dismissed. However, a party of us stood together some days in arms, and coming to Douglas emitted a declaration (which is here sent) for their own vindication, and to make the intention of their appearance known to the world. After this many of the curates were put from the kirks; so that at this time there are few of them preaching in the west.

eſt. Theſe things, as they were ſtrange, ſurprizing nd aſtoniſhing, and much of the Lord's wiſdom, pow-r, mercy and faithfulneſs to be ſeen and obſerved in em; ſo they call aloud for great fruitfulneſs and thank-lneſs at our hands. But alas, our ſhort-coming in is may make us afraid that we provoke the Lord to hange his way of dealing with us, and to manifeſt his nger againſt us, as he hath of late ſhown his mercy to-ards us.

There is one thing, worthy Sir, which oftentimes e know not to determine about, which is, concerning our home-coming.——When we conſider how deſir-ble your company would be to many here, and alſo our own deſire to come home, we would gladly omply with it: But again, when we call to mind your ſefulneſs abroad, wherein the Lord hath helped and onoured you above others to lay out yourſelf for the ad-antage and comfort of his followers; and not knowing what larger door of acceſs may be opened for you to be uſeful there, we dare not be poſitive in our deſire to you to come home: ſo we leave it wholly to yourſelf to be determined as the Lord ſhall direct you: heartily wiſhing that wherever you are the Lord may be with you, leading and guiding, protecting, and preſerving, comforting and encouraging you. We earneſtly deſire you would refreſh us with a line, giving us an account of the Lord's care of, and kindneſs to you theſe months paſt. We remain,

Your affectionate friends and well-wiſhers,

Subſcribed in the name, and at the deſire of our General Meeting, by

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

2dly, It was concluded that Michael Shields and Alexander Waddel ſhould go to Edinburgh to wait upon what news might occur, that if neceſſity required, upon any ſpecial occurrence, they might appoint a General Meeting, and give notice thereof to the Societies.

Monday, *March 4th*, being the day after our covenants were renewed, ſome men (from every ſhire where our ſocieties were) having been at the preaching the day before, and ſtaying all night, did this day meet together to conſult and deliberate upon what was their du-

ty in this juncture, especially what they would be called to in the time of the convention, which was to sit down in a little time.—An account of what was at this time concluded, with what hath followed thereupon, I shall here impartially give.

The foresaid men being conveened, where were also present Messrs. Lining, Shields and Boyd.

It was concluded that 30l. sterl. should be given to the three men who were to go to the prince of Orange with the foresaid address, which sum was presently to be borrowed, and afterward to be collected in the societies and paid again. But the collecting of the same was not to begin, or the intent thereof to be uttered, (lest the discovering of it should mar it) until it be heard the three men were arrived at London.

As it was the desire of the societies (as is evident from the foresaid resolution) to have the address and memorial of grievances to the Prince of Orange dispatched with diligence and expedition, which, if it had been done, would have contributed to the clearing them of some doubts and debates they have fallen into since, seeing thereby opportunity would have been had to have remonstrated and represented our cause and case, and of making an offer of our allegiance upon good terms and conditions to him; and however it had been taken and accepted, we would have known more of his mind and affection toward our cause and ourselves than now we do, at least we would have discharged our duty in that matter: So the same was not laid aside intentionally or out of any evil design, but the very occasion of it was this: When the sending of the address, *&c.* was concluded on, the persons pitched upon to go with the same, some of them (*viz.* Mr. Shields) could not be wanted till after the renewing of the covenants, and all of them desired not to go until the first day of that solemn work was over; and though they staid till that work was done, yet they were not ready. When the meeting of Estates sat down, at which time our ministers and others coming to Edinburgh, where they staid until after the middle of April, during which time many strange providences occurred, which afforded matter of wonder, talk and work, wherewith they were so much taken up, that the sending of the address and grievances was much neglected, and when the same was minded, they knew not well what to do therein: So that time and season

passing

paſſing over, the Prince was proclaimed King; after which the doing thereof became doubtful to ſome, yet others, notwithſtanding, were deſirous that the ſame might be ſet about for the ſame reaſons that moved them at firſt to agree therewith: But ſtill new things occurring, (which produced matter of new thoughts, reſolutions and actings) that buſineſs was laid aſide.

Upon the foreſaid day, It was concluded that ten men ſhall be ſent from the five weſtern ſhires, *viz.* two from each of them in the name of our ſocieties in that bounds, and that ſocieties in other ſhires might ſend alſo ſome to Edinburgh, where they were to ſtay in the time of the ſitting of the Convention of Eſtates, for conſulting and deliberating what was to be called for at their hands in emergencies that might fall out: And that they were to appoint General Meetings if neceſſity required, or rendezvouze in caſe of imminent danger, and to acquaint friends in the country with the ſame; as alſo to ſubſcribe with others in the name of the ſocieties they came from, any papers which might be thought for the advantage of the cauſe, to be given to the convention of Eſtates.

The names of the men agreed upon at this time for each ſhire, are as follow, *viz.* For the ſocieties in the overward of Clidſdale, Patrick Walker; for theſe in the neitherward, John Muir; in name of theſe in Renfrew, James Caldwel and William Young; in name of theſe in the ſhire of Air, Andrew Roſs and David Gemmil; in name of theſe in Nithſdale, John Mathieſon and Robert Wilſon; in name of theſe in Galloway, Earlſtoun, or elſe William Stuart and John Clark; in the name of theſe in Teviotdale and Eſkdale, Ninian Oliphant.

Theſe men above-named were made choice of, with this proviſion, If the ſocieties did not agree therewith, they might ſend others more fit.

Although what hath been the reſult of, and followed upon this reſolution hath occaſioned much matter of debate and perplexity to the United Societies; yet the thing itſelf, in its deſign if it had been rightly managed, might have conduced to the advantage of the cauſe.—However a brief account of what hath been the reſult of it, I ſhall here ingenuouſly give.

According to the concluſion above-related, the men agreed upon to be ſent from the ſeveral ſhires in the name of the ſocieties in each of them, as alſo our miniſters,

came into Edinburgh, the day before the down-sitting of the meeting of the Estates, and many others of the societies came in also; the occasion of which was this: Notice was sent to several places of the country by some persons in Edinburgh, that the malignants intended to do some mischief to the meeting of Estates the first day of their sitting, at least to hinder their meeting; therefore desired all concerned to come in in order to prevent the same.

This coming to the ears of severals in the societies, moved them to come in, lest if they had refused the malignants might have been emboldened to put their wicked projects in execution, and any designing honestly in the meeting of Estates discouraged.

Albeit what was done by them at this time, was, and is condemned by many, because it was a guarding of those men who had been bloody murderers and violent persecutors, (many of such being members of the Convention of Estates) and the same was the first step of our engaging and associating with malignants, and tampering with them, wherein we have gone further on since: Yet it is acknowledged by many, that what they did then was good service to the nation, for if they had not come, the meeting of Estates would not have sitten at that time, and may be not at all; and if so, that which they did in declaring K. James to have forfeited his right to the crown, and abolishing of Prelacy, might not have been done yet.

Some of them did stay a while in the city, being employed in helping to keep guard and cast up trenches against the castle, (which at this time stood out) and others of them staid longer, and kept watch every night in a room of the house where the Earl of Crawford, Lord Cardross, and Sir Patrick Hume of Polwart lodged, to hinder any from assassinating them, which was feared then.

But to return; The men who went to Edinburgh in the name of the Societies (as was related above) did often meet to deliberate what they were called to at this time; what was by them agreed unto (of greatest consequence): I shall here give an account of.

It was proposed by some, that a protestation should be drawn up and given to the Meeting of Estates against their admitting such as constituent members, who were incapable to sit there as being men perjured, who had

beca

been greatly accessory to, and active in carrying on the late persecution, and shedders of our brethren's blood. This (they said) should be the first thing we should do in reference to the Meeting of Estates.

Against this it was alledged by some, that this was not the time for such a protestation, seeing, though such men ought not to be there, yet to protest against it, might irritate others of the meeting not so guilty, and put a stop to the getting access of any of our papers afterwards: So it was laid aside.

After the Meeting of Estates had concluded upon raising the Fencible-men and the Militia, in case of foreign invasion, or intestine commotions, it was proposed what the Societies up and down the country should do in this case. This being deliberated upon, advice was sent to them to be oft rendevouzing, and in readiness to appear in case of danger.

At this time fell in debates concerning sinful association (which have been so much tossed since) occasioned by our scrupling to come under the command and conduct of gentlemen (many of whom had been our persecutors not long since) who would be appointed officers over the Fencible-men in the country, not thinking it safe to entrust these to be our leaders; Some of whom having formerly given evidences of their treachery, and enmity against the Lord's cause and people.

It was also proposed by some, that a paper might be drawn up, and given to the Meeting of Estates, containing briefly, some of the material grounds of our disowning the late tyrannical government,—and from a desire to have rightful and lawful government established, humbly to crave, that after they had declared the crown vacant, they might make choice of the Prince of Orange to be King, and devolve the regal authority upon him, with, and upon such conditions and provisions as religion and liberty might be secured; intending hereby, as upon the one hand to get opportunity of shewing our minds freely to the Meeting of Estates (knowing that they intended to make the prince king) what were the conditions, for security of our religion, laws and liberties we desired they should, and ought to seek, and get of him to whom the regal power was to be given; So to evidence to the world, that though we are against tyranny and tyrants, yet we are for magistracy and magistrates when they are duly constituted and appointed: And that

we

we hate Anarchy equally with tyranny, and are for order and government.

After deliberation concerning this propoſal; it was reſolved that this paper ſhould be drawn up: which accordingly was done, by way of petition to the Convention of Eſtates. It was agreed unto and ſubſcribed by moſt of the Meeting (and ſeveral others who were at the time in the town). But ſome diſſented from, and would not condeſcend unto it, ſaying, if we owned the prince as ſuch, it behoved not to be by election, ſeeing he was a ſtranger, and could not be deſired to take our covenants.

However, when it was preſented to ſome of the Meeting of Eſtates in private, they objected againſt it as needleſs, ſeeing they were about to do what we deſired therein: And if it were given in, the mentioning of the covenants, and its ſtrictneſs would anger the malignant party of the Meeting of Eſtates, and it might tend to the dividing of them. So it was not given in. Yet ſeveral of the members thereof, and others did ſee it.

About this time it was thought on, and ſpoken unto among ſome perſons, that in this juncture of affairs, where religion, liberty, country, and all was in great danger, for defending all theſe, that an offer might be made to the Prince of Orange (whom they expected would be King) of raiſing a regiment of our friends, and lord Angus to be colonel, upon good conditions, which were to be ſought and obtained, before engaging in the ſervice, ſuppoſing that both theſe who would be in the regiment, and theſe at home, might be in the better capacity to repreſent our cauſe, (for adhering to which we had been ſuffering) and remonſtrate our grievances, and ſeek redreſs of the ſame;—but ſeeing there was no concluſion laid down of proſecuting the buſineſs, it was expected the ſame ſhould not have gone abroad. However it coming to the knowledge of the laird of *Blaickwood*, he made an offer to the Meeting of Eſtates (after they had reſolved upon ſome regiments of foot, and ſome troops of horſe, in place of the Militia) of raiſing a regiment of Weſt country men under lord Angus as colonel, and William Cleland as lieutenant colonel. Which was granted, and the regiment was to conſiſt of two battallions, that is twenty companies.

After this offer was made, Blaickwood and captain Cleland came to Mr. Shields and acquainted him with what they had done (who till they told him, knew nothing

thing of it, though some blamed him for having a hand therein) desiring him to acquaint friends in the country thereof, without delay, for they had promised to raise the regiment in fourteen days. Whereupon Mr. Shields shewed this to friends that were at Edinburgh at the time, who meeting together, after some deliberation; it was thought expedient seeing the thing was somewhat extraordinary, that it was requisite a General Meeting of our friends should be appointed, who might deliberately consider what to do therein.

So it was concluded that the meeting should be at *Douglas*, upon the 29th of April next, and the same to be signified to the Societies.

HAVING briefly given an account of the resolutions fallen upon at the meeting which met at Lismahagow, the next day after the renewing our covenants, with what hath followed thereupon, I shall next set down the Causes of two Fasts, as they were drawn up at that time by our ministers, to be observed by the Societies.

IT is earnestly desired that Thursday, the 14th infrant be observed as a day of prayer and supplication, to cry mightily to God, that as he hath put it in our hearts to adventure upon the renewing of our Solemn National Covenants; so he may give us grace to know what we have vowed, and to perform, and walk suitably according to our engagements: And that others differing from us, yet professing and owning the obligation of the covenants, may be stirred up to renew the same also, and join with us in acknowledging the breaches, and engage again unto the duties thereof, that so an union in the Lord, on terms of truth and duty, and returning to him, may be obtained; and the unhappy divisions on the one hand may be composed and cured, and on the other hand, all unholy conspiracy in defection, wronging the testimony of Christ may be prevented: And to beseech the Lord that he would so over-rule the present changes of providence, and particularly the business of this great convention of Estates, that the covenanted reformation may be revived, and re-established, the government of the state be set upon a righteous foundation, relieving us of the fears of tyranny: and the government of the church restored according to the Lord's institution, delivering us from the yoke of prelacy, and

supre-

ſupremacy, and all encroaching uſurpations, novations, or men's inventions.

It is alſo earneſtly deſired that the firſt day of May, be kept as a day of prayer and ſupplication, that the Lord may break the combinations, contrivances, and plots of the popiſh, prelatical, and malignant faction, againſt the work and people of God, deliver us from their rage, and particularly reſcue and ſave our diſtreſſed brethren in Ireland from their devouring ſword.

THE interval betwixt the laſt General Meeting and this, was productive of wonders, which as they were ſtrange, ſo they had different effects upon perſons, according as they were affected, or diſaffected to the ſame: Amongſt other things theſe are very obſervable.

1*ſt*, That any of the Societies (who not long ſince were killed all day long, and counted as ſheep for the ſlaughter) ſhould not only get liberty, but be invited to appear in arms in the chief city of the kingdom as many of them did, at the downſitting of the Convention of Eſtates. But ſome did not approve thereof.

2*dly*, A few months ago Prelacy was arrived at the greateſt height of arrogancy and pride: Behold it thrown down from the top of its grandeur, even by theſe who had formerly contributed to the ſetting, and keeping it up: It was not only wearied of, and hated by the generality of people, as a burden and yoke they could not endure, which was manifeſted by the concurrence of many, to thruſt out theſe intruding hirelings the Curates from the kirks: But alſo it was aboliſhed (or laid aſide) by an act of the ſupreme judicatory of the nation, as a grievance to the ſtate.

3*dly*, This is alſo remarkable that the Meeting of Eſtates having by an act declared K. James to have forfeited his right to the crown, gave the ſame reaſons for it, that the United Societies formerly had given, and for which they proteſted againſt his inſtalment: And tho' for this, they were much condemned, reproached, and perſecuted; yet they are juſtified and vindicated in this matter, by this act of theſe men, moſt part of whom, not only owned K. James's authority, but condemned theſe who diſowned it, as guilty of death. But altho' theſe things are much to be obſerved with thankfulneſs and acknowledged with praiſe, in bringing of which to

paſs

pass, the Lord's hand was eminently seen: Yet there were other things which did a little embitter or counterbalance them. For at that time there were great fears of an invasion from Ireland, by K. James and his bloody-throat cutters, the Irishes,—and also of intestine insurrections to be raised by bloody Claverhouse (who had left the Meeting of Estates) and other malignants, papists, and enemies to God, and their country: Upon account of which the Meeting of Estates resolved upon raising some regiments of foot (as is related before) and an offer having been made of raising a regiment of West countrymen, particularly by the laird of Blaickwood, the offer was accepted, and a commission granted to raise the same, which was to consist of twenty companies of these men who had been formerly persecuted.

After some of our friends, who continued in Edinburgh, were acquainted with this, they appointed a General Meeting to meet at *Douglas* upon the 29th of April, to consider upon this affair.—Which accordingly did conveen.

Upon the 28th day of April, being the Lord's day, there was a field-meeting beside the town, where was a great multitude of people, to whom Messrs Lining, Boyd, and Shields preached.

Upon April 29th, the General Meeting did conveen in the kirk of *Douglas*.—After the same was modelled, This question was enquired at them, *viz.* Whether in this juncture, when there were great fears of an invasion from Ireland, and of intestine wars in the land, it were a necessary duty to raise a regiment of our friends, for defence of religion, the country, and ourselves.

After some discourse upon this, every one assented to this, that the country was like to be in great danger, and that it was very expedient to have men modelled.

But some said that to have a regiment of our friends under pay, would be a sinful association, seeing there were in the army, many malignants, men of blood, and murderers of our brethren, with whom our officers behoved to sit in councils of war, and to fight all under one general, *viz.* M'Kay, whom they knew not, nor what he was for, or against: also against him there were some objections.

To this it was answered, that it would not be a sinful association, but only necessitous, and discretive, which

the danger of time called for at their hands, they being as much, if not more, than any others, called to defend religion, and their country, and though there were wicked men in the council of war, yet our officers having right to be there as well as others, might further good designs, and hinder evil; and if they could not get that done, yet they had liberty to proteſt.

After ſome jangling debates it was at length reſolved to put this queſtion to a vote, and every one's mind particularly enquired, *viz.* Whether or not at this time it was a ſinful aſſociation for one regiment to be in an army, while there were many officers malignant and bloody men, and all under one general? The moſt part of the votes went in the affirmative, that it was a ſinful aſſociation. Before the votes were fully gotten, but eſpecially when the ſame was done, there was great confuſion in the Meeting: To compoſe which, there was a paper preſented and read, containing ſome propoſals to the lieutenant colonel, which when they had heard quieted them a little *.

The ſum of the paper was as follows.

To the Right Honourable the Lieutenant Colonel, *and the reſt of the ſuperior Officers of the* Earl *of* Angus's *Regiment.—The humble Propoſals of ſome Honeſt People in the Weſtern Shires, To whom it is offered to take on in, and make up that Regiment.*

WE cannot acquit ourſelves in the duties we owe to God, to our country, to our brethren, and to our poſterity; as we are obliged by the laws of God, of man, and by our national covenant, if we do not offer

* It is here to be obſerved that their miniſters were among the chief drivers of this affair, and what they could not do by preaching and arguing, they now endeavour to effect by ſubtilty; they had endeavoured the day before vigorouſly to excite them to it, and eſpecially Mr. Shields, who at that time, preached ſeveral days upon Judges v. 23. *Curſe ye Meroz,——becauſe they came not to the help of the Lord,—againſt the mighty.* Crying out, "Come, let us go and pull down the gates of Rome". And he being in greater reſpect with many, upon the account of his former zeal and faithfulneſs, had greater influence to induce many to engage, who afterward, to their dying day repented thereof: (as he himſelf relates in his Journals,) when they were in Flanders, ſome of them curſed him to his face, for the hand he had in inducing them to the ſervice.

fer our concurrence, in the preſent call of providence, to aſſiſt in the defence of the common cauſe againſt the common enemies.—But fearing the ſnares and hazard of the ſin and puniſhment of unlawful aſſociations with thoſe who have demeaned themſelves as enemies to the cauſe of God, and that ſame intereſt they are now profeſſing to eſpouſe: And we reſolving through grace to adhere to that ſame cauſe in fighting, as we have done in ſuffering. And not to forget or forgo our teſtimony againſt the wrongs it hath received from any hand. We humbly deſire to be ſatisfied in theſe propoſals, ere we can engage under your conduct.

Firſt, That all our officers ſuperior and inferior be ſuch as we can in conſcience and prudence confidently ſubmit unto, and follow. Such as have not ſerved the enemy, nor perſecuted and oppoſed the cauſe, nor engaged by the Declaration, Teſt, or other ſinful oaths and bonds to oppoſe and ſuppreſs the cauſe we fight for: But have given proof of their fidelity, integrity, and good affection to the Covenanted Reformation, and are willing to renew the covenant engagement, when duly, and ſeaſonably called thereunto.

Secondly, Or at leaſt if ſuch a number of officers cannot be found, that are free of ſuch offences, that ſuch as are admitted who are chargeable with leſſer degrees of foreſaid offences, and compliances, make public acknowledgment on the head of the regiment, of their ſenſe of theſe ſins and ſcandals, and engage to ſubmit to the cenſures of the church.

Thirdly, That theſe officers, ſo qualified, may not take up nor bring in men, any that will take on of their own choice, or by appointment of the general officers, at this levy: But that at the firſt rendevouz, the companies that we ſhall complete may have captains, and inferior officers ſet over them ſuch as they ſhall chooſe or conſent to and approve.

Fourthly, That the officers we have already choſen be either continued in their places if capable, or admitted to ſuch places as they are capable of, and none obtruded on us, as uncapable and unfit, without our conſent.

Fifthly, That particularly, it may be granted us, to chooſe the laird of *Carloups*, and the laird of *Kerſland*, or *Earlſtoun* be admitted for aid-major.

Sixthly, That while in the country, we may have liberty to chooſe our own miniſters, and if we ſhould be

called out of the country, that we may have the choice of one to go with us.

Seventhly, That we be not obliged to go out of the three dominions, nor out of Scotland except upon urgent neceſſity of preſent ſervice.

Eighthly, That we may have liberty to repreſent and remonſtrate our grievances ſuſtained theſe years bygone and impeach according to law and juſtice the chief inſtruments and abettors thereof, in church, ſtate, army, or country.

After reading of this paper, ſome of the Meeting ſaid if theſe propoſals were granted they could not ſay much againſt the raiſing of a regiment.

Upon the morrow April 30th, the General Meeting conveened again in the Kirk, to whom were read again the propoſal above written; when it was reſolved by them that the lieutenant colonel ſhould come in, that after hearing of it, they might know what he would ſay to it: which accordingly he did; and after hearing of it, he anſwered that there were ſome of them not in his power to grant, but belonged to the King, and Meeting of Eſtates. And ſome were in his power, as theſe relating to the putting in of officers in the regiment, and ſaid he would put none in againſt whom we had juſt exceptions.

But he going out again, and the Meeting not getting ſatisfaction for granting of their propoſals. They fell again into confuſions, and diviſions, ſome being for raiſing of the regiment preſently, upon good conditions, others requiring time to conſider and adviſe with their Societies, ſeeing the buſineſs was of no ſmall importance. To this it was anſwered, though time to deliberate thereon was to be deſired, yet in this caſe it could not be allowed, ſeeing they knew not how ſoon the land might be invaded by the bloody Iriſhes; and before that, it were neceſſary that the regiment were taught the diſcipline of war.

About this time ſome came into the kirk, and told that news was come to the caſtle, that the Iriſhes were landed, and the Highlanders were in arms. This, as ſome ſuppoſed at the time, was not true (as afterward it proved) but only was made uſe of to ſtir up the people the more to engage in the regiment.

After-

Afterward all the companies in the town were desired to go to the Holm beside the water, and to draw up before Mr. Buntine the general muster-master, that he might report that he saw them in arms, and they should not be thereby any further engaged.

Some were for the companies drawing up, and others were against it. As some of the companies were going to the Holm, one went and dissuaded them therefrom, saying, If they went they would be engaged in the regiment.—For this he was blamed by some, seeing thereby the lieutenant colonel and others did lose much of their pay, which they would have got if they had mustered.

For composing and settling differences, much pains were used. Some desired proposals should be sent to General Mackay; and to avoid division for the future upon this account, that some were for engaging in the regiment and some not, this proposal was made by some, That these who had not clearness to engage, might forbear, and say nothing against them who had; and these who had freedom, might go on, and say nothing against these who wanted it.

May 1st, in the morning some persons conveened, and drew up proposals to be sent to Mackay, which were to be presented to the General Meeting, who met within a little, to whom the proposals were read. They objected against some of them; so the same were corrected, and desired to be sent immediately to Mackay, and his answer to be returned to them against the next General Meeting, which was appointed to meet at Douglas, *May 13th.*

This paper of proposals by way of humble petition to Mackay was shewed to the lieutenant colonel; but as he did not agree with the manner of sending it, he drew up an address to Mackay in the name of the regiment;—which some was against, in regard the meeting had concluded upon the other, and knew nothing of this, which differed much from the first.

The person who undertook to deliver the papers to Mackay, coming into Edinburgh for that end, found him gone to the north; so it was not given. However a new draught of the address was written by Blakewood, who desired the same might be smooth, in regard all we were to seek of him was only the signifying his assent, and agreeing with the work of reformation. But some of these desired to present it, were altogether against this al-

teration,

teration, becauſe they had no allowance for any ſuch thing from thoſe who deſired them to come: Yet the ſame was preſented to Col. Balfour, commander in chief for the time.

In the interval betwixt the laſt meeting and this (which was the ſooner appointed, that the affair concerning the regiment might be haſtened) the captains were raiſing the companies, which were brought up to a field-meeting upon the Lord's day, *May 12th*, where was a great multitude of people. Mr. Shields preached upon Judges v. 23.

Upon the morrow, the General Meeting conveened at *Douglas*,—There were preſented to, and read at this meeting two papers; the one was ſome propoſals of the ſoldiers deſirous to ſerve in the regiment, to the lieutenant colonel and other officers; the other was a declaration to be ſubſcribed by all the officers and ſoldiers at their engaging in the regiment. True copies of both theſe papers follow.

To the Right Honourable the Lieutenant Colonel, and other officers in the Earl of Angus's *Regiment— The humble Petition of the* Soldiers *that deſire to ſerve in the ſaid Regiment,*

Our conſcience, in the fear and zeal of God, moving us to undertake this ſervice without any ſelfiſh or miniſtrous motive or end, preſſeth us humbly to propoſe and lay before your Honours the terms which will engage and encourage us to come with confidence under your conduct. And therefore we moſt earneſtly deſire you will be pleaſed to conſider them, and conſent to, and concert them with us by way of contract, which may contain what we deſire of your Honours, and what you are pleaſed to demand of us for mutual ſatisfaction.

Our deſires are theſe following.

1*ſt*, That all officers and ſoldiers of the regiment, in ſome ſubſcribed declaration, like this herewith delivered, make profeſſion of their ſoundneſs in religion, ſincerity in the cauſe truly ſtated, and of their unanimous harmony in the received and approven principles of the church

church of Scotland, owning and adhering to the covenants and work of reformation, in its doctrine, worſhip, liſcipline and government, againſt Popery, Prelacy, Eraſtianiſm, Sectarianiſm, tyranny and arbitrary government; and that none be liſted or kept in the regiment, but thoſe who ſubſcribe the ſame, when agreed upon.

2*dly*, That all officers and ſoldiers may concur in all awful and expedient endeavours in advancing the reformation of the church and ſtate, eſpecially for eſtabliſhing the church in its former order and union, according to the word of God and former approven conſtitutions of this church; and proſecuting every ſeaſonable and ſuitable teſtimony for proſecuting the ſame, or againſt any corruption introduced, or that may be introduced, inconſiſtent therewith or impedative thereof.

3*dly*, That we may not only have liberty to repreſent our grievances ſuſtained theſe years bygone under the late tyranny, and impeach, according to courſe of law, the inſtruments and abettors of the ſame in church, ſtate, army or country. But eſpecially that our ſuperior officers concur, and bear hand to the pleading out of the army ſuch notorious criminals as have oppreſſed and perſecuted us, murdered our brethren, and have been enemies to the cauſe we now fight for.

4*thly*, While that is not done, and until it be done, we deſire to be as remote from the ſnares of conjunction with them, as may conſiſt with the effectual management of the war. And to this effect, that our officers endeavour to provide and procure, that we go not out in promiſcuous detachments with them, nor be mixed in encampments with the foreſaid criminals.

5*thly*, That our officers be always of our own choice, or approbation; and that none be obtruded upon us without our conſent; and theſe already commiſſioned or now to be commiſſioned, be continued, until either by death taken away, or for ſome fault they deſerve degradation, or be found, after a competent time to fit themſelves, uncapable of that truſt.

6*thly*, That as ſoon as peace is ſettled, and fears of rebellion or invaſion ceaſed, ſuch as have a mind to go off, may have liberty; and their vacancies ſupplied with the approbation of the reſt.

7*thly*, That we may have the privilege of a miniſter choſen by all of us, and an elder in every company, with the

the reſpect and eſteem due to perſons of their character, who may with authority reprove offences, without reſpect of perſons.

8thly, That for promoting piety in the regiment, it be not only permitted, but appointed that the guards may perform the worſhip of God publicly, at leaſt ſuch parts of it, and at ſuch times as their military duties will allow: And theſe that are off guard, may concur in family worſhip ordinarily; and ſome day or other, every week alſo, to meet in competent numbers with their elders for fellowſhip in prayer and Chriſtian conference, (beſides the miniſters exerciſe for preaching and catechiſing) as conveniency will allow.

9thly, That among the military laws for reſtraining diſorders, there may be ſevere ſanctions and puniſhments aſſigned for fornication and all uncleanneſs, and all laſcivious, filthy and unchriſtian talking, ſwearing, curſing, mocking of godlineſs, drinking of healths, and all drunkenneſs, &c.

The tenor of the Declaration follows.

WE all, and every one of us, officers and ſoldiers of every degree, belonging to the regiment of James, Lord Angus, under-ſubſcribing; who now offer ourſelves with all reſolution and readineſs of mind to the ſervice of the king and ſtate, in defence of religion and the liberties of our country, againſt the inteſtine inſurrections and foreign invaſions of the Popiſh, Prelatical and malignant faction; Conſidering what a promiſcuous aſſociation of men of diverſe principles and profeſſions are employed and intruſted in the preſent ſervice, and how variouſly they may propoſe to themſelves the ſtate of the cauſe, and the end of the expedition; and conſidering how many demur and heſitate to concur in the preſent appearance, fearing the ſnare and hazard and puniſhment of unlawful aſſociations with theſe that have heretofore demeaned themſelves as enemies to the cauſe of God; for their ſatisfaction and our own exoneration, Do declare, we mean no manner of way to eſpouſe any malignant party, quarrel nor intereſt, nor fight for any other cauſe, nor upon any other grounds, than what this church and kingdom hath owned in the beſt and pureſt times of reformation, and what the faithful

have contended for through all the troubles of the
e tyranny. To wit, not only for the preſervation of
e rights of the ſtate and liberties of the kingdom, with
e defence and preſervation of our dread Sovereign,
ng William, his perſon and authority, in the defence
d preſervation of the true religion, liberties and laws of
e kingdom: To whom, as a comfortable inſtrument
God's mercy, we owe the preſent reviving in our bon-
ge: Upon whom, in a great meaſure, doth depend
e quiet and continuance thereof; and with whom the
ibility and ſecurity of our religion and liberties is ſo
aitly conjoined: But alſo for the good old way of
otland's covenanted reformation, in its formerly eſta-
iſhed, approven, and received principles, confeſſions
d conſtitutions of doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline and
overnment, according to the word of God and ſolemn
ational covenants, which we own and avouch to be of
inding force and unrepealable obligation, and declare
ur willingneſs and deſire to renew the ſame, whenever
awfully, duly, and ſeaſonably called thereto; and a-
gainſt Popery, Prelacy, Eraſtianiſm, Sectarianiſm, ty-
anny and arbitrary government, and all perſons or
hings oppoſite to the glory of God, the honour of the
ing, ſafety and liberty of the church or ſtate: Particu-
arly againſt all the attempts of the late James the VII.
nd his accomplices within or without the land, for
-inforcing his uſurpations by rebellious armies.

Moreover, as for aſſociation with the enemies of the
reſaid cauſe of God, of truth, and of godlineſs, whe-
er for or againſt it; we abhor and deteſt every ſuch
nfederacy, or entering into affinity with the people of
aeſe abominations; and ſhall concur with, and adhere
nto the former approven teſtimony of this church, a-
gainſt the admitting unto, or keeping in places of power
and truſt, any Popiſh or malignant incendiaries or evil
inſtruments, for the defence of the cauſe or nation, who
have been the profeſſed and ſworn tools of the deſtruction
thereof; But whether they ſhall intrude themſelves in-
to this ſervice or not, yet we ſhall not be hindered from
contributing our utmoſt to oppoſe all the enemies of the
cauſe of God and the country in the preſent juncture.
And in the mean time, ſhall endeavour that none be im-
bodied to our regiment that have not given proof of
their fidelity, integrity and good affection to the fore-

ſaid cauſe, or of their remorſe for their defects therein.†

Theſe two papers were drawn up in the interval between this meeting and the laſt, intending to have good conditions; and that their way might be further cleared who engaged in the regiment; the ſame containing nothing but what they judged neceſſary, both to ſeek, and alſo to have, before they engaged.

When the meeting had heard theſe papers, it was concluded by them that they ſhould both be ſhewed to the lieutenant colonel, and alſo to Sir Patrick Hume of Polwart, who was come from Edinburgh. Upon this account, and for this effect, they choſe Meſſrs. Shields and Boyd, Wm. Stuart, Jo. Mathieſon, Wm. Young, Jo. Clark, James Wilſon and Michael Shields, who went immediately to theſe gentlemen, (who were then come to the town) together with Blakewood.

When Polwart had read the papers, he ſaid, He had nothing to object againſt them; yet the ſame could not be agreed upon and done by way of contract betwixt officers and ſoldiers, leſt thereby they might come under the hazard of a council of war; for, according to military diſcipline it would not be ſuffered, and that no private leagues among ſubjects were to be made.

After the lieutenant colonel had read the two papers, he ſaid, He would never go into any ſuch tranſaction, or come under ſuch engagements, (agreeing with the objections made by Polwart). At length, after ſome debatings, Polwart drew up a paper containing a ſhort declaration of the deſigns of engaging in the ſervice, with which the lieutenant col. agreed.

The perſons above-named, returning to the meeting, gave them a brief account of what had paſt betwixt the gentlemen and them, with which the meeting was not ſatisfied, ſeeing their propoſals and deſires were not granted; and many, when they ſaw it ſo, were more averſe from engaging in the regiment.

However, after ſome diſcourſe and debating concerning what was their duty in ſuch a caſe, it was concluded that

† It appears that theſe papers were wrote by Mr. Alexander Shields, and although many judged much of the matter of them contrary to the actings at this time, yet many others were much induced thereby to engage, chiefly thro' their implicit faith in Mr. Shield's honeſty.

that a paper ſhould be drawn up, containing in ſhort what they were for and what they were againſt, to be read to-morrow at the head of every company. This was thought neceſſary, leſt the teſtimony (for owning of which they had been ſuffering) might be wronged, or kept in ſilence by their preſent reſolutions and actings. —And for that night they parted.

At night there were two papers drawn up, one in the name of the officers, and another in the name of the ſoldiers.

Howbeit they were not read as was deſigned, the reaſon of which ſhall be immediately given.

May 14th, The lieutenant colonel and the laird of Blakewood in the morning came from the caſtle to the town, and acquainted our miniſters and others, That ſome officers having met in a council of war, had reſolved not to treat any more with us. He likewiſe made ſome reflections on ſome of the captains, that he had been ſlighted and diſobeyed by them.—So theſe gentlemen returned again to the caſtle, and preſently the laird of Polwart took journey for Edinburgh, whom the lieutenant Col. conveyed a little way off.

But before he did this he was deſired to come and ſpeak with the companies, who were then all drawn up in the Holm. Whereupon the lieutenant Col. coming to the place in order to ſpeak to them; he came firſt to Capt. Haddow's company, and had a ſhort ſpeech to them to this purpoſe: That he had loſt himſelf by failing in his promiſe to raiſe a regiment; but ſince it was ſo, he would do it with honour: That he had been ſlighted, *&c.* and that he had met with ſome of our friends the day before concerning our engaging, to whom he had offered reaſonable terms, and had drawn up a paper ſhewing their deſigns of entering into the ſame.—Whereupon capt. John Campbel of Moy (who was with him) read the ſame.——This paper is mentioned above, and was drawn up by Polwart; The tenor whereof followeth:

"TO declare that you engage in this ſervice, of purpoſe to reſiſt Popery, and Prelacy, and arbitrary power; and to recover and eſtabliſh the work of reformation in Scotland, in oppoſition to Popery, Prelacy and arbitrary power in all the branches and ſteps thereof, till the go-

vernment in church and ſtate, be brought to that luſtre and integrity which it had in the beſt times."

This being read, Mr. Shields explained it a little, having a ſpeech to the company to this purpoſe, That they were for maintaining and defending the work of reformation and our covenants, and that they were againſt aſſociation with malignants and enemies to truth and godlineſs; and that they would help to bring theſe guilty of our brethren's blood to condign puniſhment.

In this manner the lieutenant colonel went through the whole companies, from one to another, (being all the time on horſe-back) having to each of them the like ſpeech, as is above written, and capt. Campbel reading the above paper, as alſo Mr. Shields explaining the ſame to the ſame purpoſe, as is above ſet down. After this was done, the companies ſtaid a little in the Holm. But the lieutenant colonel with the captains and ſome lieutenants, with our miniſters, went into the town, where they communed together concerning the preſent buſineſs.—And afterward he gave orders to each captain where to march with his company, which was accordingly obeyed.

To this account I ſhall add this one thing, *viz.* That there were ſome objections made againſt ſome captains which the lieutenant Colonel chooſed, eſpecially againſt Captain Monro, yet they were made officers in the regiment.

Thus was Lord Angus's regiment raiſed and managed. As ſome were not well pleaſed that there was any engaging or taking on therein, before ſecurity was obtained for performing the conditions required, but inſtead thereof rather a paſſing from them, and an yielding too far: So ſince that time they have been the occaſion of much talk, ſome deſpiſing, and ſome others commending them. Again they have been condemned by ſome, as being in a ſinful aſſociation with malignants. But many of the malignants themſelves, eſpecially ſome in the army, have accounted them as one of their great eye-ſores.

Towards evening, after the affair was paſt, the moſt part of the meeting conveened again, when it was propoſed to them, What was next called for at their hands? To which ſome anſwered, They thought it neceſſary that an offer ſhould be made of raiſing another regiment of

of our friends, upon good terms and conditions. Whereupon it was concluded that this offer ſhould be made; for effectuating of which William Stewart, Dr. Furd, James Wilſon, and Michael Shields were deſired to go to Edinburgh, to ſpeak to ſome perſons concerning the ſame: Who accordingly went and ſpoke to Sir Patrick Hume of Polwart. He told them that he, and alſo ſome others of the Meeting of Eſtates wiſhed that another regiment of theſe people were raiſed, but he thought the ſame would not be obtained at the time, both on account of the want of money, and alſo if ſuch a thing were mentioned in the Meeting of Eſtates, ſeverals of them would oppoſe it, who had no kindneſs for theſe people. So this was deſiſted from.

TROUBLES and commotions were not few in the land, ſince the laſt meeting, and more daily expected, both at home, and alſo from abroad: As Claverhouſe and others, were raiſing all the force they could, in the Highlands: And in the Lowlands, papiſts and malignants were buſy, in plotting and ſecretly carrying on their wicked deſigns: So an invaſion from Ireland was ſtill feared, the fears of which, made the moſt part of the Fenſible-men in the Weſtern ſhires, to chooſe officers, and often to muſter, that they might be the better capacitated to defend themſelves. As for the Society people, many of them were engaged in Angus's regiment, and theſe at home, were frequently rendevouzing under their own officers. But one thing was ſad, and matter of lamentation, *viz.* The confuſions and debates that begun to ariſe, and increaſing amongſt them concerning the regiment, with whoſe engaging ſo abruptly, without getting the conditions (ſought,) granted. Many were diſſatisfied, and did ſay they were in a ſinful aſſociation with malignants, which alſo, ſeverals in the regiment themſelves complained of, and feared. As it was a burden to them, that there were ſome ſcandalous officers in that regiment, who were put in by the lieutenant colonnel: So to ſhew their diſlike at employing and entruſting wicked men in the army,—The ſoldiers emitted a Declaration, upon the —— day of July, as they were marching from Dumblain and Down, in their way to the Highlands.

At this time the parliament was ſitting at Edinburgh, having conveened upon the 17th day of June.

UPON

In the mean time a General Meeting did conveen at *Carntable* upon the 18th of July 1689.—After the Meeting was modelled and prayer ended.——It was enquired what they thought moſt expedient to begin with. Some anſwered that there were two men come from the regiment. Theſe men were ſent from the regiment, to keep up and entertain correſpondence with the reſt of their friends at this Meeting, and to know what was concluded by them. Whereupon they were deſired to ſpeak. Who ſaid that it was the deſire of thoſe who ſent them to keep up correſpondence with their brethren in the country as formerly. But they were jealous that ſome in the Meeting had exceptions againſt the regiment, and they deſired to know the ſame. To this ſome anſwered that they were afraid that they were in a ſinful aſſociation. It was ſaid by others, that this had been debated before, and at this time they could not put an end to it, therefore it was ſafeſt to forbear.

However the ſoldiers had ſignified their mind concerning the ſame, and other things in a declaration lately emitted by them, which was ſhown to the Meeting, and read †.

The Meeting having heard this paper were well ſatisfied, and ſhewed their deſire and willingneſs to keep up correſpondence with the regiment,

They likewiſe ſhewed that it was the deſire of the regiment, that they ſhould keep up their rendevouzes frequently, and that it would be for the ſecurity of the Weſt country, to have the regiment among them; which to get effected, they deſired the ſame might be repreſented to the parliament, as at this time there were great fears of the Iriſhes landing in the Weſt country, in caſe of which both theſe in the country, and the regiment might have the better acceſs to the helping one another.

The Meeting did take this in good part, and wiſhed that the regiment were in the Weſt, and that a fit way were fallen upon to repreſent the expediency of the ſame, to

† This Declaration is not only the ſame in ſubſtance, but in the ſame words, with the Declaration ſhown to the lieutenant colonel at their entry into the regiment; a copy of which is already inſerted in page 400, therefore unneceſſary to repeat; and whether their emitting it now, or their ſhewing it as their deſire to the lieutenant colonel before, could free them of being in a ſinful aſſociation, muſt be left with the reader to judge.

to the parliament. Though this was their desire, yet the same took no effect, being never put to the trial; one cause whereof was, the want of hopes of its having success. But as to the rendevouzing which they advised unto, the same was very frequent through the West country; concerning which, this is not to be forgotten, but deserves a remark: That in several places the country people who were rendevouzing, did refuse these men for officers, who were malignants, and had been persecutors, notwithstanding of their being chosen to be such, by the commitee of the shires: And made choice of such as they had no exception against: Thinking it highly irrational, and very unsafe to come under the command and conduct of these men whom they had ground to expect (as was said of some of them) would betray them to K. James, when he came over, severals of them having sworn allegiance to him formerly. This afforded matter of much talking, and made many to enquire and search into the question about association.

Upon the consideration that there had been much precious blood of the Lord's people shed in this land in the time of the late persecution. And now a door being opened in holy providence whereby access was given, and and some hopes of getting justice executed upon the murderers. It was proposed to the Meeting that they should deliberate upon what was their duty in such a case.

After speaking to this a little, they concluded it was their duty to duty to seek, and cry for justice upon the murders of their brethren, and that the parliament should be petitioned for the same.

Whereupon James Wilson and Michael Shields, was desired to go to Edinburgh, to seek advice from some there, what would be the fittest method for effectuating thereof. But in the mean time our friends up and down the country, were desired to have in readiness the evidence for probation of the murderers; seeing the same would be instantly called for, whenever the murderers came to be tried.

Agreeable to this conclusion, was the desire of the soldiers in lord Angus's regiment, who before they marched to the Highlands drew up a petition to the parliament (to be given in when it should meet) wherein among other things they crave injustice upon the murderers

ers of their brethren, and in particular upon some at that time in prison, which petition was read to the Meeting. A short compend of which followeth ‡.

To the Right Honourable, the Estates of Parliament of the Kingdom of Scotland,---The Humble Address of the Soldiers of the Regiment of James lord Angus.

SHEWETH,

THAT as our sufferings under, and for declining the yoke of the late popish arbitrary usurpation are not unknown to your Honours, and we hope will not now be condemned, when these mischiefs framed into a law, which occasioned them, are abolished. So our actions since the beginning of his Majesty's undertaking to redeem these nations from popery and slavery, have as evidently demonstrated our inclinations to loyalty, as our sufferings before shewed our aversion to tyranny. Having confidence in humility to say we were the first in the nation that publicly prayed for, and avouched a readiness to concur with his Illustrious Highness, before, at, and since his arrival: We were the first that declared a desire to engage for him, and under him, at our renewing of our Solemn Covenants. We were the first that offered our service for the defence of the Meeting of Estates,—and we were the first that offered to be levied into a modelled regiment,—yea though we had (and continue to have) many discouraging fears of snares, and sinful involvments in association with the enemies of truth and godliness, who have been, and yet are encouraged, employed, and intrusted for the defence of that cause, which within this short time they professedly opposed, and by many dreadful oaths, are engaged to suppress,—against which associations we cannot forbear to bear witness.——Yet we reckoned we could not acquit ourselves in the duties we owe to our God, to our country, to our king, to our posterity, and

‡ As Mr. Shields was minister to the regiment, and went, and continued for most part with them; So all their public papers now behoved to come through that channel: And as it was one of the arguments he used for engaging in the regiment: That they would be in a better capacity to prosecute, and bring to justice the murderers of their brethren; so the event shewed how far he was mistaken in his politicks.

and to ourſelves,—if we ſhould not appear for ſuch a cauſe, as the recovery and preſervation of our Covenanted Reformation, laws and liberties.

Wherefore as we have engaged, ſo we reſolve, thro' grace, to continue venturing our deareſt blood for this cauſe,—ſo far as we can with a good conſcience, which as it was the only principle that prompted us to undertake this ſervice; ſo it is that which moves us now to take the boldneſs to unbowel our hearts before your Honours, as many reproaches are caſt upon us, that we are enemies to government, and will not fight for it, and that we are diſorderly perſons, not fit to be truſted, which is the language of theſe, who though they deſerve no truſt yet they deſire it, not only to ſatisfy their ambition, but to ruin us who have hitherto eſcaped their fury: From whoſe reproaches we could eaſily have vindicated ourſelves, if partly, the conſcience of our innocency had not perſuaded us to patience, and partly our officers refuſing to concert with us, or have any hand in emitting any paper in the name of the regiment, leſt it ſhould be interpreted a ſeditious motion, beyond the bounds of military order, had not diſſwaded us. But now being to march to the Highlands, farther from all acceſs to your Honours, and nearer the enemy, with whom we look for daily conflicts, none of us knowing who may firſt enter into eternity.

Our conſcience in the zeal of God preſſeth us, in all humility and earneſtneſs,—in the firſt place we requeſt that we, and our brethren in the country be admitted to repreſent our grievances ſuſtained theſe years bygone under the late tyranny, and impeach according to courſe of law and juſtice, the inſtruments and executioners of that bloody cruelty exerciſed on us and our brethren, eſpecially ſuch notorious criminals as have without, and againſt all colour of law without any trial or ſentence, murdered many honeſt and innocent perſons, whoſe blood cries for vengeance, and he to whom it belongs craves it of your Honours to execute it; as being the only way revealed in his word, whereby the land may be cleanſed from the blood ſhed therein.

Particularly we crave liberty to impeach thoſe already incarcerate, *viz.* ——— Murray, ——— Livingſton, and ——— Creighton, whom we offer to convict of horrid murder, and ſhedding the blood of war in peace, without, and againſt all law, as alſo ——— Balfour,

and ——— Nisbet, who are let out upon bail, whom in like sort, we offer to prove guilty of the like crimes.

Next as we presume to supplicate that the church be purged of Episcopal Curates, that were intruded by the Prelate's collation, and Patron's presentation, contrary to the institution of Christ Jesus, the only King and Head of his church, contrary to the institutions of this church, without the call, and contrary to the inclinations of the people, being the bane of the nation, the scandal of the church, and the source of all our sorrows: So we petition that none be admitted to, nor continued in power and trust, in the state, army, or country, who have been instruments of the persecution, and professed and sworn tools of the late tyranny: Whereby, as your honours will be far from all fears of the like treasons, and treacheries discovered already in some of these forementioned in the army; so all honest men will be exceedingly encouraged and engaged to be zealous and resolute in your service.

Finally, We humbly supplicate your Honours, that military laws for restraining the army from disorders, be ordered to be put in execution effectually against all debaucheries, that affront the Most High God, and provoke his indignation against the army, particularly, fornication, drunkenness swearing, cursing, *&c.* without respect to persons of officers or soldiers.

These things we beseech your Honours to grant, and your supplicants shall pray, *&c.*

According to the desire (of the Meeting) before mentioned, the two men appointed by them having gone to Edinburgh, took with them the petition of the soldiers of the regiment, that it might be given in to the Parliament. But having shewed it to some there, to get their advice concerning the giving of it in; they dissuaded them from doing it at the time, in regard that if such a paper were given by the soldiers, it would be accounted mutinous, which would hinder the Parliament from taking heed to the same, yea it might give occasion to disband the whole regiment: But though the same were fit to be presented, yet it would not at the time be noticed by the Parliament.—Upon which consideration, any further procedure in that matter was laid aside.

To

To return; At this Meeting a faſt day was agreed upon to be obſerved by the Societies.——The cauſes follow.

It is earneſtly deſired that the 15th day of Auguſt be kept as a day of faſting and humiliation before the Lord, for the inſenſibleneſs that hath poſſeſt the ſpirits of all ranks, ſo that we are not rightly affected with the Lord's diſpenſations, either of judgment or mercy, and alſo, we would be earneſt with the Lord, for light and direction how to carry ſo as to be kept free from the right hand, and left hand extremes.

The next Meeting was concluded upon to be at *Douglas*, the laſt Wedneſday of September, yet in conſideration that in this interval ſome providences might occur, which would require the Meeting to be anticipated, it was concluded that one man from each ſhire where our Societies were, ſhould meet at *Frierminion*, the firſt Wedneſday of Auguſt, for mutual conſultation concerning emergents which might come to paſs,—or might appoint the General Meeting ſooner.

ACCORDING to the foreſaid concluſion: Upon the 7th of Auguſt at *Frierminion*, ſome perſons from ſeveral ſhires did conveen.

The moſt material thing deliberate upon by them, was, that albeit the repreſenting of our grievances to the King, while he was Prince of Orange had hitherto been delayed, whereby debates had been occaſioned among ourſelves, yet it might be conſidered whether it were now neceſſary to ſend the ſame.—They all agreed that it was neceſſary and expedient to give a true repreſentation of our cauſe and caſe to the King, and ſeek redreſs of our grievances, though this had been long delayed, and had formerly been agreed upon by the General Meeting at Crawford-John, February 13th laſt paſt.

Whereby it was concluded that an addreſs with a memorial of our grievances, ſhould be ſent to the Prince of Orange; which memorial might now be written over again, and ſent, with ſuch alterations, as the preſent circumſtances called for. And they concluded that Earlſtoun, Kerſland, and Sir Robert Hamilton, and Mr Alexander Shields ſhould be deſired to go to London with the ſame, or any two of them, (Mr. Shields ſtill being one of them) as they agree among themſelves As alſo, it was agreed, that thirty pounds ſterling, ſhould be given to them who went, for bearing their expences, which

was to be ſent to Edinburgh, ſoon after this Meeting.

When this concluſion was fallen upon, Kerſland and Mr. Shields were with lord Angus's regiment, who being acquainted therewith, they both came preſently to Edinburgh, where at the time were Earlſtoun and Sir Robert Hamilton.——Whereupon Kerſland, and Mr. Shields, having met with Sir Robert Hamilton in order to confer together concerning that buſineſs, the reſult of which conference was; Kerſland refuſed to go at the time, in regard he could not get the regiment left. Sir Robert ſignified his mind to this purpoſe. That tho' he was ready to be at the pains, and willing to adventure himſelf with an addreſs to the Prince of Orange, providing it were rightly drawn up, in doing whereof he expected they and he would not agree, but he refuſed (and in this he ſaid Earlſtoun was of the ſame mind) to go with that paper which was already written, in regard that he had no commiſſion, nor inſtructions from the General Meeting concerning the ſame: Which, if called for, and wanting, he might be reckoned a cheat. And moreover, as for him they were to go unto, he could not addreſs, nor own him as King, but only as Prince of Orange, but he ſaid he was willing to hazard himſelf in repreſenting our grievances to him as ſuch, with an offer of our allegiance upon right terms, acknowledging we had been too haſty in owning him before. Neither would he go with Kerſland and Mr. Shields, who were of a contrary mind in this matter, ſeeing they might, when there, contradict one another in their diſcourſes.

Mr. Shields declared his willingneſs to go, if theſe deſired would go with him, but for the reaſons above given by each of them a ſtop was put to that affair.

NOT long after the laſt General Meeting, in a rencounter at Dunrory, in Athol, Claverhouſe a grand enemy to the country was killed, whereby the fears of his doing more miſchief was removed, and one great prop which ſupported the malignants hope was cut off. However the loſs of the forces which were againſt him was very great, for which M'Kay who commanded them, was much blamed for his bad conduct.

After Claverhouſe's death, one Cannon, commanded the Iriſhes, and Highland army, who were then increaſed;

many

many being encouraged to join them by the ſpoils gotten at the late engagement. They pillaged much of the country in and about Angus. Mackay, with ſeveral troops of Engliſh and Scotch horſe and dragoons, went againſt them, but his motion toward them was very ſlow. In the mean time, when he and his troops were in the north, Cannon with his whole army, conſiſting of 5000 men, or thereby, came to Dunkel, where lord Angus's regiment was poſted, being ordered to that place, as was thought and ſaid by many, of deſign to be cut off†; but the Lord diſappointed the hopes and expectations of their enemies, and the fears (that were not groundleſs) of the regiment themſelves. Though Cannon's men did aſſault them very briſkly, yet they were repulſed, and made to retire with loſs. This conflict gave occaſion to much talk and diſcourſe. The regiment was commended far their behaving ſo well in the engagement. The moſt part of people did ſay they were betrayed, in which the Duke of Hamilton was blamed as having a chief hand. After this, Mackay with an army went the length of the Blair of Athol in purſuit of Cannon and and his men, who immediately after the repulſe at Dunkel, did break and ſcatter. But finding they were diſperſed, he returned, having left ſome garriſons.

During the time that the north was in confuſion, and many people much ſpoiled and diſtreſſed, the weſt country enjoyed peace, of which they had little before.

A General Meeting conveened at *Douglas*, the 25th day of *September*, 1689.

After the meeting was modelled, this propoſal was made by one to them: That conſidering the heat and paſſion that was in the meeting which was laſt in this place, (*viz. May* 13*th*) and what prejudice it had done, which might be evident to them all, it was therefore deſired that ſome way and method ſhould be fallen upon to prevent the like at this time. This the whole meeting thought very neceſſary, all being ſeaſonable of the hurt ſuſtained by heats at former meetings. Whereupon this mean was thought expedient for avoiding of paſſion at the time, *viz.* The miniſters ſhould be acquainted, that the

† Here lieutenant Col. Wm. Cleland and capt. Ninian Steel. and many others of Angus's regiment were killed, when they had enjoyed the honour of theſe offices ſcarce three months.—This Wm. Cleland was a captain at Bothwel.

the meeting acknowledged that formerly they had been guilty of this fault, whereof they now saw the evil; but at the same time they were resolved to guard against it, —and desired that the ministers might do the like, and not to use irritating expressions one to another.

The ministers being come in, and prayer ended, a person pitched upon for that end, acquainted them with the resolution and desire of the meeting, with which the ministers were well satisfied *.

After it had been enquired, What was the business of greatest importance to be considered of? Mr. Lining said, The thing he thought of greatest consequence for them to deliberate upon, was, concerning union with the

† They might be the better satisfied, as this overture appears have proceeded from themselves, they fore-seeing they would meet with opposition in what they intended. It may not be improper here to insert a part of a letter from Colin Alison (who is several times spoken of before) to Sir Robert Hamilton, dated *Sept. 5th,* 1689.

* *Much Honoured Sir,*

"MY earnest desire is, that the Lord may direct you in all your ways, for many have their eyes upon you, some expecting good and many expecting evil, which calls for much acquaintance with, and nearness to your Master, which I am confident is your study.

"But, ah! our confusions are upon the growing hand, and it seems the Lord in his holiness will have us brought as low and contemptible, if not more low, than ever. O how happy should we be, if we could but learn to live a life of dependence upon him, casting our eyes off all outward helps, for he seems to be testifying to us, that none will do us good, and I am made to say, that we have sought ourselves too much, for which he is now threatening to lay us low. But what measures or methods to fall upon, my capacity cannot win to take up: Only I think we are called to withstand the ministers seeking our concurrence in joining with the rest. Mr. Lining, on Sabbath last, was so bent on it, that he behoved to publish it in his doctrine, and cited scripture for it, *viz.* Luke i. anent Zacharias, who kept his course with the rest of the priests; as also Joseph of Arimathea. I told him my mind about it, that I was mistaken if he would be approven of God for publishing such doctrine, the cases being so unlike. Sir, I earnestly desire you will shew me your mind in this matter.

But which is saddest of all, we are a people fit for nothing, plagues from the Lord are so manifestly multiplied upon our spirits. O that the Lord would be intreated to breathe on us, and qualify us for what he calls for at our hands. Our remissness in zeal for his concerns has provoked him to great wrath, so that he hath in his anger divided us, and threatens to break us in pieces.

COLIN ALISON.

the miniſters; and he gave an account of a conference which he and Meſſrs. Shields and Boyd had at Edinburgh in *Auguſt* laſt, with ſome miniſters appointed by the Commiſſion of the Aſſembly to confer with them concerning union.

When they enquired at theſe miniſters, That in caſe they ſhould join with them, what ſhould they do to ſave themſelves from partaking of theſe defections that many of them were guilty of, as hearing of Curates, accepting of indulgences and toleration, and addreſſing for the ſame, *&c.?*

One of the ſaid miniſters replied, He would anſwer that queſtion by diſtinguiſhing thus: Theſe within a ſociety are to do it one way, and theſe without that ſociety are to do it another way.—As for the laſt, which ſays he) is your caſe, the way to ſave yourſelves from partaking of the ſins of the ſociety you are to join with, is, At your firſt uniting with them, you may draw up and enter a proteſtation againſt every thing you think ſinful in that ſociety, which ſhall be regiſtered in the Books of Aſſembly and an extract thereof given you, and after you are united, ye ſhall have liberty to debate, remonſtrate and proteſt againſt every thing ſinful.

When Mr. Lining had done with this account, he deſired the meeting ſeriouſly to conſider this matter, and what they would do as to joining with the miniſters on theſe terms offered by them.

When the miniſters had gone out, the meeting did fall upon the conſideration of this matter, as it was propoſed, and they having diſcourſed upon the ſame, at length came to this reſolution; That at the time, they could not ſee it their duty to unite with theſe miniſters from whom they had formerly withdrawn upon juſt grounds, unleſs they confeſſed theſe defections they were guilty of, doctrinally and alſo ſynodically; that is, procuring an act to be made in a Synod or Aſſembly condemning theſe things as ſins and defections, which might be ſet up as a beacon to hinder the generations to come, from ſplitting on ſuch rocks.

Among other things moving ſome to agree with this reſolution, this had its own weight, that if ſo raſhly they ſhould join with theſe miniſters, without their reſentment of their defections, it was to be feared, as the ſame would not be for their edification and advantage, which ſhould be one end of our joining with them, but rather

rather prove hardening and confirming to them in their backſlidings; ſo it would ſtumble and offend ſome of tender and weak conſciences, and occaſion their running upon unwarrantable extremes.

With this reſolution the miniſters were preſently acquainted; who within a little came into the meeting. To whom they made this propoſition, That ſeeing they had not clearneſs at the time to unite with theſe miniſters upon the terms offered by ſome of them; yet whether or not would they join with the miniſters who had freedom to concur in Preſbytries and Synods with theſe miniſters with whom we could not join, againſt whoſe defections they would enter their proteſtation, and always after, remonſtrate and debate againſt every thing wrong amongſt them; and their deſign by joining, was to endeavour to help to carry on reformation.

This they deſired the meeting to conſider, and upon the morrow to give an anſwer thereunto. After diſcourſing a little concerning the ſaid union and prayer, they parted that night.

Upon the morrow, *September 26th*, they conveened again. It was enquired at them, What anſwer they would give to the miniſters concerning the queſtion propoſed by them laſt night. After diſcourſing about it, the meeting judged it moſt expedient, that many of them having never before deliberated upon it, and it being of no ſmall conſequence, they could not at this time anſwer the ſame, but deſired longer time to conſider thereupon.

When the miniſters came in, they were acquainted with what the meeting had agreed upon.—Then after ſome debate about union with the miniſters, this was at length reſolved on; That ſeeing there could not be an unanimous agreement in this matter, a day ſhould be ſet apart for faſting and prayer, to cry unto the Lord, that he would be graciouſly pleaſed to lead and guide us aright in this matter of ſo great importance, and help us ſo to manage it, as the ſame may tend to the glory of his great name, and the good of his church.—And the 22d of *October* next was appointed for that effect; and it was deſired that the ſocieties ſhould obſerve the ſame.

And the next meeting was appointed at *Douglas*, the 6th of *November*, and that theſe who come to the ſame, ſhould bring the minds of the ſocieties they were ſent from,

from, concerning this weighty affair which this meeting had been deliberating upon.

ALBEIT after the diſperſing of the Highlanders the country was ſomewhat quiet, yet there were many complaints among the generality of people, that their grievances were not like to be redreſſed, nor juſtice executed upon notorious murderers, of which they had been in expectation; and they were beginning to utter their fears that the adminiſtration of the government might come to be bad, ſeeing many malignants were already, and others like to be put in places of power and truſt, in judicatories and armies: whom, though the diſpenſations of providence have made them change their carriage a little, yet it was to be feared, that whenever opportunity ſhould offer, they would put in practice their old inveterate principles of malignity.—Eſpecially the United Societies had reaſon to complain of this, and to fear the worſt which theſe men could do, who had been formerly their perſecutors, and bore ſtill their old hatred to them, though they ſaw it not for their intereſt at preſent to evidence the ſame, by putting forth their hands againſt them as before.

Among other things wherewith they were at preſent exerciſed, that concerning union with the miniſters whom they had formerly withdrawn from, was of no ſmall weight and moment, and did occaſion many thoughts and ſearchings of heart, that they might know and be helped to carry aright in reference to the ſame. Though, upon the one hand, as they were deſirous of uniting in the Lord, which they were willing to evidence to the world, and that right methods and meaſures ſhould be fallen upon for attaining thereof. Yet, upon the other hand, they did not ſee that this union could be obtained in a way comfortable, without both the ſinful cauſe of the diviſion, which is defection and backſliding, were acknowledged and condemned, and alſo, that the holy cauſe, which is the anger of the Lord, were removed, of which there was ſmall hopes appearing, while theſe miniſters from whom they had withdrawn and now deſired union with, inſtead of confeſſing, did defend the ſinful and offenſive courſes of which they were guilty. And albeit the ſnare (and temptation) was broken, ſo that they were not actually going on, and continuing in their defections,—yet they could not ſee the offence and

ſcandal removed, unleſs theſe things were acknowledged and condemned; neither until that were, (though they ſhould unite) had they ground to expect the Lord's countenance and bleſſing.

This was a dark, dead, and languiſhing time, wherein ſnares were difficult to be diſcerned, duty in ſome things not eaſy to be known. People were apt to offend and ſtumble, and there was danger of turning aſide either to the left hand or to the right.

In this diſcouraging time, A General Meeting met at *Douglas* upon the 6th of *November*, 1689.

After the meeting was modelled, it was enquired, What the meeting ought firſt to conſider of? Some anſwered, That the buſineſs concerning union with the miniſters, was of greateſt conſequence, and therefore ſhould be firſt deliberated upon, eſpecially ſeeing a day had been ſet apart for prayer to be helped to carry aright in this matter; and at the laſt meeting it was deſired that the ſocieties might ſend their mind and reſolution concerning the ſame, with theſe who were to be ſent from them to this meeting.

Whereupon every one of the meeting were deſired to ſhew what was the mind of the ſociety they were ſent from about this paper. So ſome of them gave in papers from correſpondent meetings; others from ſingle ſocieties concerning that matter, and others did ſhew the mind of their ſocieties by word of mouth.

But before the whole members of the meeting had told what was the mind of their ſocieties, our miniſters came in, to one of whom the papers given in, were delivered, who read the ſame; which put a ſtop to the going through thereof. Eſpecially one thing occaſioned a diverſion therefrom, which was this: The meeting being acquainted that Sir Robert Hamilton was come to town, were deſirous of his company among them.

Whereupon ſome went and ſignified this to him, who preſently came in. After he had ſtaid a little ſpace, he roſe up and ſpoke to this purpoſe: "That he not having been much among them, nor in any of their General Meetings ſince he came to Scotland, he did not know well what was amongſt them. However there were ſome things he would now take this opportunity to ſpeak his mind of, which in conſcience he could

" could not forbear but ſhew his diſlike of, and proteſt " againſt. As,

" 1*ſt*, The owning of the Prince of Orange to be " King upon ſuch conditions as they had done, and wi- " thout taking of the covenants.

" 2*dly*, The raiſing of Angus's regiment, which was " a ſinful aſſociation with malignants.

" 3*dly*, The admitting any to be at General Meetings, " who came from the regiment, or were for trafficking " for union with them.

" 4*thly*, Mr. Boyd his ſitting in General Meetings, " or being employed by them to go to Edinburgh to " treat with the miniſters.

" 5*thly*, Joining with theſe miniſters whom formerly " we had withdrawn from, upon the terms which our " miniſters were deſiring to do it in."

When he had done, our miniſters aſked whether he would have an anſwer to theſe things by word preſently, or by write? He ſaid, he would have it in write, which he looked upon as the ſafeſt way, which if they would do, he would give a reply to the ſame in write alſo. But that they might the better anſwer it, the miniſters deſired he might give them theſe things in write, either that night or the next day; which accordingly he did the next day.

Though what that gentleman delivered in write, differ little from what is above, yet for the information and ſatisfaction of any who may be deſirous of it, a true copy follows *.

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To return; as is hinted above, that which Sir Robert Hamilton ſignified to the meeting put a ſtop to that which they were about, and did occaſion debates and heats, which to ſettle and compoſe, it was thought fitteſt to part that night, and to meet next day, that then they might more calmly confer, and deliberate about matters.

Upon *Nov. 7th*, the meeting conveened again, and conſidering that albeit ſome had ſhewed the mind of their ſocieties concerning union with the Miniſters, yet others

* This is not done, but left blank, and cannot now be had.

had not done it; therefore the whole might now ſhew what was the mind of the ſocieties every one of them came from, about that matter, that our miniſters might be acquainted therewith; which they were deſirous of. Whereupon the ſame being particularly enquired at the whole meeting, They all (except two or three from ſome ſocieties in Galloway) ſhewed it was the mind of the ſocieties they were ſent from, That at preſent they did not ſee it their duty to unite with theſe miniſters from whom they had formerly withdrawn, without confeſſing of their defections doctrinally, and getting them condemned ſynodically.

After this was done, it was urged by ſome, that this queſtion ſhould next be propounded, *viz.* Whether or not the meeting would join with miniſters who were for joining with theſe miniſters (with whom we had not clearneſs to unite, except upon the foreſaid terms) in ſynods and General Aſſemblies, with a proteſtation againſt their backſlidings, *&c.* of which they were guilty?

Some were againſt the enquiring of this queſtion, fearing that the conſequent thereof might be about hearing of our own miniſters; but that in place thereof that it might be conſidered by the meeting, That in regard we, for moſt part, had agreed concerning non-union with the miniſters, we ſhould next deliberate what was our further duty in reference to them, which might tend to their good, the advantage of the cauſe, the benefit of poſterity, and our own exoneration.—And that which they thought would have a tendency to this, was, That we ſhould jointly draw up a paper to be given in to the Aſſembly of miniſters, containing briefly the grounds of our withdrawing from them; and that we were willing and deſirous to join and unite with them again; which to obtain with the more freedom, comfort and ſatisfaction, and that we might have confidence to ſeek, and ground to expect the bleſſing of the Lord thereupon: To ſhew and remonſtrate unto them the neceſſity of acknowledging and condemning theſe defections whereof they were guilty, in which we ought to be very earneſt and preſſing, and cry unto them for it †. But if they ſhould not do this, then we might proteſt againſt

† But what if they will not ſuffer you to cry, nor allow you a hearing in the houſe, except you'll firſt ſubmit yourſelves to their aſſembly?——That this was actually the caſe, when afterwards put to the trial, the following account will declare.

againſt them for the ſame.——Whereupon the whole Meeting ſhewed their willingneſs, and deſire that our miniſters, and elders ſhould go to Synods, and General Aſſemblies; and there plead with miniſters, in order to convince them of, and to get them brought to acknowledge, and condemn defection: And not only to witneſs againſt the backſlidings of the conſtituent members; but alſo againſt any thing that might be wrong in the conſtitution thereof. And to do other things, wherein ſtill they might be two parties. But they were againſt embodying with them, without confeſſing and condemning of their defections.

And as for hearing of theſe miniſters who would join in Synods and Aſſemblies, with a Proteſtation, *&c.* while in the mean time, theſe againſt whom they proteſt, did not acknowledge and condemn the ſame: This, ſome of the Meeting ſaid the Societies from which they came were againſt hearing ſuch miniſters that would do ſo. And ſome ſaid their Societies had never communed about the ſame; and others ſaid their Societies were for hearing ſuch miniſters,

When this was done, the miniſters were deſired to come in. To whom the Preſes of the Meeting ſhewed that the whole Meeting except two, or three, were unanimouſly againſt joining with the miniſters, except upon the foreſaid condition. After our miniſters had heard this, they ſhewed their diſſatisfaction with the making of not confeſſing of former defections, a ground of withdrawing, and ſtanding at a diſtance at the time, from miniſters. And that they were willing to give reaſons againſt it, either by word or write, and that very rarely an union in the church, after a long diviſion, was obtained that way, and as it would be deſireable to them to ſee miniſters acknowledge their defections; ſo they would endeavour to get them brought to do it.—For albeit we had ſufficient ground to withdraw from theſe miniſters, in the time of perſecution, which was a broken and unſettled time, yet now, when the ſame was removed, and the church growing up in reformation, the caſe was altered: And as there was one way of contending then, which was by withdrawing, ſo there was another way now, which is by joining with a proteſtation againſt defection.

In anſwer to this, and in defence of what was reſolved by the meeting in this matter; it was ſaid, that it was granted

granted, the Lord by his wonderful providence had made a change, ſo that the ſnare being broken, theſe miniſters were not now going on in theſe defections: Yet the tentation had left them, before they had forſaken it; and ſtill they were defending what they had done: And to join with them while they continued ſo, would harden them therein, and offend and ſtumble others: And moreover, the church was not yet conſtitute, which if it were, and miniſters zealouſly carrying on reformation, (of which there was little appearance) it would then be an encouragement to ſpeak of joining with them.

After ſome debates, (wherein were too much heat and paſſion on both ſides) at length this concluſion was put to this matter at the time. Our miniſters undertook to write their mind concerning Union with the miniſters: And to anſwer the objections which were given in againſt joining, without confeſſing and condemning defections, of which they would ſend copies to the Societies *.

And another Meeting was appointed to be at *Sanquhar*, Feb. 5th, 1690.

In the interval betwixt this Meeting and the laſt, the complaints and diſcontents amongſt the generality of people, was no way abated but rather augmented and increaſed, concerning many of theſe employed in the adminiſtration of the government, and many uttered their fears of matters growing worſe. That which gave great occaſion to this, was the adjourning of the Parliament, at which time, the redreſſing of grievances, and ſettling of affairs was expected; but the delaying of it till March, made ſome think there was no ſuch thing deſigned.

In the mean time, though much of the land, eſpecially the Weſt, enjoyed peace and quietneſs, yet there were

* Of this writing there is no further account, but it is probable this hath been the original ſource of a pamphlet called Church Communion, which was publiſhed by Mr. Lining a number of years afterward. It is obſerveable, that as in the laſt Meeting they appointed a Faſt day to pray for light and direction in this matter, but finding the effect of that, to be contrary to their deſire, and deſign, ſo now they lay aſide that mean for a time (as there is no faſt days appointed by this Meeting as uſually) and fall upon another expedient, in order to convert the people to the miniſterial faith, ſince neither prayer, nor yet pleading will do it.

were great complaints among the godly that it was not now with them, as ſometimes before it had been, (Pſal. cvi. 14, 15.) and that darkneſs and deadneſs was growing.

In this diſcouraging and complaining time, our General Meeting conveened at *Sanquhar* in *Nithſdale*, Feb. 5th, 1690.—After the Meeting was modelled and prayer ended, There were ſome Letters preſented and read to the Meeting. One of which, was directed to them by Mr. James Wallace miniſter at Inchinen, which tended ſomewhat to the allaying and hindering of heats and debates, that otherways might have fallen out.

A true Copy whereof follows*.

Right Reverend and dearly beloved Brethren and Friends in the Lord,

GRACE, mercy, and peace be multiplied upon you, from our Father, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.—Being informed of a General Meeting of yours at Sanquhar; and alſo of ſome animoſities and difference like to be amongſt you at the Meeting, I judged it my duty (as one that has deſired according to the meaſure of his grace given to me, to be faithful to him, his intereſt, and to you who has deſired and endeavoured the ſame) to impart ſomething of my poor thoughts, and give you my humble advice accordingly.

That in the firſt place you would agree upon a ſupplication to the next ſeſſion of parliament, for abrogating and reſcinding all laws made in former parliaments, againſt truth, equity and peace in this church and nation. That they will make laws and conſtitutions civil, for ſettling the Preſbyterian government according to the word of God, and our ſworn covenants, particularly in the year 1649. And if ye judge it fit, that theſe covenants be renewed as then. That they will ſtudy the purging of the ſtate and army, of all erroneous ſcandalous, and profane perſons, and ſuch as had a hand in promoting of the late defection, and have been perſecutors of theſe who did oppoſe the ſame: And that they put the church of Scotland in a poſture to purge herſelf of

* Mr. Wallace lived not long after this.

of all ſcandalous and inſufficient perſons, and undeſerving to bear office therein.

This will in the firſt place evidence to all well-wiſhers to the glory of God, his work, and the good of ſouls, that you mind an union upon right grounds, and will by the Lord his grace obtained, exceedingly contribute unto it, and will, I hope, keep you unite among yourſelves, And whatever be the ſucceſs of ſuch an addreſs, you will have more to join with you, and your number will be rather more, than leſs.

In the next place, I would have you moving ſlowly into any formal, ſettled union with any, until you ſee what you obtain, leſt there be a new rupture, and a worſe diviſion, for if this be not granted, which you ſupplicate for, wherein will you unite? In the mean time, I would have you keeping concord amongſt yourſelves, unfriends will ſtudy to divide you, and ſo to break you, and do with you what they will, and then laugh at you.

In the laſt place, that with theſe that you are called to be unite with in the Lord, and with whom you now differ, I earneſtly intreat that both in preaching, prayer and practices, you will do nothing to irritate, or make the breach wider, which may conſiſt with a good conſcience, not neglecting neceſſary duties, nor making yourſelves partakers of other men's ſins.

And that the Wonderful Counſellor, may give you counſel, keep you faithful in all duties, unite, humble, and patient, ſhall be the deſire of,

Your well-wiſhing Brother and ſervant in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

JAMES WALLACE†.

INCHINNEN, *January* 31*ſt*, 1690.

Another Letter was ſent from lord Angus's regiment, wherein after giving reaſons why they ſent not ſome to this Meeting, they ſignify their deſire to keep up correſpondence with them, and to join with them in every thing that is for promoting, and defending the covenanted Preſbyterian intereſt, &c.

Ther-

† This Letter diverted theſe who were ſo bent for the foreſaid Union, both now, and for ſome time after, and ſet them upon a project which in the concluſion turned to no effect.

There was a third Letter ſent to them by Mr. Shields who at the time was at Montroſe (with the regiment) wherein among other things, he acquaints them that he had ſent ſome anſwer to Sir Robert Hamilton's proteſtation, having no time to perfect it*. This gave occaſion to the Meeting to deliberate whether or not, it was neceſſary to read it. After ſpeaking a little to it, moſt part of the Meeting were againſt reading of the ſame,—ſeeing though the proteſtation was given before them, yet they never undertook to anſwer the ſame, as our miniſters did. And moreover, the gentleman to whom the Letter was directed, might have occaſion to be diſpleaſed, upon the account that the reading of it here, would publiſh abroad both his name, and the things contained in the Letter, which ſhould not be done with a private Letter.

When our miniſters came in, this was ſpoken of again, Mr. Lining, and Mr. Boyd were much for the reading of it, ſaying that the Proteſtation was againſt the Meeting, and they ought to hear what was written in anſwer to the ſame. But moſt part of the Meeting were againſt the ſame (leſt it might occaſion if made public, that gentleman's ſuffering). After ſome debates concerning it, at length it was laid aſide.

After this there was a fourth letter read, which was directed to this Meeting, from a Correſpondent Meeting of ſome gentlemen, and others in the foot of Nithſdale, and Galloway, as alſo a memorandum of ſome things to be repreſented to the Parliament, *&c.* They were brought to Sanquhar by Mr John Hepburn, and the laird of Caithlock. The import of the Letter, is their earneſt deſire that we ſhould concur with them in ſuch an addreſs, or ſupplication, which they intended to draw up to give into the Parliament.

When the Meeting had heard the Letter and the Paper; they agreed in this, that though we did not object againſt any thing that was in the memorandum, nor againſt their giving in of the ſupplication unto the Parliament; yet conſidering our preſent circumſtances, we could not go on jointly with them therein, unleſs they

* Mr. Shields in his Journal, mentions ſeveral days, in which he was writing an anſwer to this Proteſtation, in the laſt of which he ſays he was ſeized with a ſweating ſickneſs and fainting which obliged him to lay it aſide unperfected.

would acknowledge and condemn theſe defections which ſome of them were guilty of, for if we ſhould go on with them in this affair, it might be interpreted by ſome, that we were joint with them in other things alſo, which at the time, they could not ſee it their duty to do, except upon the terms of confeſſing and relinquiſhing theſe backſlidings they were guilty of. However they thought it requiſite, a diſcreet, and ſober anſwer ſhould be given them. After ſome debate what the ſame ſhould be, and the way of ſending it; at length it was concluded an anſwer ſhould be written to them to this effect.

That albeit what zeal appeared in their paper, for the covenanted work of Reformation was commendable; yet to ſhew them we could not go alongſt with them in what they deſired, except they confeſſed and condemned theſe defections ſome of them were chargeable with; and withall, in a brotherly way, to admoniſh them not to cover, or defend, but acknowledge the ſame. Whereupon one was deſired to draw up the Letter that night, and ſhew it to the Meeting to-morrow.

When the Meeting was ſpeaking about petitioning the Parliament; as ſome of them ſaid, if any paper were given in to them, there ought to be in it, a Proteſtation againſt ſeveral members in it: So though they were againſt joining with theſe people who deſired our concurrence, nevertheleſs they were for this that we ſhould remonſtrate unto, and ſeek redreſs of theſe grievances mentioned in the memorandum, and others alſo, from the Parliament.—And it was concluded that if any extraordinary occurrence happened, a perſon at Edinburgh ſhould appoint a General Meeting, and acquaint friends therewith, in order to deliberate what was their duty. But if none did occur, the General Meeting was concluded to be at *Douglas* the firſt Wedneſday of May.

That night the Meeting parted, and upon the morrow, Feb. 6th, they conveened again, The Letter which was deſired the night before to be written, was read, but they did not accord about it, ſome were for acquainting their Societies, and adviſing better about it. Others made exceptions againſt ſome words in it, *&c.*

However after the Meeting was parted, it was ſubſcribed by Mr. Lining and Mr. Boyd, and two others in the name of ſeveral other friends here preſent.

As

As before, ſo after the laſt Meeting, the diſcontents of the generality of the country, were not diminiſhed, nor the grounds upon which they were founded taken away, eſpecially the often and frequent adjournments of the Parliament, was one great cauſe of theſe complaints; for inſtead of having their many, and grievous grievances redreſſed by its ſitting, they were by its delays like to loſe all hopes of getting the ſame done. The great need of having the church and ſtate ſettled upon good and laſting foundations, and of having juſtice to run down like a river, and judgment like a mighty ſtream, made ſome to think that the ſitting of the Parliament was very neceſſary, and that the delay thereof was dangerous. Another of the complaints was, the employing and putting in of wicked men into places of power and truſt, in judicatories and armies; which was juſt, and very rational to complain of, conſidering the hurt and detriment which they (many of them having been inſtruments of the late perſecution) might do, when they ſaw opportunity to put it in execution.

In the mean time, an invaſion from Ireland was looked for, and malignants at home were beginning to be briſk, who it was feared were carrying on a plot, which afterward might break out.

In this complaining and reeling time, our General Meeting conveened at *Douglas*, March 27th, 1690.—The Meeting being modelled, and prayer ended, There was a Letter from lord Angus's regiment preſented and read.

And Mr. Shields having drawn up a petition to be given in to the Parliament by the Societies, it was brought to, and read at this Meeting. After the reading thereof, and ſpeaking to it a little, it was enquired at every one of the Meeting if they agreed therewith, and that it ſhould be given in to the Parliament. All of them for themſelves, (except two or three) were in the affirmative. And ſome of them had the mind of their Societies for it †.

† The Reader need not wonder that at this time there were ſo few againſt it, and ſo many afterward, ſince the thing was new to them, and many had not conſidered the import of it, *viz.* that it was an owning and acknowledging of theſe men, as the lawful repreſentatives of the nation, the greateſt part of whom had

It was thought expedient that ten men or thereby, out of every ſhire ſhould ſubſcribe it, in name of their brethren. And ſome to ſubſcribe it before parting of this Meeting, and the reſt afterwards at a Meeting at Leadhills, upon the 8th of April. But ſome fearing that the ſubſcribing it here by a few, would be reckoned too haſty, and might occaſion debates, were for the ſeveral correſpondences getting copies thereof, that ſo as many of the Societies as could be got together the week following might hear the ſame read, and after mature deliberation, and conſideration thereof, might (if they agreed therewith) condeſcend upon ſome men to go to the Leadhills, and in their name to ſubſcribe it.

Accordingly ſeveral copies of it were written, and many of the Societies ſaw it.

An exact copy of the Petition follows.

To his majeſty's High Commiſſioner for the Kingdom of SCOTLAND, *and Remanent of Members of the High Court of* Parliament,—*The Humble Petition of the* PERSECUTED PEOPLE *of the* Weſt *and* Southern Shires

SHEWETH,

NONE in the three nations can be more obliged to make thankful acknowledgments of the mercy of the late Revolution and change of government, than we, who had the largeſt ſhare of the miſeries of that bondage theſe nations thereby are delivered from. We had never indeed great intereſts in the world to loſe, and we never thought any thing too dear to be expended for adherence to the leaſt point of truth or duty bound upon our conſciences by the word of God, or any part of the church's eſtabliſhed Reformation, in Doctrine, Worſhip, Diſcipline, and Government.

But

had forfaulted their right to be ſuch, by being either active perſecutors, or aiders, and aſſiſters of ſuch, and ſworn to be ſo; yea many of them had abjured the Covenants and Reformation, and as yet, there was no evidence of their repentance, but the contrary: Therefore after deliberation they judged it unlawful, and unreaſonable to petition ſuch men for the redreſſing of their grievances, or to expect that they would now reſtore, or reintegrate the Covenanted Reformation, who had been ſo active in deſtroying, ſuppreſſing, and ſubverting the ſame.

But what have been our oppreſſions, perſecutions, and ſufferings, by finings, forfaulteries, harraſſings, ſpoilings, intercommunings, chaces, wanderings in extremities of wants, impriſonments, tortures, baniſhments, and ſpilling of our blood. Sometimes under colour of law, ſometimes without all colour of law for non-conformity with prelacy, non-ſubmiſſion to intolerable impoſitions on our conſciences, and our teſtimonies againſt the late uſurpations of the former reigns, their eccleſiaſtic ſupremacy, and boundleſs tolerations, prerogative, and abſolute power, as the kingdom is not ignorant of: So the repreſentation of our grievances, which we have in readineſs to give, will in ſome meaſure manifeſt.

Nor is it the leaſt of the great advantages we have reaped by their preſent Majeſties aſcending the throne, that now, we have not only the liberty of eaſe from theſe grievances, but of acceſs to repreſent them, it being now declared to be the ſubjects right to petition, which was before accounted treaſon: This doth give us confidence, and our conſcience lays upon us the neceſſity of addreſſing your Honours with this complaint and petition, humbly repreſenting that not only our old long continued grievances are not redreſſed (whereby the hope and expectations of many thouſands founded upon the princely promiſes of his Majeſty's declarations, and ſtipulations of the claim of right, at his acceptance of the crown, have hitherto been fruſtrated) but alſo ſeveral new grievances are multiplied, by the ſeveral adjournments of the Parliament, ſo conſternating and diſcouraging to all.

1. We therefore cannot but with many others complain that our longing, and languiſhing expectations and deſires of redreſs of grievances are not ſatisfied, but ſtill poſtponed and delayed by the frequent adjournments of Parliaments, to the danger and detriment of his Majeſty's intereſt, to the advantage and advancement of the deſigns of the common adverſaries, to the diſcouragement of the moſt faithful and conſtant ſubjects and friends of the common cauſe, and the ſtumbling of many others, who are thereby confounded with diſmal apprehenſions and jealouſies, leſt theſe delays may prove deſigned diſappointments, which we believe is far from his Majeſty's intentions; we therefore humbly requeſt that there may be more adjournments, until grievances be cognoſced and redreſſed.

2. We

2. We complain, though Prelacy, or the government, eſtate and office of the Biſhops be aboliſhed; yet the many cruel acts and edicts of Parliament and council, made in favours thereof, and preſſing conformity thereunto, and for ſuppreſſing Preſbyterial government are not repealed. We therefore petition that Preſbyterian government may be reſtored and redintegrated in its purity, freedom and full power, as it was eſtabliſhed in the year 1649; the church and ſtate-conſtitutions thereanent be revived, and all acts of parliament or council againſt the Covenants and work of reformation, or in favours of abjured Prelacy, be reſcinded.

3. We complain, though Prelacy be aboliſhed, yet its pillars and ſupporters, the Prelatic curates, or Epiſcopal miniſters, the bane and brand of this poor church, and the ſource of all our late oppreſſions and preſent confuſions, are in many places continued in the peaceable poſſeſſion of their intruſions, and others of late intruded againſt the will of the pariſhes, and notwithſtanding of their oppoſition, for very little acceſſion to which ſome have been long kept in priſon; while many Preſbyterian miniſters, long extruded and perſecuted, are not reſtored to any ſettlement.

We therefore ſupplicate that a full and free General Aſſembly be called and appointed, conſiſting of Preſbyterian miniſters, according to the old conſtitutions; to order church-affairs, and inquire into public ſcandals, with power to depoſe, ſuſpend, deprive or remove the foreſaid intruders from the churches, by the authority wherewith Chriſt hath veſted them; and to provide for the planting of all the churches and Preſbyteries with able and faithful miniſters; and all this under the patrociny, and with the ſanction of civil authority.

4. We complain, though Prelacy be aboliſhed, yet its foundations and fountains, the old uſurpations of Eraſtian ſupremacy and patronages, are not yet aboliſhed, whereby a door is kept open for the re-introduction of all corruptions, innovations, defections and diviſions in the church, and for the magiſtrate's encroaching upon the prerogatives of Jeſus Chriſt, the only Head and King of the church, and the liberties of the church, his free kingdom.

We therefore earneſtly beſeech, that acts may be paſſed, delivering the church from the bondage of patronage; reſtoring to her the privilege of the election of her

her paſtors; and abrogating the ſupremacy, with all eraſtianiſm; and that the late indulgences, flowing from the eccleſiaſtic ſupremacy, and the late toleration given by virtue of abſolute power, and conveyed by ſtopping and diſabling the ancient penal laws, be there diſanulled and declared to be contrary to law.

5. We complain, that our national covenants, which we avouch to be of indiſpenſible obligation, have been very long abuſed and trampled upon, to the aſtoniſhment of all nations that have heard of the unparalleled breaking of them, burning of them, enacting them by law to be renounced and abjured, and making it criminal to own them; while many other contradictory enſnaring oaths, teſts and bonds, have been impoſed upon people's conſciences.

We therefore humbly move to your Honours, that acts of parliament may be paſſed, condemning theſe unlawful impoſitions of the late contrary oaths, and vindicating and approving theſe reproached covenants; and that your Honours may be pleaſed to think upon ſome expedient courſe for the renewing of the ſame, the adminiſtration of the way and order of it being left to the General Aſſembly.

6. We complain of the continuance of our ſufferings to this day, even in this reviving in our bondage, while the cauſes of our and our brethren's ſufferings, eſpecially our active endeavours to defend our lives, religion and liberties, againſt tyranny and unjuſt violence, are reproached, and declared (by yet ſtanding laws) to have been rebellion. Acts of forfaultries and donetories of Eſtates are yet ſtanding unrepealed, and the unjuſt poſſeſſors yet keeping them from the right owners. Many of our brethren are yet in ſervitude in foreign lands whither they were baniſhed; while in the mean time our enemies, and the enemies of the king and kingdom apprehended or diſcovered in rebellion againſt the preſent government, are indemniſied, and ſuffered to eſcape juſtice, and thereby emboldened to go on in their conſpiracies.

We therefore, with all ſubmiſſion, humbly intreat your Honours, in order to our relief from our ſufferings, to repeal theſe wicked laws that enacted them, and reſcind theſe acts that branded our lawful endeavours with ſo odious a character; and that your Honours may take ſome ſpeedy and effectual courſe to reſcind theſe acts of

forfaultries,

forfaultries and finings for adhering to the covenanted reformation, and to cauſe reſtitution be made of eſtates and fines, &c. to their proper and righteous owners; and take ſome conſideration of the widows and children of thoſe that have ſuffered unto death in fields or ſcaffolds, or who have died in their baniſhment, or ſuch who have loſt law-ſuits becauſe they had not acceſs to, or durſt not appear in their own vindication and defence for the hazard of the times; and that ſome way may be thought upon for the relief and bringing home of thoſe that are yet alive in their baniſhment; and in the mean time that in theſe and the like particulars old ſufferers may be redreſſed, before the preſent rebels be indemnified.

7. We complain, that though His Majeſty's declaration from this kingdom, took notice of many evil counſellors, that had been the inſtruments of all theſe miſchiefs he came to deliver us from; and upon their crimes founded both the equity and expediency of his laudable expedition, yet not only many of theſe grievous to the nation, becauſe they were ſworn tools of tyranny, for enſlaving them and ſupplanting their liberties, and bigotted enemies to Preſbytery, are admitted to public truſt and employed in the affairs of the kingdom, to the endangering our religion and liberties, and of undermining and betraying the King's intereſt; but even many of the murderers of our brethren are both connived at, and encouraged, and entertained in places of power and truſt, in court, country, army, and ſupreme judicatories.

For the which cauſe, with all reſpect to many noble Lords and worthy Gentlemen that have their deſerved place in this preſent parliament, We are conſtrained in conſcience to take the boldneſs to proteſt againſt all, of what quality ſoever, that ſit in that judicatory, as repreſentatives in the ſupreme council of the kingdom, who have been, and are evil counſellors, diſaffected to the government, malignant enemies to the covenanted reformation ‡, cruel perſecutors of the godly owning the ſame; and eſpecially ſuch as have been criminally acceſſory to the ſhedding the innocent blood of our brethren that died as martyrs for adhering thereunto.

We therefore, in all humility and earneſtneſs, ſupplicate, obteſt and beſeech your Honours, in your wiſdom to

‡ Many then, and ſome yet think that this comprehended almoſt the whole.

to provide ſome laws (according to the laudable precedents of your noble progenitors) for removing out of truſt, and out of capacity of doing more miſchief to the king, church, country and armies, ſuch inſtruments of the late king's tyranny, and of our late ſlavery, againſt whom the preſent king declared in his declaration, and who declared their averſeneſs to admit His preſent Majeſty to the throne. For we can never believe, that they who betrayed our laws and robbed us of our privileges under the laſt reign, will ever adminiſter juſtice, or do us any good under the preſent government. We cannot but be always in fears, while we remain in the hands of our old oppreſſors, in whoſe conduct and adminiſtration, we could never ſee any thing but rage, and rapine, and unjuſt violence.

Finally, We requeſt and crave of your Honours that we may have liberty in due time, according to courſe of law, to impeach thoſe that murdered our brethren in the fields without all proceſs or ſhadow of law, as is taken notice of in His Majeſty's declaration for this kingdom; and as the cry thereof did call His Majeſty to appear for our relief; ſo it ſtill continues to cry for vengeance; and Almighty God, to whom it belongs, craves of your Honours to ſee to the purging of the land from blood, which cannot be otherwiſe purged than by the blood of them that ſhed it.

May it pleaſe your Honours to conſider the premiſes, and to take ſuch meaſures in ſatisfying theſe our humble deſires, backed with the importunate cries of many thouſands of the beſt ſubjects of the nation, that God may be glorified, religion encouraged, the peace and proſperity of the church promoted, their Majeſtie's throne eſtabliſhed in righteouſneſs, the people be happy under their goverment, and the Lord delight to dwell among us. And your Petitioners ſhall ever pray, *&c.*

Subſcribed in our name, and by commiſſion from, and at the deſire of many others of the ſame ſentiments with ourſelves, by ——— ———

Upon the morrow the meeting conveened again,—where the petition was read. Any who had freedom to

subscribe it, were desired to do it. Whereupon, about ten men subscribed the same in the name of the societies in the shire of Air, and some persons in the overward of Clydesdale, did it in their own name. But these representing the societies of Renfrew, and the netherward of Clydesdale, (some of whom having no clearness themselves, nor commission from their societies for subscribing it, did it not) were desired to let their societies see and consider it, in order to send some to Glasgow next week, to subscribe it in their name; as also, these for the societies in Galloway, Nithsdale and Anandale, being in the like circumstances, were desired to let their friends see it, in order to send some to the Lead-hills to subscribe it.

The next meeting was appointed to be at *Douglas*, the first Wednesday of *June*. But in case of extraordinary emergents, as an invasion of the Irishes or French, some at Edinburgh were to appoint it sooner, and acquaint their friends therewith.

The night before it was agreed upon, that a Letter should be written in the name of the Meeting to Lord Angus's regiment; which was done, and the same was read that day. It was agreed upon to be sent with some additions, and Michael Shields was desired to write it over again with the same, subscribe it in their name, and send it to the regiment; which was accordingly done: the substance of which follows.

Douglas, March 27th, 1690.

Dear Brethren,

WE received your Letter. Albeit the scruples and hesitations do yet remain, which many of us had concerning the regiment from the very first raising thereof, occasioned by the admission of malignant, wicked, and profane men into the army, (the corruptions whereof still increase) and some of them taken in amongst yourselves; and though we still fear the sin, snare, and danger of sinful associations; yet we desire to sympathize with you, and to keep correspondence with you, in so far as may be for your edification and advantage, and may not strengthen your hands, nor involve ourselves in any sinful course, that ye are, or may be afterward insnared in.

According to your desire, we take this opportunity to use some freedom, yet we hope, and intreat you will take

take the ſame in good part, ſince love to you incites us to the ſame; and we deſire you will uſe the like freedom with us.—We would not have you content ſo long as there are ſo many malignant and profane men in the army, and while there are any ſuch among yourſelves; but in your ſtations, to the uttermoſt of your power witneſs againſt it. Seek for a reformation thereof, for to get and keep places was not the end for which ye took up arms, it was rather (profeſſedly) to be in a better capacity to witneſs and wreſtle againſt corruptions in the army, and to endeavour in your capacity to ſeek and cry for redreſſing grievances in church and ſtate.

We earneſtly requeſt ye would keep up your chriſtian ſocieties. Be much in private prayer. Cry mightily that the Lord will bleſs you and us with the knowledge of the times and our own duty.—If ye grow ſlack and remiſs in ſecret prayer and public witneſſing, ye have ground to fear, that next your hands wax feeble in the day of battle. Conſider under what character ye go, as a people more ſtrict, zealous and religious than others. Small faults in you are more heinous, and will do more hurt than in others; and wherever ye come, let *your light ſhine before men*, and have no fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs, but rather reprove them, both in yourſelves and others. Forbear theſe things to which ſoldiers are much addicted. Pray that ye be not led into temptation, but delivered from evil. Abſtain from ſinful and ſcandalous games, as cards, dice, *&c.* the firſt of which we hear ſome of you are guilty of, which is not a little wounding to us. Refrain from duels, and fighting, quarreling, either among yourſelves, or with others, and from drunkenneſs, which often occaſions theſe unmanly and unchriſtian actions. Forbear, and forgive one another. Be not of a revengeful, but of a goſpel-ſpirit.

It was not a little wounding, as well as ſurpriſing, to hear of the extravagances committed by many of you upon the King's birth-day, *November* laſt, the noiſe of which hath gone much abroad, whereby many of your brethren were offended, and the wicked confirmed and hardened in their practice, we hope ye are againſt obſerving anniverſary days as well as we, and that ye will mourn for what ye have done.

We wiſh that ſome amongſt you may ſee the evil of their unconcernedneſs at hearing of the ſcruples, diſ-

couragements and perplexities which many tender friends and zealous Chriſtians had at the on-going and continuing of the regiment; and albeit we deſire all irritating, untender ſpeaking or writing may be forborne, yet ſeeing we neither could, nor can go on in the regiment, and conſidering the evil and danger of ſinful aſſociations, and to free ourſelves from partaking in the guilt of the ſame, we beſeech and obteſt you, that ye may reſolve in the Lord's ſtrength not to continue in arms unleſs it be for the glory of God, and the carrying on, and advancing of reformation. Let not the flatteries and inſinuations, nor the frowns and threatenings of men, ſo prevail, as to draw or drive you unto, or make you continue in any courſe diſſonant unto, or inconſiſtent with the noble cauſe for which many of you formerly contended and ſuffered,

We wiſh ye may be endued with true and holy zeal, and boldneſs, without fear or ſhame to avouch the owning of the former and preſent teſtimony. Reckon it no diſcredit, but your honour to be called Covenanters. In every place ſtudy a practice ſuitable to ſuch an honourable deſignation,

As for your going to Ireland, we are glad that many of you are ſo little for it, and we cannot ſee it expedient at preſent, conſidering what a profane and malignant army (for the moſt part is in that land) to join with, the conduct ye behoved to come under, and the bad ſtate of the cauſe and quarrel ye would have to fight for, and alſo the great danger this land is, or may be in very ſuddenly.

We are very glad to hear of your reſolution not to come under the conduct of lieutenant general Douglas. We think ye ought to refuſe to come under the ſame at all hazards, and to ſhew your diſlike of employing him, or any ſuch in the army. We deſire you'll repreſent to the Parliament the uſage you met with Dunkel, that the ſame may be enquired into, and that it, and other grievances may be heard and redreſſed.

You may remember, at the raiſing of the regiment it was thought convenient that there ſhould be elders and a ſeſſion in it, to exhort and reprove for faults; and that faſt-days ſhould be appointed and obſerved among you: the omiſſion of theſe things is unpleaſant. Not deſiring to trouble you further, we remain

Your loving friends and brethren.

Sub-

Subſcribed in our name, and at our appointment, by the clerk of our General Meeting,

MICHAEL SHIELDS.

ACCORDING to the appointment of the Gen. Meeting, ſeveral perſons came to the Lead-hills, *April 8th*, ſome of whom ſubſcribed the petition to the Parliament, but ſome were againſt that way of ſubſcribing thereof, and would have had more in it.

Mr. Lining undertook to endeavour to get it preſented to the Parliament; and he coming to Edinburgh, after adviſing with ſome perſons there, it was thought moſt convenient to give it in to a member of the parliament, to be by him preſented to them. So it was delivered to Sir John Monro of Foulis, who was not only a member of the parliament, but of the committee for the church. He ſeveral times offered it to the ſaid committee, who — — — — — — — —†.

At the foreſaid place and day, Mr. Lining and ſome elders drew up the cauſes of a faſt to be obſerved upon the 18th of *May*; which is to be kept as a day of humiliation and prayer.

1ſt, Becauſe of the abounding ſins of all ranks, *viz.* of the king, council and inferior judicatories, church, army, and people. *2dly*, In particular, for all the favours God hath ſhewed to the land, yet its repreſentatives in the ſtate, have done little for the glory of God and the legal eſtabliſhment of the covenanted reformation of religion. *3dly*, Becauſe, though the army be raiſed up for the defence of religion as well as liberty, yet many of them are found groſly guilty of being even enemies to the power and purity of religion. *4thly*, Becauſe, though the Lord by his diſpenſations be calling all of us to repentance, yet there is much impenitency under former defections and ſcandals, both in miniſters and people, and here we would pray for a down-pouring of the Spirit of repentance upon both, that God might have his glory, and his church might find mercy. *5thly*, The uncon-

† Here Mich. Shields doth not relate how contemptuouſly this petition was by the committee rejected, and as this committee were accounted among the beſt affected to religion in that parliament, ſo it now appeared, that theſe people were not deceived who expected no redreſs of grievances from ſuch men as had been *ſo deeply involved in* the evils complained of.

unconcernedneſs with our dangers from combinations of papiſts and malignants at home, and with the diſtreſs Ireland now is lying under from theſe, and to pray that God would break theſe, and make us more to know our duty towards that diſtreſſed church of Ireland.

ALBEIT the ground of many people's complaints, *viz.* The ſeveral adjournments of Parliament, was removed, when this ſeſſion did ſit down, whereby they were put in hopes of getting grievances redreſſed, yet the want of performance of ſome things, and in ſuch a manner, made ſome of them to remain; eſpecially the putting and keeping of many in public truſt, who were malignants, and diſaffected to religion; and the not bringing to condign puniſhment, theſe among their hands who deſerved it, but ſetting them at liberty. And the ſettling of church government, as in the year 1592, and not as it was in the years 1648, and 1649, gave occaſion of diſcontent, and complaint. At the beginning of this ſeſſion of Parliament the names of court and club party were very great; yet afterward, the club party taking in known malignants, into their cabal, made them leſs eſteemed, and ſeverals fell off from them, ſo that the court party had the greateſt ſway. The Highlanders being defeated at Cromdale, made the malignants in the Parliament more faint than before, and tho' this victory was very remarkable, and ſeveral priſoners taken at it, and ſome afterwards, yet none were brought to condign puniſhment, which heightened the complaints of many and leſſened the authority of the government, ſo that the enemies thereof did not ſo regard or fear its power, as otherwiſe it would have done.

IN this time when ſome were pleaſed and others were diſpleaſed with matters both in church and ſtate; Our General Meeting met at *Douglas*, June 4th, 1690, where it was agreed upon that the covenants as renewed at Leſmahagow March 3d, 1689, ſhould be printed, and twenty pounds ſterling was to be given for printing 2000 copies, and Colin Aliſon was appointed to wait upon the preſs.

Upon the conſideration that ſhortly there would be a General Meeting of miniſters, and thereafter a General Aſſembly, it was thought fit that the Meeting ſhould deliberate upon what was their duty in reference thereunto. And it was reſolved that a Paper ſhould be writ-

ten, ſubſcribed, and given into the miniſters containing a repreſentation of our grievances, wherein we might be free, ſhewing the grounds of our former withdrawing from them, with our earneſt deſire of union at the time, upon good terms; Alſo, to contain a Proteſtation againſt defections; for drawing up of which paper, five men were nominate that were preſent in the Meeting, *viz.* James Wilſon, Peter Walker, William M'Neil, ——— ——— and Michael Shields. Likewiſe for the foreſaid end, it was deſired that Sir Robert Hamilton, Earlſhoun, William Stewart, John Mack, Archibal Hunter, and John Campbel ſhould be acquainted therewith; Which perſons were all to conveen at *Douglas* upon the 16th of June inſtant, in order to draw up a draught of the ſaid paper.

The Meeting was deſired to acquaint their Societies with this concluſion, and that correſpondence ſhould meet, and after deliberation, draw up their mind concerning it, and what they would have in the ſaid paper. And the paper being drawn up, it was to be ſent to Edinburgh to our miniſters that they might reviſe the ſame. And they with conſent, were to appoint the time of the next General Meeting and ſend advertiſement thereof, with ſome copies of the paper that the Societies might conſider it, and ſend their mind to the next General Meeting *.

ACCORDING to the appointment of the laſt General Meeting ſome perſons conveened at *Douglas*, upon the 16th of June, but not all who were acquainted therewith, as was deſired.

At night Sir Robert Hamilton came, and gave ſome reaſons (firſt verbally, and then in writing) why he could not accept of their commiſſion, the tenor of which ſhall be here inſerted.

Douglas, June 16th, 1690.

Chriſtian Friends,

THOUGH I have not freedom to accept of, or aſſiſt in your late commiſſion to me, yet for the exoneration of my own conſcience; the tender ſympathy I owe

† Here they again return to their former project for union, but it is now grown out of faſhion to appoint Faſt-days by the General Meetings.

I owe you all; the great desire I have to serve you in the Lord, to the utmost of my poor capacity; the old esteem and affection, I hope, I justly bear to many of you, and for the further vindication of truth, when called thereunto, I came to the place appointed notwithstanding of bodily indisposition, and other difficulties in my way, and gave some reasons both of my refusing your commission, or of sitting with some of the persons delegate, which, I hope will save me from the mistakes of any not prejudged, and exoner, and vindicate me at the hands of these who, I hope may be singly aiming at the glory of God, and labouring to tread again in the good old paths; as also, save me hereafter from any such trouble at your hands, while matters are so managed and carried on by you. For which causes I have judged it fit here to insert the reasons of my declining, which I gave in verbally to your delegates, which are as followeth:

1. I cannot accept this commission, as from the General Meeting being from a mixt company, part of whom are engaged in, and many active in carrying on the late courses of defection, a part of which are specified in that Protestation I formerly gave in writing to Mr. Shields and Mr. Lining, at the Meeting.

2. Because restricted by this commission to Society papers, coming from men of various judgments, and practices, both as to what is the testimony of the day, and the stating and managing of it, and so it is folly to expect a faithful testimony to be had from amongst them.

4. Because some of these delegated, are not only of contrary sentiments, but have been, and still are active in carrying on the late defections.

4. Because Messrs Shields, Lining and Boyd, are not included amongst these ministers whose defections are to be protested against, while as much, if not more, guilty in the late defections than they.

5. Because it is concluded that these forementioned men, were to revise the protestation before it be given in.

6. Because there is not due time given to deliberate on matters of such consequence, neither to consult God in it, nor the faithful in the land, nor our own consciences, as to our accession in the provocation, *&c.*

This being what I spoke to the delegates.

I am your real friend in the Lord,

ROBERT HAMILTON.

To

To return again; Upon the morrow more came, and there were the draughts of two papers read, and likewise some little papers from correspondences containing exceptions against many ministers, after some debates and deliberation, there was a short minute drawn up containing not only some of those things which gave us ground to withdraw formerly from many ministers, but also what is dissatisfying to us in their practice at present, a copy whereof followeth.

Some particulars which gave us ground to withdraw from many ministers.

1st, Joining with Prelacy, and hearing of Curates. *2dly*, Accepting of indulgences, and justifying that practice. *3dly*, Lying by from duty in time of danger, and ambiguous preaching, not discovering the sins and snares of the time. *4thly*, Not joining with the faithful ministers that appeared publicly for the cause of Christ, but condemning their endeavours and reproached sufferers. *5thly*, Some taking oaths and bonds. *6thly*, Accepting of, and addressing for the toleration. *7thly*, Owning, praying, and pleading for the authority of tyrants, and usurpers, and condemning these who did disown the same.

Some things which are dissatisfying to us at present.

1. Not confessing and condemning these above written defections. 2. Not pleading for, nor mentioning of the covenants, in their addresses to the King and Parliament, that the land hath broken them, and that they are yet binding. 3. Not minding people of their former backslidings. 4. Admitting some to be elders who had taken the test, and are guilty of other gross scandals. 5. Not preaching against the sin and snare of sinful association with malignants, and not discovering the danger of bringing them into judicatories and armies. 6. Not signifying their dislike of the King and Queen's involvement into the sin and danger of defending and maintaining the church of England. 7. Admitting of scandalous persons to the sacraments. 8. Some pleading for the keeping in of some prelatic curates. 9. Ordaining some to be ministers who had taken the test.

We ought also to show our dissatisfaction with the defectiveness of the act establishing the church government.

It was resolved that copies of this Paper should be shewed to correspondencies; and a copy thereof, with a Letter sent to Mr. Alexander Shields, desiring him to draw the Paper (enlarging the particulars in the minute) that is to be given in to the ministers. The Letter was immediately written and sent to Mr. Shields.

The next General Meeting was appointed at *Douglas*, August 13th, 1690.

As it was feared that papists and malignants were carrying on a wicked plot, which might break out unexpectedly, so the same was found true; for one of a deep reach, and large extent, was discovered in England, in which many of the three kingdoms were concerned, and some were suspected to to have a hand in it of whom better things were expected, *viz.* Some of the club party, who not long before made a great noise. The chief of them, as, the earl of Anandale, lord Ross, (who going to London, was taken, and imprisoned in the Tower) and Skelmorlie returned from the Parliament, which did sit till July.

Several acts past therein which tended to the settling and allaying the discontents and complaints, which before were great. Nevertheless not a few remained, and the ground whereupon they were founded was not removed. But notwithstanding, the said plot was discovered, and the designs of enemies frustrated, and tho' King William got a notable victory over King James and his cut-throat Irishes and Frenches, in Ireland, yet the Highlanders (accustomed to rob) brake out again spoiling and plundering in Monteith, and other places, which alarmed the country. To prevent which, it was ordered the Fensible men in the West should rendevouze. Whereupon a great number appeared in arms, and came to Glasgow, but the rebels returned. As for the Society people, many of them appeared in arms also, with others, but this occasioned some debates among them, for though they counted it their duty to oppose the enemy, yet they demurred to associate with many of the country.

Our General Meeting conveened at *Douglas*, August 13th, when it was expected that the paper to be given in to the ministers would be ready to be seen, but Mr. Shields being in the Highlands, with the regiment, occasioned

caſioned the hindrance of it at this time, as alſo the printing of the Covenants, &c. as it was deſired he ſhould reviſe Leſmahagow-work before it was printed.

At this time there was a queſtion ſtarted and enquired particularly at all the members of the Meeting, *viz.* Whether they thought it fitteſt to ſignify to the miniſters in that paper to be given in to them, that unleſs they confeſſed and condemned all theſe defections they were guilty of, they would not join with them; or to leave it out? The whole Meeting, except three, were for leaving it out, being deſirous to know the miniſters mind as to theſe things, before they poſitively acquainted them whether they would join, or not: for they thought albeit they were not particular therein, yet they could not ſee that thereby any obligation was laid upon them to unite. Which Paper, when drawn up by Mr. Shields, the Meeting deſired copies thereof to be ſent to Correſpondencies, to the end that they might ſee and conſider the ſame: And ſend their mind concerning it to the next General Meeting.

The next General Meeting, was appointed to be at *Douglas* upon the laſt Wedneſday of September *.

ALBEIT a party of the rebels were defeated in the North, and another near Cardroſs, by a party of Angus's regiment, and ſome horſe; yet they appeared again, conſiſting for moſt part of horſe, having encouragement both from abroad, and at home. However not long after they all ſcattered.

The Parliament conveened again, but did not ſit long, neither did they much of conſequence, except laying on fourteen ſhillings Scots upon every hearth in the kingdom, ſave hoſpitals, and the houſes of thoſe living on charity. At this many were diſpleaſed.

After the Parliament roſe (being adjourned to the 22d of October) the commiſſion of Parliament for forefaulteries and fines, did ſit, as alſo the commiſſion for viſitation of Univerſities, &c. who put off ſeveral of the Regents, and all the Profeſſors, doctors, and Principals of the Colleges of Edinburgh, Glaſgow, and St. Andrews.

* The chief occaſion of this Meeting is diſappointed yet no Faſt days.

AT the laſt Meeting this General Meeting was appointed to have been upon the laſt Wedneſday of Sept. But in regard Mr. Shields being longer in coming to Edinburgh than was expected, there was not time enough to draw up the Paper foreſaid, before the Meeting: So it was thought fit to delay it eight days, and advertiſement hereof to be ſent to the country (with ſome copies of the Paper) that ſome of our friends might meet upon the 1ſt day of October at *Douglas*.

ACCORDINGLY upon the ſaid day our General Meeting conveened at *Douglas*.—After prayer, *&c.* this queſtion was a little agitated, concerning hearing theſe miniſters who defend their defections, and condemn our former teſtimony: But they could not come to any unanimous reſolution about it. Wherefore it being laid aſide, the miniſters were ſent for, and came in. The paper to be given in to the miniſters was read: After which there were ſome debatings whether or not we could petition this enſuing General Aſſembly, ſeeing many who would be members, are guilty of theſe things whereof we are complaining (ſince this was to ſuſtain a great part of them as judges in their own cauſe, and caſe). It was anſwered to this purpoſe*, That the conſtitution of

* As to the conſtitution it hath been aſſerted by many, and offered to be proven, that the greater part of the conſtituent members were guilty of ſuch ſcandalous compliances, ſwearing ſinful and perjurous oaths, *&c.* as that by the word of God, and the acts and conſtitutions of this church, they were obnoxious to church cenſure. And whereas it is ſaid they were not prelimited, let K. William's Letter to the Aſſembly dated 13th Feb. 1690. be viewed, where it is ſaid, Whereas there hath been humble ſupplication made to us by ſeveral miniſters, who lately ſerved under Epiſcopacy, we have thought good to ſignify our pleaſure to you, that you make no diſtinction of men, otherwiſe well qualified for the miniſtry, who are willing to join with you, in acknowledgment of, and ſubmiſſion to the government of church and ſtate, though they have formerly conformed to the law introducing Epiſcopacy, and that ye give them no diſturbance for that cauſe, or upon that head. And it is our pleaſure, that until we give our further direction, youproceed to no proceſs, *&c.* and in another Letter, dated June 15th, 1691. he ſhews that they had ſufficiently underſtood his intentions, by their unanimous inclinations, to unite with ſuch of the clergy who have ſerved under Epiſcopacy, excepting that neither they nor any church meeting do meddle in any proceſs, or buſineſs that may concern the purging out of the Epiſcopal miniſters. If this was not a manifeſt prelimitation of theſe Aſſemblies the votes

of the General Aſſembly was right, and the members no way prelimited, and when ſo, we might preſent our grievances to them, deſiring that they would acknowledge and condemn defections; and though many of them were guilty of theſe things we complained of, yet all were not. But if we ſhould not give in this paper to them, what way could we keep up a teſtimony againſt theſe defections?

The paper (or petition) being read over again, and ſeveral things helped in it, and ſomewhat added thereunto, thereafter this concluſion was agreed unto, That copies of the ſame ſhould be written and ſent to the correſpondencies, who might conſider it, and ſend two or three, or as many of their number as they thought fit, to *Edinburgh*, againſt the 21ſt of *October*, with power from them to ſubſcribe in their name if they agreed therewith, ſome of whom might be then and there condeſcended upon to preſent it to the Aſſembly, having a commiſſion from the reſt for that effect.

Likewiſe theſe perſons who were to meet at Edinburgh, were to appoint the time of the next General Meeting.

It was deſired that the 14th of this inſtant ſhould be obſerved by our ſocieties a day of prayer and ſupplication, that we may be directed aright in managing this paper above mentioned; as alſo, upon the account of the General Aſſembly.

ACCORDING to the concluſion agreed upon at the laſt General Meeting, ſome perſons from ſeveral correſpondencies met at Edinburgh, upon the 21ſt of *October*; but in regard all were not come who were expected, and that ſome were for adding ſomewhat to the paper, about which they were met; nothing was done that day ſave the reading of it, and appointing to meet next morning at 8 o'clock.

Upon the 22d of *October*, (more perſons being then come, but none from the netherward of Clydeſdale, albeit

reader may judge. Accordingly the Aſſembly was obedient to the royal mandate, as appears by the letter preſented to them by Mr. J. Law and Mr. D. Blair,—ſo as that there were hundreds of theſe old abjured, perjured, erroneous, ſcandalous, Epiſcopal Curates continued in the peaceable poſſeſſion of churches and ſtipends, without any evidence of their repentance. See *Mr. Clarkſon's plain reaſons*, P. 32,——39.

albeit two were choſen for that effect) all being met, ſome words were altered in the paper, and ſome added thereto, as was deſired, and ſo was agreed upon to be written for ſubſcribing againſt the next day. Upon the 23d of *October*, after reading it again, it was ſubſcribed by ſeveral hands in the name of many others.

After ſubſcribing of this paper, five men, *viz.* Thomas Latimer, James Muir, William Swanſton, William Woodburn and Robert Cowan were choſen in name of the reſt to preſent it to the Aſſembly, to deſire an anſwer, and to uſe diligence therein, of which they were to give an account: But in reſpect it might be enquired at them, If they had any commiſſion from their friends for what they did, it was thought neceſſary to write a line directed to them; which was preſently done, the tenor of which follows.

To Tho. Latimer, Jam. Muir, Wm. Swanſton, Wm. Woodburn and Robert Cowan.

Chriſtian and aſſured Friends,

BEING confident of your care and diligence, we hereby intruſt you with the delivering and preſenting of this paper, containing the complaints of many Preſbyterian people in ſeveral ſhires of Scotland to the reverend Aſſembly; earneſtly deſiring you to ſolicit them that they would be pleaſed to vouchſafe you an anſwer to the ſame. Subſcribed by

WM. SPENCE.

Albeit it was much deſired that the paper, with all poſſible diligence ſhould be given in to the Aſſembly, yet it was thought fit to delay the ſame, until it was known what was done with the paper given in to them by Meſſrs. Lining, Shields and Boyd. The iſſue of which buſineſs, with the way of managing it is not proper here to relate, an account thereof being already publiſhed; nevertheleſs it is not unſuitable to mention this, That it was very offenſive to many, that the Aſſembly by a vote refuſed to read the paper given in to them by the foreſaid miniſters, (after hearing the reaſons by the committee of overtures why it ſhould not be read, which indirectly condemned it before the ſame was heard) eſpecially the perſons intruſted with the ſubſcribing and in giving of the ſaid paper and ſome others, were

ſo

so offended, that they thought it fit to shew their dissatisfaction therewith to the Assembly, yet not in an irritating manner, but with all due respect.

Whereupon a paper was drawn up and subscribed by the five men before-named; a true copy whereof followeth:

To the Moderator and remanent members of this General Assembly.

Right Reverend and Honourable,

BEING intrusted by our friends with the delivering to this reverend Assembly of a paper containing the complaints of many Presbyterian people in several shires of Scotland, we have taken this opportunity of presenting the same, humbly (yet earnestly) beseeching you would be pleased to take notice thereof.

We are indeed loath to trouble you, as knowing you have great and weighty affairs to take up your time; yet we hope your wisdom will see such a necessity of hearing the complaints of a poor people, longing for, and desirous of peace, concord and union in the Lord, as to move you to a diversion for a little, and take some consideration of what they have to say.

Right Reverend, The in-giving of it was delayed until the adjusting of that business of Messrs. Thomas Lining, Alexander Shields and William Boyd; the issue of which we expected should have tended much to the healing of the breach and composing of differences. But with all due respect and reverence, we humbly conceive that we have gotten one complaint added to these we had formerly, viz. your not only refusing to read the representation given in by Mr. Lining, Mr. Shields, &c. but the voting in Assembly not to read it; because (they say) it doth contain gross mistakes, unseasonable and impracticable proposals, and uncharitable and injurious reflections upon godly ministers, tending rather to kindle contentions than to compose divisions. By the mentioning of this, we design neither irritation nor reflection; but ingenuously to lay open before you what grieves us, in order to get the same removed. Again humbly be-

seeching

ſeeching that you will hear the ſame, and grant a favourable anſwer, which is expected by

THOMAS LATIMER.
JAMES MUIR.
WM. SWANSTON.
WM. WOODBURN.
ROBT. COWAN.

Here follows the larger paper as written by Mr. Shields, and corrected and agreed upon by many of the ſocieties.

To the Moderator, and remanent members of this reverend General Aſſembly.—*The complaints and humble Petition of many Preſbyterian people, living in ſeveral ſhires of* Scotland.

SEEING the Lord in the riches of his infinite mercy wherein he hath abounded to this generation, in the late revolution of providence, far beyond all poſſible acknowledgments, hath been pleaſed to grant at length this long-wanting, and long-wiſhedfor privilege of ſeeing a free General Aſſembly of Preſbyterian miniſters gathered and fenced in the name of our Lord Jeſus; we cannot, and muſt not omit this opportunity of applying ourſelves thereunto for a redreſs of theſe many grievances under which we have groaned theſe many years. The chiefeſt, bittereſt, and moſt burdenſom of which, (though we have not wanted our ſhare of other burdens very heavy) hath been, and yet remains to be, even in this plenty, our ſcarcity and famine of goſpel-ordinances, wherein we have languiſhed of a long time, ſighing over our ſilent Sabbaths, as ſheep ſcattered without a ſhepherd, fainting for hunger at the head of every ſtreet, and panting after the green paſtures and pleaſant waterbrooks of the preached goſpel: And yet ſcarred, and made to ſtand aloof from it by the ſtumblings, tentations, defections and diviſions of theſe unhappy times paſt; which as it hath been our greateſt ſorrow, ſo no comfort on this ſide heaven could be ſo deſireable as to re-enjoy and recover again acceſs with clearneſs to pure and powerful goſpel-ordinances, without which we ſhall never have a pleaſant day, in the greateſt abundance of all our outward peace.

It was, *right reverend*, a reproach heavy to bear, that we were called deſpiſers of the goſpel and of the miniſtry thereof,

thereof, which yet, so far as we had clearness and access, we sought after and followed even upon the hazard of our lives, so that no terror of persecutors could hinder us from the pursuit of it. And nothing moved us to withdraw from these ministers who counted themselves rejected by us, but their sad involvements in the defections of the late defiling time, seeing no other way left us in that broken state of keeping up a testimony against the same, or to free ourselves from partaking in the sin thereof, but abstraction;—which we never loooked upon as separation from the reformed, covenanted church of Scotland, (as is more fully shewed in our *Informatory Vindication*, which we homologate) but only from the defections of many of her members; for schism ever was and is equally hateful to us, as sinful union. And we are, and were always most willing to join again in terms pleasing to the Lord, edifying to the church, and satisfying to our consciences. We are not for imposing terms or prescribing rules to ministers, more than we are to be imposed upon and led by them; yet seeing people are allowed of the Lord sometimes in sobriety to say to Archippus, *Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, and fulfil it.* And when offences are given by ministers, it is people's privilege to plead for the removing of them in a Christian way, to the satisfaction of the offended party. We humbly conceive, in order to the removal of these many offences given and taken in this our day, in order to our comfortable reconciliation together, and that we may be reconciled to the Lord and his wrath turned away, that confessing, forsaking and condemning the courses that have been so offensive, is very necessary; and seeing a door is opened, whereby ye have access and capacity to build and cleanse the temple of the Lord of these filthinesses wherewith in the time past it hath been defiled, and removing these stumbling-blocks which have offended the consciences of many tender serious people—Therefore, in all humility and reverence, we must take the freedom to represent to this revd. Assembly, in a few particulars, what chiefly hath humbled us, and occasioned our withdrawing from many ministers of this church, which we cannot omit to complain of, and protest against, neither designing hereby to irritate, or lay the faults of any open to the world, nor to plead our own innocence, but desiring to acknowledge our deep accession also to the sins

which have provoked the Lord to all this anger against this church and kingdom; and that the remembering of them may help us all to the sight and sense of these sins, —that we may mourn for them and testify against them, and to shew our desire of having peace and truth, unity and order among all the lovers of Zion, settled upon a solid foundation,—and communion in ordinances restored to us, who have been long driven away from that benefit by these offences.

As it was not a little affecting to behold, so it is no pleasure to remember, that when Prelacy (condemned in the word of God and abjured by our covenants) was established, many ministers did hear and join with these perjured hirelings and intruders, yea, and persuaded others to the like practice; whereby their hands were strengthened, and many of the godly were stumbled.—We are grieved that this joining and complying therewith is not yet condemned, nor the practice of those who withdrew, approved.

As it was no small grief of heart to see the supremacy which belongs only to the Lord Jesus, as King and Head of his church, given away to a miserable mortal, and settled upon him by laws; so it was an augmentation of our sorrow to see an indulgence flowing therefrom, clogged with restrictions very prejudicial to the honour and freedom of Christ's ambassadors, embraced by several ministers, and justified by others, which did much strengthen these wicked usurpations on our Lord's crown-rights and his church's liberties, and gave great occasion of offence and contention among the Lord's people in this land;—the sin whereof is not confessed and condemned; the doing whereof, we are persuaded, would be very contributive to the turning away of the Lord's anger, and satisfying all offended.

It was very offensive to us, when many snares and temptations were going through the land, that then many ministers who should have preached in season and out of season, and when no dispensation could discharge them from that necessary duty, did not set the trumpet to their mouth to give faithful warning in times of such danger, as became watchmen; but though often called to preach in the country, *did either faintly leave the land*, or lurked and lay by in the land, and others when they preached, either did not apply their doctrine to the times, so as we might take it up, or were ambiguous in

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their application of their doctrine to the dangers of the times; whereby many were left to periſh in their iniquity, and the hands of theſe who were endeavouring to keep clean garments were not ſtrengthened. Yea, it was very offenſive to ſee the practice of ſome miniſters, who inſtead of ſtrengthening their hands who were at that time moſt zealouſly appearing and contending for the intereſt and cauſe of Chriſt, and joining with, countenancing or encouraging the miniſters who were valiant for the truth, and jeoparded their lives in the high places of the fields for the teſtimony of Chriſt, did condemn their laudable endeavours, and reproached them and their actings and ſufferings, both at home and abroad.

More eſpecially it was ſad and humbling to us, when many miſchiefs were framed into laws by a throne of iniquity, when many wicked oaths and bonds (contrary to the word of God and our national covenants) were impoſed, and when many were required upon pain of death to *own the authority of*, and *acknowledge allegiance to tyrants and uſurpers* as our lawful magiſtrates whom God had ſet over us as his miniſters of juſtice; that then many miniſters did comply with theſe wicked laws, and taught the people to obey them, and ſome did take and ſubſcribe theſe oaths and bonds themſelves, and perſuaded people to take them, and not only *owned and acknowledged allegiance* to theſe tyrants and uſurpers, prayed for them and their government, and pleaded for the lawfulneſs of their authority, yea ſome prayed for the pretended Prince of Wales; but inſtead of ſympathizing with the ſufferings of thoſe that could not in conſcience own that authority, condemned and inveighed againſt them as fools, and dying in an error.—We wiſh that ſuch untender carriage towards conſcientious ſufferers were reſented, and the heads and cauſes upon which theſe reproached martyrs and confeſſors ſuffered, were approven and juſtified.

It was very burdenſom to our conſciences, that a Popiſh toleration deſigned to introduce Popery into this land again, granted by K. James, from his abſolute power which he blaſphemouſly arrogated to himſelf, and whereby he preſumed to ſtop the penal laws againſt Papiſts, and clogged with many limitations, was embraced by many Preſbyterian miniſters, and addreſſed for to that Popiſh uſurper in name of all: Which many of the

godly of the land looked upon with weeping eyes as a faſt ſtep of defection from the wonted zeal of the miniſters of Scotland. The ſin and ſcandal of this courſe is evident in a teſtimony given in againſt the ſame by ſome miniſters which we here own. Yet now,—though the wicked power it flowed from be removed, we cannot think the ſin and ſcandal of it is taken away, ſo long as the ſame is not confeſſed, mourned over, and condemned.

The condemning of all theſe courſes of compliance and defection would not only be as a beacon ſet up to hinder the following generations from ſplitting on ſuch dangerous rocks; but alſo will make our uniting with thoſe (which we long for) cordial and comfortable.

We are alſo diſſatisfied and offended at ſeveral things at preſent.—The practice of theſe miniſters continues to be very offenſive and ſtumbling, who inſtead of confeſſing and condemning theſe defections, and minding the people of their former backſlidings, and diſcovering the ſins of the late times that were many and heinous, to the end that they may be induced to mourn over them, and turn to the Lord; do yet continue to defend and hide their ſin, and thereby harden others in impenitency: So that the wrongs done to Chriſt are like to be forgotten, and few are like to be brought from the evil of their ways by a real repentance.

We are alſo much diſcouraged and diſſatisfied, that the *national* and the *Solemn League and Covenants* have not only not been renewed, but not mentioned by many; the affront done to them, and their binding force not declared, but like to be buried in oblivion. And more eſpecially, it was wounding to us to hear, that when opportunity was, and acceſs to addreſs the King and Parliament, the mentioning of theſe ſolemn covenants was omitted. And ſince the King and Queen were advanced to the throne, we fear that ſuch faithfulneſs and freedom hath not been uſed as was wont to be in former times, to warn and admoniſh their Majeſties of the ſins and ſnares of the throne, to beware of evil counſellors, and of the guilt and danger of tampering with, and patronizing Prelacy in England and Ireland, nor to diſcover and declare to them and the parliament, the ſin and danger of bringing into, and keeping in places of power and truſt, in judicatories and armies, perſons who are known malignants, enemies to truth and godlineſs

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and to their present interest, as faithful ministers in former times used to witness against such sinful associations: *And after all this is come upon us for our evil deeds*, and have gotten such a deliverance as this, if again his commandments be broken by joining in affinity with the people of these abominations, it will be more than ever dangerous both to king and kingdom.

Likewise, we cannot conceal our sorrow, that the great and glorious attainments, betwixt the year 1638, and 1649. being years of the right hand of the Most High, in which we were brought under the renewed bond of Solemn Covenants, are not revived, nor any honourable mention made of them, in any of the acts establishing the privileges of the church, which we think a losing of the ground which our fathers gained. We do not say that it was in the power of ministers to redress this,—yet we conceive, the pleading for the full of this, in their address, was not above their power, and that they should have signified their dissatisfaction at the want thereof.—So in our poor judgments, we think in all establishments of religion, and religious rights in a land, respect is always to be had to the pattern and rule of God's revealed will in his word, and not to the inclinations of men, and their worldly politicks.

It is also very discouraging and offensive, and we cannot but complain of it, that now when there is an opportunity to purge the church from these corruptions wherewith she hath been long pestered and plagued: Yet (though Prelacy be abolished by the state, and many Curates put away, some one way, some another) we hear of none censured, and removed for prelacy, perjury, and intrusion, and some ministers are also pleading for keeping them in, upon carnal and politic grounds, who we fear may afterwards do more mischief, than the good now pretended can countervail: And that if this occasion be lost, of purging the church of insufficient, corrupt, and scandalous officers of all sorts, especially of prelatick Curates, and of planting it with godly and faithful ministers, we may all repent of it too late.

More especially, it is very stumbling and offensive to us, that albeit there be an opportunity, without fear and danger, to exercise discipline impartially and faithfully; yet some who have formerly taken the abominable Test, and are guilty of other gross scandals, are admitted to be officers of the church, some to be ministers, and some

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to be elders, and many guilty of very groſs degrees of compliance, are admitted to the ſacraments, without any public acknowledgment of their offences, whereby they and others are hardened, and many of the godly ſtumbled, to the diſadvantage of the church.

To conclude, Right Reverend, we expect, and intreat that ye will not be offended at our freedom in what we here repreſent; but our meaning and end being to have differences ſatisfyingly removed, will move you to put a favourable conſtruction thereupon.—But tho' we ſhould be condemned and cenſured with the greateſt ſeverity, we muſt ſeek, we muſt cry for the removing of theſe ſtumbling blocks, and condemning theſe courſes, which have done our Lord Jeſus ſo much wrong, and his children ſo much hurt, in their ſtanding in the way of their comfortable communion with the church: Let the famiſhing ſtarving caſe of our ſouls, thro'the want of the bleſſed goſpel, and our hungering to hear it preached by you, prevail with you to conſider our complaints, and let the wounds of our bleeding mother, panting to be healed by the hand of the tender phyſician have weight with you, not to ſlight or deſpiſe our deſires; But if ye ſhall ſhut your eyes, and ears at them, then we know no other remedy left us, but to complain, and proteſt unto judicatories, and cry, ſigh, and groan to the Father of mercies, who is tender of all his little ones, and is the hearer of prayer, that he may ſee to it, and heal our backſlidings, and breaches in his own time and way, and not lay it to our charge, that ye have had ſo little regard to the ſtumbling and ſaddening of ſo many of his poor broken, bruiſed and ſcattered ſheep, and that ye have not had greater care to ſtrengthen the diſeaſed, and to heal that which was ſick, and to bind up that which was broken, and to bring again that which was driven away; and to ſeek that which was loſt.

Upon Tueſday, October 28th, The five men, foreſaid, went into the *New-kirk*, in order to get theſe papers delivered in to the Commitee of Overtures then ſitting, that by them the ſame might be tranſmitted to the whole Aſſembly, where meeting with two miniſters, Mr. John Stuart, and Mr. Alexander Forbes, with whom they had ſome conference concerning the papers they were entruſted to deliver. Mr. Alexander Forbes told them, that before they could expect to have a hearing, they

they behoyed to subscribe a submission to the church. To this it was answered, that being come there, not in their own name, but in the name of many others, from whom they had a commission only to present to the Assembly two papers, and to get their answer thereto; so they could not answer what was proposed.

He replied, seeing they had no power to do that, or any such like thing that might be thought expedient, there could not be a commitee appointed to treat with them about their papers. But Mr. Stuart said they would go in to the commitee (whereof they were members) and if conveniency allowed would acquaint them of it; accordingly they having informed the commitee thereof, who nominate two ministers, *viz.* Mr. Gabriel Semple, and Mr. James Frazer, with a ruling elder, the laird of Glanderstoun, to confer with the men, who immediately came out, and went with the men to a corner of the kirk, where Mr. Lining and Mr. Shields came also. Mr. Shields being desired, read first the short paper. After hearing of it, they said there was no reason to complain of what it did, seeing our ministers were tenderly dealt with, for notwithstanding their paper to the Assembly was long, yet the commitee had the patience to hear it, and the reason wherefore it was not read in open Assembly, was, that if the same had been done, several members of the Assembly would have risen in a heat at it, and likewise there were many Gilli-Crankie blades waiting on, who if they had heard any thing like a debate in the Assembly, would have presently spread it abroad that the Assembly were all by the ears amongst themselves.

Next the long paper was read, which being done, the five men were desired to go aside a little until the ministers and elder had spoken among themselves concerning it; after which Mr. ——— came to the men, saying there were three things in the paper which they desired might be helped, *viz.* they said there was something antiscriptural in it, which was concerning ministers leaving the land.

2. Owning the authority mentioned therein, which belonged not to the church to cognosce upon, but to the state.

3. As to the Solemn League, mentioned in it, They said the church of Scotland could not own a league with the church of England, in the state wherein it did at present stand. To all which they desired an answer. To which

which the men ſaid, they had no commiſſion to reaſon or debate about any thing in the paper with any perſon, or to alter any thing in it, but to ſolicit the reading of it in the Aſſembly, and to receive their anſwer thereunto, the two miniſters had a long diſcourſe to them which cannot be remembered; the ſcope of it was, ſhewing that the commitee had ſhewed much tenderneſs to them, in appointing them to converſe with them about their papers, which they had heard read and had ſpoken about the ſame; that as their paper was little different from our miniſter's paper; ſo what was done about it, might ſatisfy them; ſaying they had ſufficiently exonered themſelves by giving in the paper, which was read, and ſome conference about it; ſo it was needleſs for them to trouble themſelves any more with the ſame, but report to their friends what they had done.

To this anſwer was returned, That this would not be taken by their friends as the Aſſembly's anſwer to their paper, and therefore they behoved ſtill to ſeek to have it read in the Aſſembly, and deſire to have their anſwer to the ſame.

To which the miniſters replied, that the paper being very little different from our miniſters paper, there was no need of reading it in the Aſſembly; and deſired the men to be tender of the church's peace, and to do nothing that might tend to the renting of it; alſo they ſaid, *As ye have ſomewhat againſt us, ſo we have ſomewhat againſt you; forgive ye us, and we will forgive you, and let us unite.*

To this the men ſaid, That they could do nothing in their friends name without their conſent; and they had no other commiſſion but to deliver the paper to the Aſſembly, to deſire the ſame to be read, and to get ſomewhat in anſwer thereunto. Then the miniſters ſaid, they would repreſent that to the committee. Accordingly one of them went in and delivered the papers to the clerk.

Upon the 29th day of *October*, they met with one of the miniſters, who began a diſcourſe on ſeveral things, but the men would enter on no debates, but inſiſted for a hearing to the paper, from which he diſſuaded them, and adviſed them to converſe with Mr. Thomas Hog; which they did, other two alſo being preſent. They inſiſted much againſt that concerning miniſters leaving the land, which they ſaid could not be condemned at

time

time of suffering. To this it was said, that the leaving the land as they took it, was not so much complained of, as that the ministers generally lay by from the duty of giving faithful warning in time of snares and dangers, and that was one way whereby ministers deserted people at that time to perish in the midst of snares. Mr. —— shewed that the same reason for which our ministers paper was not read, was the reason why ours could not be read. After much time and talk had passed they dismissed,

Upon the 30th of October the men went to Mr. Frazer, and desired of him that he would endeavour to get their affair dispatched; he willed to know what they would have him doing, they told him as formerly. Again he enquired what answer would satisfy them. They answered, if the Assembly would determine that these things complained of in the paper should be doctrinally acknowledged, and an act condemning the same. This (he said) he would as willingly be at, as they, only he feared it would not be done; but yet (he said) there were some things complained of, which could not be acknowledged and instanced the things before related.

The next day meeting at Mr. ——'s quarters with three ministers, they desired to see the papers, one of them having read the short paper, was dissatisfied therewith, saying there was something in it which reflected upon the Assembly for not reading our ministers paper. The men replied, there was reason to mention all that was in it, seeing the Assembly voted the not reading the paper upon the overture of the committee, which was, that there were gross mistakes, peremptory overtures and injurious reflections upon godly ministers in it, which seemed to condemn it before it was heard. He answered tho' it was not read in the Assembly, yet it was read in the Commitee of Overtures. After much discourse the ministers expected that the men should have gone away, but they still urged that they might have some answer from the Assembly, to return to these who had sent them. After the ministers had spoken among themselves, they said to the men that they would give it under their hands, to testify the deligence they had been at, but to this the men replied as before. Then the ministers said they would do what they could for a more satisfying answer to them.

Having parted at this time, and meeting afterwards with one of these ministers, he told them that they were ordered by the Assembly to give it to them in writing, what was done concerning their paper. Which was accordingly done, and subscribed.

A true Copy of which follows.

Loving Friends,

THE Papers you gave in to the Assembly, were first given into the Commitee of Overtures, and we were appointed by them to confer with you: And after conference with you, we moved in the Commitee that the Assembly would order the papers to be given in to these who were to draw up the Monitory Letter, and Causes of the Fast, that they might make their own use thereof in drawing up the same, which at the first next session of the Assembly, on Saturday last the first of Nov. was accordingly done in open Assembly, and we are by the Assembly allowed to report the same to you, which accordingly we do.

And we hope this will satisfy you, and others who did commissionate you. And that the Lord will incline your hearts to peace, and to guard against any further rent in the church of God; and in this hope we subscribe ourselves,

Your Friends, and Servants in the Lord,

Sic Subscribitur,

PAT. WARNER,
JAMES FRAZER,
ALEX. FORBES.

EDINBURGH, Nov. 3d, 1690.

THE greatest thing that occurred in this interval was the sitting of the General Assembly which met 16th of October, and upon the 13th of November was dissolved (by the King's Commissioner) at which time another was indicted to be upon November 1st, 1691. The union and submission to this Assembly offered and subscribed by Messrs Lining, Shields and Boyd, occasioned much talk, and was approven by some, and disapproven by others But as an account of it is now published it is unnecessary here; so it is as needless to relate the management of the paper given in by the people. A short hint of

of which is already given; only it may be obſerved that the paper containing their complaints, and humble deſires, was given in order to the removing of differences, and grounds of withdrawing, that ſo they might unite with the more freedom, and have more comfort of the ſame. But the anſwer returned was not as was deſired, and might have been expected. And the refuſing to read it in open Aſſembly hath created ſcruples and jealouſies, and not a little retarded union.

As it was agreed upon at Edinburgh, a General Meeting met at *Douglas*, the 3d of December, 1690.—After prayer, *&c.* it was thought fitteſt, firſt to have an account of the diligence of the men intruſted with the paper to the Aſſembly.—William Swanſtoun one of the five, gave the Meeting a particular account of the whole management, as is hinted above. The Meeting having heard the relation, were diſſatisfied with the anſwer returned, and did not look upon the ſame as ſufficient.—Afterward Meſſrs. Lining and Shields ſhewed the Meeting how they had united (an account of which is now printed). This being done, after ſome reaſoning, and debate, concerning union, it was thought fit to read the Cauſes of the Faſt appointed by the Aſſembly, in reſpect that many times it was ſaid, we would get ſatisfaction to our ſcruples from it. Which being heard, the ſame was thought lame, and many things wanting in it, which were cauſes of wrath: It was diſſatisfying not only that the Teſt and Declaration, were not in it, but being once in, were put out again *.

After this, Meſſrs Lining and Shields, ſpoke to the Meeting, to this effect, That they would not impoſe upon any perſon, yet they adviſed them to hear thoſe miniſters who were moſt free and faithful, that they could have the opportunity of, and to have a care of running upon extremes on the right hand.—After which ſome debates enſued.

* Theſe two, were the moſt openly wicked oaths, of any that were impoſed in that period, as thereby the Reformation in 1618 was declared rebellion, the covenants were abjured, and all ſelf-defence by ſubjects, or petitioning, and remonſtrating of grievances were owned to be treaſon, and the king's eccleſiaſtic authority fully recognized.

Whereupon it was propoſed to the meeting that a paper ſhould be drawn up, containing a Proteſtation againſt the defections of the miniſters they were to hear, (which they might give in either to the miniſter with whom they were to join, or to the Preſbytery of the bounds) and what induced them to join at the time; as alſo, that their joining at preſent, *was neither a condemning of, nor receding from our former teſtimony and contendings, nor approving of theſe defections they witneſſed againſt before.*

Some were for ſuch a paper, and ſome were againſt it, fearing it would open a door, and give a latitude to hear every miniſter. However the moſt part were for the writing of it in order to ſee it, and the miniſters undertook to do it. They parted for that night.

Upon the morrow they conveened again. The ſaid paper was preſented and read; but there were debatings concerning the ſame between our miniſters and ſome of the meeting. As alſo, the Meeting were of different ſentiments about it, ſome againſt it upon one account, and ſome upon another account, and ſome were for it, thinking it better to join with ſuch a teſtimony than without any at all. Not coming to any agreement, it was left to people's liberty and freedom to give it or not, as they thought fit. However the miniſters inſiſted for it. It was propoſed to the meeting, That in regard debates did not much good, but rather hurt, it was fitteſt to leave them off, and part;—which (after appointing a meeting at *Douglas*, the firſt Wedneſday of *April*, and prayer) they did. Some ſtaid and took copies of the paper, which they gave in to miniſters before they joined; a tranſcript of which follows.

To the right reverend Miniſter and Elderſhip of the Pariſh of ——— or Preſbytery of ———

ALTHOUGH among other calamities that we have been exerciſed with in theſe days of tribulation that have gone over us, theſe have been very grievous unto us, that not only we have laboured under a ſad famine of goſpel-ordinances, but under the reproach that we deſpiſed and rejected the offer of them: Yet we have a witneſs in heaven, and in our own conſciences, that nothing hath been more lamented in our lot than the want of ſuch a privilege, nor any thing ſo much deſired as the

the recovery and enjoyment of these ordinances, administred in freedom and faithfulness, purity and power, which for a long time, in our judgment, have been so restrained and restricted, burdened and borne down under the bushel of Erastian and Antichristian usurpations, that not only they wanted that liberty, light and lustre, which the Lord Jesus had set them in by his institutions, but seemed to be encompassed with and subjected to these wicked encroachments that we could not have access to them without some way acknowledging and bowing unto these idols of jealousy, which being set up in the very entry of the house of the Lord, did scar and fright us from coming thereunto, so long as these usurpations were standing. But now these being removed, and the church's freedom and power restored, the doctrine, worship, discipline and government, and all the ordinances of Christ re-established in purity, peace and freedom, we cannot any longer stand at a distance from them.—Nevertheless, the indignities done to our Lord Jesus, and injuries done to his church by these Erastian and Antichristian usurpations of Prelacy, Supremacy and absolute power; and the defections of ministers in compliance therewith not being as yet confessed nor condemned, and our complaints and petitions offered to the late General Assembly, not being received nor regarded as we expected, which was a great grievance, and an addition to all our former complaints;—and yet being resolved to remain no longer in withdrawing as formerly, we think it altogether needful for our own exoneration, and for making our communion the more comfortable, and free of all accession to, or partaking with the guilt of these offences, which made us withdraw in former times; To offer and give in our testimony against all the wrongs done to Christ and this reformed covenanted church of Scotland, by the Popish, Prelatical and malignant faction, in their wicked overturning its blessed ancient reformation, rescinding the righteous laws, and breaking, burning and burying the holy covenants that fenced it, and establishing upon the ruins thereof abjured Prelacy, supremacy and tyranny, and by all the defections of ministers in compliance with, or submission to the same; such as, hearing of curates, taking any of the oaths and bonds repugnant to the covenants, embracing the indulgences and indemnities of tyrants, addressing for, and accepting of the late Popish toleration,

toleration, their lying bye from, or unfaithfulneſs in the exerciſe of their miniſtry in times of abounding ſnares, and their preſent offenſive omiſſions in not renewing the covenants, nor purging out all the Epiſcopal curates, &c. And particularly, we cannot forbear to teſtify (with all reverence and reſpect to your miniſtry, which now we offer and promiſe ſubjection to in the Lord) againſt your ſin of —.

Thus having given in our teſtimony againſt theſe ſins and all other defections and corruptions in this church; We proteſt that our preſent joining may not be interpreted an approving of any of theſe ſins, nor a condemning of, or receding from our former or preſent teſtimony againſt the ſame; and humbly plead, that this our teſtimony and proteſtation may be regiſtered in the books of Seſſion or Preſbytery.

Subſcribed by us the day of

AN

An Appendix.

As Michael Shields hath in the foregoing relation frequently made mention of diviſion and debates in their meetings, and hath related how matters were carried on by the miniſters and the majority of the people, (of which number he was one) but hath been ſparing in giving account of the grounds upon which the minor party went in oppoſition to the ſeveral parts of their managements in the two laſt years, (*viz.* 1689 & 1690) ſo it is ſuppoſed that it will be acceptable to many of the readers, and that it can juſtly give offence to none, to give here a brief relation, in their own words, of the reaſons wherefore a conſiderable number of the ſociety people did diſſent from and proteſt againſt the meaſures that were then followed; and as this will ſet the controverſies of that time in a more clear light, and give the reader a more full view, and an opportunity to judge whether the major or minor party in their conduct were moſt conſonant to, and conſiſtent with their former principles and practices while they were united; ſo it may contribute not a little to help the candid and impartial reader to judge of the future progreſs and proſecution of theſe debates and diviſions that have ſince inſued, the foundation of which was then laid; and there is a ſpecial connection with, and dependance that every thing hath upon its foundation: as that is good or bad, ſo will the ſuperſtructure readily be; ſo in this alſo.

Although the reaſons of their diſſent be publiſhed long ago in their declarations emitted at Sanquhar, in 1692, 1695, 1703, *&c.* and alſo in the Informatory Vindication, ſecond edition, P. 213 to 223; yet as the ſame is more fully demonſtrated and corroborated from ſcripture and acts of General Aſſemblies and Parliaments, in ſome ſteps of defection drawn up and agreed upon by a ſociety in Tinnald, with the aſſiſtance of Sir Robert Hamilton, *&c.* and by them ſent to ſocieties in ſeveral ſhires

ſhires who diſſented from the meaſures then followed, in the year 1691. in order to gather them together again into a General Correſpondence; which paper was further enlarged afterward; a brief ſummary of which it is ſuppoſed will not be unacceptable to the reader, together with ſome account of theſe matters, given by a few of thoſe old men who overlived the perſecution in their dying teſtimonies; eſpecially as theſe foreſaid declarations, *&c.* are not at hand to every one who may deſire information in theſe things.

A brief abſtract of which paper here follows.

WE—being refreſhed to hear that any of our ſuffering brethren are conſulting how we may take up, (in the Lord's ſtrength) our former ground again, after all our confuſions, wanderings, declinings and ſad diſtempers, partly occaſioned by the fatal endeavours of Meſſrs. Thomas Lining, Alexander Shields and William Boyd, and their accomplices, who ceaſed not ſince the arrival of the Prince of Orange by inſinuations, miſrepreſentations, and much ſubtilty and under-hand-dealing, to withdraw us from our former teſtimony and principles into an aſſociation, union, and concurrence with ſuch as our magiſtrates, againſt whom our covenants were made, and with their judicatories thus compacted; —and alſo into a ſinful union with backſlidden miniſters and their corrupt Aſſemblies, while not only guilty of many ſcandalous compliances, but vindicating and going on in their former practices, ſo far as occaſion offers, and their eccleſiaſtic courts (for moſt part) being compoſed of perſons, who by the conſtitutions of this church, ought not to be admitted as judges even in the loweſt of her judicatories.

Although it be matter of grief and ſore regret, that we have it to ſay, that theſe three forementioned men have had ſuch an hand in our late ſtrayings and preſent miſeries; yet they alone have not been the cauſe of it, but we ourſelves by our great and manifold ſins have provoked the Lord in his juſt and righteous judgments to make it our plague, and to puniſh us with ſuch unfaithfulneſs and unſtedfaſtneſs in theſe men, making them in many things ſnares and traps to us, and by the moſt politic indirect dealing imaginable, to draw us from theſe things formerly taught us by themſelves, whereby many

many of us have not only been left to walk in our own crooked ways and counſels, and to be a prey to our malignant bloody enemies, and ſubtle, imbittered, backſliden antagoniſts; but our own ſtrength is broken, our hearts faint, our hands are weakened, the godly grieved and ſtumbled, enemies on the right and left hand hardened and ſtrengthened, and the precious cauſe of Chriſt betrayed, and the name of our God blaſphemed, and his way evil ſpoken of:—Yet, we ſay, we are not a little revived and refreſhed in our ſad caſe to hear of any conſulting if again we might be honoured, in the Lord's ſtrength, to take up our former ground again, and after all our wanderings to return to our firſt Huſband:—Whereupon we determined, after ſome time ſeeking the Lord's council in it, to ſend ſome of our brethren with our mind unto you, if poſſibly we might be ſtrengthened of one another; with a commiſſion to conſult, conſent and concur in whatever may be for the raiſing up and carrying on of our former teſtimony in all its parts and pendicles, and to proteſt againſt, diſown and diſcountenance whatever may be found contradictory, or any way prejudicial to the ſame; and for the more ſafe going about of this, we earneſtly intreat, that before any thing be concluded, we may begin where we left off, that is, in ſetting days apart in humbling ourſelves, and mourning for our many wanderings and provocations, and caſting our ſad, dark and dead caſe before the Lord, and waiting and imploring him for his reconciled countenance with light and life, to bring us out of our deplorable condition, and to guide and aſſiſt us in all our motions and managements in proſecuting what is our preſent duty; For ſince our neglecting and ſlighting of this duty (in many of our meetings the two years paſt) we have never ſtept a right ſtep, nor been able to withſtand the ſmalleſt temptation, and all attempts of recovery have been broken in our hands.

None of us need be ignorant what ſubtile ways both the enemies without, with their falſe alarms, and thoſe within (particularly the three foreſaid men, with their accomplices) have taken to hurry, and precipitantly to involve us in their backſlidings, without giving us time to conſult either God and our own conſciences, or one another.—And that we may not be ſtrangers to one another's minds, we ſhall here give you ſome of the cauſes of the Lord's wrath, or ſteps of defection, moſt re-

lative (as we judge) to the preſent teſtimony. We have no freedom to diminiſh or reſile from the matter here condeſcended on, eſpecially in theſe articles relative to our former ſtated teſtimonies; neither to join in fellowſhip or conſtituted meetings with any who are, or have been involved in, or pleading for any of the old or late defections; except our conſciences be ſatisfied by their poſitive condemning and teſtifying their reſentment of the ſame before God and the world, by their real forſaking theſe defections, and taking up our former ground and teſtimony, relative both to magiſtrates and miniſters, againſt right and left hand errors and oppoſers. As this was our former practice while jointly carrying on the public work, and wherein the Lord was graciouſly pleaſed to own us,—and here we reſolve, in the Lord's ſtrength, to ſtand, though alone, till he plead the controverſy of Zion, vindicate his own cauſe and people, for *wiſdom will be juſtified of her children.*

Firſt, Some of us ſhamefully ſuffering ourſelves to be led away with Mr. Boyd in that ſinful act in being among the firſt in the nation that proclaimed the Declaration of the Prince of Orange, and to own it as the ſtate of our quarrel, who was matched to a daughter of the bloody Popiſh Duke of York, educated in the family of her uncle Charles, and ever ſince adhered to theſe abjured, prelatic principles;—and while he is aſſociated with all the Popiſh and bloody enemies abroad, (France and his aſſociates only excepted) yea, even that ravenous eagle, the Tyrant of Auſtria, who is the Pope's general, while ſwiming in the blood of the Proteſtants of Hungary; and with that old devouring leviathan, the King of Spain; and now alſo with that little tyger of Savoy: Likewiſe his unconcernedneſs theſe many years with the overturning of the work of God in theſe lands, until his own intereſt was touched, and till called and encouraged by the ſtated enemies and very actors of our ſad cataſtrophe, and he being bound to the ſame perſons in the ſame deſigns in his Declaration for Scotland; whereby a wide breach is broken through the very vitals of our ſacred covenants and ſolemn engagements, and our noble reformation, for the introduction of all the enemies thereof, and that upon their bare aſſiſting of him, and caſting off the friends thereof, ——In which declaration, ſhewing the reaſon of his appearing

pearing in arms in this kingdom, he ſtates himſelf in an oppoſition to the covenants and ſolemn engagements of the three kingdoms, and labours therein to bury every part of our teſtimony, *viz.*

1*ſt*, Our teſtimony againſt King James VII. (ſo called) for paragraph 5th, he ſays, "It is alſo manifeſt "and notorious, that His Majeſty (King James) was, "upon his coming to the crown, received and acknowledged by all the ſubjects of Scotland, England and "Ireland, without the leaſt oppoſition, tho' he made "open profeſſion of the Popiſh religion, *&c.*"

2*dly*, Our teſtimony againſt all oaths contrary to our covenants; for *ibidem*, and elſewhere in it, he "declares it to be a ground of his undertaking, The "breach of the oaths of Allegiance, Supremacy and "Teſt."

3*dly*, Our teſtimony againſt Prelacy the daughter of Popery; for beſides the foreſaid oaths, he declares through his whole declaration, that his "undertaking "as it was at the inſtigation of the reverend fathers in "God, the Lords Spiritual, (as he calls them) ſo it was "for the maintenance of the (Prelatic) church of England."

5*thly*, Our teſtimony againſt toleration; for paragraph 4th, he "promiſes ſuch laws for covering and ſecuring "all ſuch as will live peaceably under the government "—from all perſecution upon the account of their religion," even Papiſts themſelves not excepted.

5*thly*, Our teſtimony againſt promiſcuous aſſociations; for in the end of his declaration, he "invites all perſons, all Peers of the realm, both ſpiritual and temporal; all lords lieutenants; all gentlemen, citizens "and commons of all ranks to aſſiſt."

By eſpouſing of which declaration, as we relinquiſhed our former teſtimony, ſo it was alſo contrary to the law of God, Deut. xvii. 14, 15. 2 Chron. xix. 2. and contrary to the act of the Gen. Aſſembly, 1647. ſeſſ. 15th, and the declaration of the Gen. Aſſembly, 1648, and contrary to ſeveral acts of parliament, particularly act 15th, Feb. 7th, 1649. A

Second ſtep of defection, and cauſe of mourning was that many of us were ſo far prevailed upon by the ſubtle draughts, and fair pretences of the above named three miniſters, and our own ſin and folly, to come to Leſmahagow, in order to renew our covenants, *&c.*—Where-

by inſtead of turning us unto the Lord, they laboured moſt deceitfully to turn us from the moſt part of our Teſtimony, and to ſet us in the way back again to Egypt bringing us again under obedience and ſubjection unto the old bloody perjured enemies of Chriſt, his cauſe and people (whom formerly we had juſtly rejected) who had made an act that all who had ſerved in the army under the late popiſh tyrant ſhould lay down their arms, and enliſt again under the prelatic banner of the prince of Orange, with aſſurance that they ſhould be paid their arrears: Thus the bloody butchers were juſtified in all that they had done, and declared capable of truſt.

As alſo they induced ſome of us to take up arms, and march into Edinburgh to guard the foreſaid bloody men, in a Convention of Eſtates (ſo called) together with the prime ring-leaders, favourers, and followers of the indulged and tolerated party; where to our ſin and ſhame we were prevailed upon to ſtay until the foreſaid enemies, with their accomplices had eſtabliſhed themſelves again in the government, and the exerciſe of it; and had made choice of the Prince and Princeſs of Orange to be their King and Queen, and had proclaimed him King over this Covenanted Land; and had authorized ſome of their number (particularly Sir John Dalrymple who had a principal hand in ſhedding the precious blood of great and worthy Mr. James Renwick) who was ſent to preſent to them the offer of the crown of Scotland, and their admiſſion to the exerciſe of the government, notwithſtanding of many diſcoveries of their ſtated oppoſition to the work of God (mentioned article 1ſt,) and their being at the ſame time crowned and anointed King and Queen in England, and admitted to the exerciſe of government there, according to all the Engliſh popiſh ceremonies, and upon their ſolemn oath upon their knees before the altar, with the book in their hand (according to the Coronation Oath adminiſtred to them by the Archbiſhop of Canterbury) "To defend and protect "the laws, cuſtoms, and liberties of the preſent Church "of England, confered upon her by the laws of their "religious predeceſſors, eſpecially by their glorious pre-"deceſſor King St. Edward, according to the law of "God (thus acknowledging Prelacy of divine right) "and the true profeſſion of the goſpel, firmly eſtabliſh-"ed in this kingdom, and all the Canonical privileges "of the biſhops, and the churches under their govern-

"ment,

" ment, *&c.*"—And upon theſe terms the biſhops, nobility, and gentry ſware allegiance to them. Yet nevertheleſs he is inveſted with the crown and government of this covenanted land by our pretended repreſentatives (or rather by many of the murderers) who had many ways forefaulted all right to rule or to chooſe a king over the land and people of the Lord, which they had ſo long perſecuted, and for which we had long ſince juſtly rejected them, with all their aſſociates, being without theſe neceſſary qualifications, *viz.* of known integrity, approven fidelity, conſtant affection, and zeal to the cauſe of God, which the word of God, and our ſolemn and inviolable covenant engagements, and acts of parliament require in all judges ſuperior or inferior. Among many others that might be quoted, ſee Deut. xvii. 14, 15. Exod. xviii. 21,——25. 2 Sam. xxiii. 3, 4. Neh. vii. 2. and xiii. 3. As alſo ſeveral acts of parliament, particularly Act 5th, June 11th, 1640. Act 15th, Feb. 4th, 1649. Wherein they enact, ordain, and declare, " 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 by, and at our the foreſaid (Co- " ronation) Oath aſſure, and declare by his ſolemn oath, " under his hand and ſeal, his allowance of the National " and Solemn League and Covenant, and obligation to " proſecute the ſame in his ſtation and calling, and that " he ſhall for himſelf and his ſucceſſors conſent and a- " gree to acts of parliament enjoining the ſame,—and " that he ſhall never make oppoſition to theſe.——It is " alſo declared, enacted, and ordained, that before the " King be admitted to the exerciſe of the royal power, " he ſhall leave all counſel and counſellors prejudicial to " religion and the covenants," *&c.* and Act 18th, Jan. 23d, 1649. Wherein they ſay, " And whereas the E- " ſtates of Parliament, are convinced in their conſcience, " from the word of God, from their Solemn League and " Covenant, eſpecially from the 2d, 4th, and 5th Arti- " cles thereof, and from ſad and dear bought experi- " ence, that the malignant dealing of ſome, and the " prophane looſe walking of others who have been mem- " bers of judicatories, and employed in places of power " and truſt, have been a chief cauſe of all the evils, both " of ſin and puniſhment, under which the land groans, " and that the Lord in his word, requires, that thoſe " who judge, and bear charge among his people, ſhould

" not

"not only be able men, but such as fear God, hate co-
"vetousness, and deal truly; and that it is of special
"importance, for the remedy of all our evils, and for
"securing and advancing religion and righteousness,—
"for removing the judgments of God,—and for pro-
"curing the blessing of God through the whole land,
"that men not only of known ability, but also of ap-
"proven integrity, and constant affection to the cause,
"and of a good and Christian conversation, be intrusted
"in all judicatories, and places of power and trust, ac-
"cording to the seventh desire of the Commissioners of
"the church given in to the last Parliament, &c. There-
"fore the Estates of Parliament remembering well the
"laudable precedent of the Parliaments 1641 and 1646,
"and several others for purgation of the judicatories and
"places of trust.——They do in pursuance of their so-
"lemn acknowledgment, performance of their vows to
"God, declaration emitted to the world, and for sa-
"tisfying the Kirk's just desires, for purgation and re-
"formation of our Judicatories;——The Estates of Par-
"liament upon these, and many other great and weigh-
"ty considerations,—therefore declare, enact, and or-
"dain, that all the officers of state,—members of parlia-
"ment,—commitees,—secret council,—session,—justice
"courts, &c. &c.—who were guilty of any of the
"faults contained in the four classes after mentioned,
"shall be removed and secluded from public trust."—
See also the act of the General Assembly, session 13th, June 17th, 1646. and July 20th, 1649.

By all which it is evident that it is contrary to the law of God, and to the laws of this land, that either men of no religion, or of a false religion should be chosen to be ruler or magistrate in a reformed covenanted land, nor owned as such; the very light of nature teaches all nations in the world to provide that none have a right to rule over them who are of a different religion from what is established amongst them; and the Prelatick church of England are very circumspect in this. And if the Parliament, and the General Assembly had just cause in the year 1649, the one by the act of Classes, to put out of office, and the other ecclesiastically to censure these who joined and assisted in the engagement (in 1648.) for K. Charles I. his restoration: How much more was there just cause to degrade and censure those

who

who for twenty-eight years had assisted the two tyrants to oppress, persecute, and murder thousands of the best subjects?

Thirdly, Our suffering ourselves to be so far prevailed upon as to be hurried upon so great a work, as the renewing of our Covenants, Acknowledgment of Sins, &c. without taking time to consider the great work we were going about, whereby these three men got opportunity to stuff some things into our acknowledgment, as sins, which we did, and still do judge to be our duty: As also mentioning some things in ambiguous terms, whereby they might afterward explain it as they pleased particularly in that article concerning the magistrate*, they now impudently averr that we espoused the interest of the prince, and that we appropriated and applied that article in the National Covenant concerning the King to his highness, if he should be called to the government: whereas there is nothing more false, and several things do they now most falsly assert.

A *Fourth* step of defection, and cause of mourning, was our sinful tampering with these three foresaid men, and others with them, disaffected to the cause of God, and our stated testimony anent the raising of a regiment, under the conduct of William Clelland, one of Argyle's officers: who, though once one with us, yet was afterward a great opposer of our testimony and a reproacher of great Mr. James Renwick, and our faithful brethren, both at home, and abroad: Whereby a great part of us were ensnared into a sinful and scandalous association in war, with all the perjured, murdering, backsliden, and apostate enemies of Christ, both at home, and abroad (France

* In another paper intitled Steps of Defection, they say there "was no such thing heard or understood, before, or at that time "by the bulk or body of the well meaning people who were "then present, and swore the covenant, for the administrator "(Mr. Lining) expressly declared, that as they then took it, "that they meaned magistracy in the general, and had no prospect to any in particular, but such only as according to the covenant they could own, when it should please the Lord to "grant us such.——Whereby the people were cheated and deceived."—It is observable that the printed copy differs from the subscribed roll in some places, and many of these who subscribed it that night, and had no time to read it again, did not fully understand it, neither had they ever opportunity to see it afterward, as it was in Mr. Lining's custody until his death.

(France and his associates, only excepted) * contrary to Deut. xxiii. 9,——14. 2 Chron. xviii. 3. with chap. xix. 2. Isa. viii. 12, 13. And likewise to an owning of their civil courts, paying cess and other impositions imposed and employed for the maintainance of the Prince and Princess of Orange, now become the head of the Malignants, Prelatic, Indulged, Toleratists, and Sectarians in these lands. Thereby acknowledging him and them, and advancing, defending, and securing them and their confederates in their designs, both at home and abroad; and thus venturing our stock in one vessel, *Casting in our lot, and having one purse with them*, Like that in Prov. i. 14. But such as will regard the Lord's counsel, ought to regard what follows, ver. 15. *My son walk not in the way with them, refrain thy foot from their path.* It is a strengthening of the hand of evil doers, and a sacrilegious robbing of God of our means and estates, giving that to his enemies which we gave away to him, in our sacred covenants; contrary to the zeal we owe to our

* This appears to have respect to the Treaty of Union entered into at the Hague, Feb. —, 1691. by the confederate princes and allies, (*viz* The emperor of Germany, the kings of Spain, England, &c.) wherein they say. "We solemnly protest before God—that we will never break off this Union, nor make "peace with Lewis the XIV. of France, till the following Articles be executed: To the obligation of which, we will oblige ourselves for ever. First, Till he has made reparation to "the *Holy See* (of Rome) for whatsoever he has acted against "it; and until he has annulled and made void all these infamous "proceedings against the *Holy Father*, Innocent the XI."—— And in the prosecution of this treaty Angus's regiment, among others (having Mr. Shields as their minister) was sent over to Flanders to the combined army, where he, and they continued several years, until they were weary of him, and he of them. May it not seem strange, that Mr Shields and so many of the persecuted society people, whom he had induced to join in the regiment, (*to go and pull down the gates of Rome*, &c.) should now be engaged in such a cause, and associate with such company as the allied army, espousing the Pope's cause? Yea even zealous, godly and learned Mr. Alexander Shields, who had so often preached, written and protested against association and confederacy with Popish Idolaters, Hereticks, Malignants or Sectarians, and even had written the Declaration which at the raising of the regiment they sent to their officers, May 13th, 1689. and afterward emitted at Dumblain, &c. (which is inserted page 194) and it is probable that verbally he would yet protest against the same, whatever his practice was. May not this be a Beacon to warn all, how dangerous it is to think that verbally protesting against any sinful course, while practically it is counter-acted.

and

our Covenanted Husband, and the honour of his house, by not only strengthening and securing his enemies in the possession of it, after he had once again shaken their foundations; but inviting them, and prostituting our estates and consciences to them, not only playing the harlot with them, but hireing them when they have done, like these people of old, Ezek. xvi. 33, 34. *They give gifts to all whores, but thou giveſt gifts to all thy lovers, and hireſt them that they may come unto thee on every ſide for thy whoredom.*—And what could be their hire if it was not their taxations they paid, and money they sent to them, 2 Kings xvi. 8. and chap. xviii. 14, 15. Hoſ. viii. 9, 10. It is an helping, strengthening, supporting, and furnishing them, contrary to 2 Chron. xix. 2. Isa. lxv. 11. Jer. xxiii. 14. Contrary to all our former resolutions, oaths, confessions, humiliations, and to the Solemn League and Covenant Article 4th and 6th.—Contrary to the Acts of the General Assembly 1647, session 15th, Where it is called a joining hand in hand,—a casting in their lots, and interweaving their interests in way of combination with the popish, prelatic, and malignant party: And contrary to the Declaration of the General Assembly 1648, session 21. ordaining "that this church "and kingdom concur not in, nor any way assist this

 "present

and contradicted, will be a sufficient testimony against the same in the sight of God, or avert his righteous judgments. This appears to be eminently exemplified in the case of pious Mr. Alexander Shields, and others: Who after the raising of Angus's regiment, he continued with them in Scotland and Flanders a number of years, with much grief, toil, and contempt from these he was associated with. Returning to Scotland, he was for a short time settled in St. Andrews, in association with many of the old Episcopal Curates there, who hated, mocked, and derided him, and he, and they entered into a disputation in the Episcopal controversy, by word, and write (some of which is yet extant) until Darien Expedition occured, when to be quite of him, they procured him to be chosen (with others) to go and plant a flourishing church in the Wilds of Caledonia, in company with the most hopeless stuff to make it of, that Scotland, or perhaps the world, afforded, and what comfort he had therein, Mr Borland's account of Darien bears witness. So, as many then counted it his sin to join and draw many others with him, into association and confederacy with malignants it was also his plague and punishment in an eminent way, to be associated and connected with such, until his death. Whether his principles and conduct, at that time, or the sentiments and conduct of Mr. Renwick and the Societies (in a similar case 1683. with respect to Argyle's association) was most agreeable to the rule, must be left with the reader.

"preſent engagement, as they would not partake in o-
"ther men's ſins, and to receive of their plagues; but
"that by the grace and aſſiſtance of Chriſt they ſtedfaſt-
"ly reſolve to ſuffer the rod of the wicked, and the ut-
"termoſt which men's malice can inflict upon them, ra-
"ther than to put forth their hand to iniquity."

A *Fifth* ſtep of defection was that ſome of us concurred in the ſinful levies—for proſecuting this moſt impious confederacy bottomed on their late declaration againſt that bloody tyrant of France, whereof one of the cauſes is the wrongs done to their confederates abroad, who are the chief ſupporters of Antichriſt—in which they are aſſiſted not only by the body of the land, but by their clergy, who not only in their doctrine encourage them therein, but hound out their elders, who moſt barbarouſly, on the Lord's day, break in upon poor men's houſes with their mouths full of bloody oaths, in ſome places interrupting family-worſhip, and violently drawing ſervants from their maſters, and children from their parents, and parents from their children and wives, cruelly binding, guarding, and ſelling their covenanted brethren to bloody enemies for ſupporting their deſigns and intereſts †. And ſome of us taking commiſſions from the country gentlemen, ſome of whom were guilty of blood, and generally all, of the public defections, and oppoſers of our Teſtimony: And ſome were prevailed with to take money from them, others keeping country mixed muſters, by virtue of Council orders, in ſuch a way as that they could not ſuppoſe that it was in obedience to them,—and look upon us as their militia. And thus many of us by their wiles and alarms, the laſt year at Glaſgow, were ſadly enſnared and involved in an aſſociation with the very bulk of all the indulged, complying and perſecuting party in the Weſt: Contrary to both ſcripture and the acts of the church of Scotland as is ſhewed in the

† Mr. William Boyd that he might ſhew what kindneſs he had for his old friends, and that he might be behind none in this, after he was ſettled in Dalry, cauſed his elders in the night, to take out of their beds ſeverals of the diſſenters in that pariſh, and upon the Sabbath morning ſhaved the old men's beards to make them appear young that ſo they might paſs for the pariſh, and ſo preſented them to the recruiting officer: But was in this diſappointed, as the officer would not accept o' them becauſe of their age. Such was a part of the reward Mr. Boyd returned to his old friends for contributing ſo largely for his maintenance while he was abroad, as is before related.

the fourth ſtep. And the Acknowledgment of Sins is ſo clear and peremptory in this, that it may make us to tremble to think on it, whereby we are ſtanding under ſuch a ſentence, which we deliberately, and ſincerely paſt on ourſelves, that if ever we did any more join with the people of theſe abominations, the Lord would conſume us, till there were no remnant nor eſcaping, *&c.* and this was done, not in raſhneſs, but with a ſcripture precedent, Ezra xi. 12, 13. and experience hath made this clear to us, we never mingled ourſelves amongſt malignants, but the Lord purſued us with indignation, and ſtamped that ſin in legible characters upon our judgment, witneſs, Dumbar, Inverkithin, Pentland, Bothwel, *&c.*

A *Sixth* ſtep of our defection and cauſe of mourning, was our ſuffering the moſt material points of our teſtimony, not only to be controverted, but publicly oppoſed and diſowned by theſe three foreſaid miniſters and their accomplices, without a ſuitable teſtimony againſt them, whereby many of us have been brought to lick up our vomit again: Severals taking occaſion to traffick with them ſeveral ways, as if it had been lawful to cut and carve in the Lord's matters, and ſo gradually, many of us were brought in to hear, and plead for the backſliden miniſters, both in Scotland, and theſe from Ireland, and to pay them ſtipends; and ſome of us who were choſen elders, by our then faithful miniſters, accepted of new admiſſions from them, notwithſtanding of all their old and late defections, which in part, are to be ſeen in our Informatory Vindication, and the Teſtimony againſt the toleration, given in by worthy Mr. Renwick ‡. And partly now legible in vive characters on all their proceedings. Thus we were brought to an owning of their corrupt and null Aſſemblies, Synods, Preſbyteries, and Seſſions, in our petitions, proteſtations, and otherwiſe: Although they were many ways contrary to the conſtitution of our former faithful General Aſſemblies, and to the comely order of this church: by which men guilty of ſcandal, or bringing in novations to the church, pleading for, conſenting, or adviſing to ſinful compliances, or who were malignants and diſaffected to the cauſe of God, or who by their counſel, countenance or approbation, make themſelves acceſſory to any evil courſe were

‡ And is now further vindicat in Mr. Renwick's Teſtimony vindicated.

declared incapable of the meaneſt office in Chriſt's houſe, or of truſt in the ſmalleſt of his judicatories; but rather, by his law, and the laws of our covenanted church, to be brought before Chriſt's bar (not to judge but) to be judged, for their ſo many ways betraying, and deſerting his cauſe, perſecuting, and reproaching his friends, and ſtrengthening his enemies, burying our ſacred covenants and ſolemn engagements, and all the faithful teſtimonies and proteſtations of this church, and of the Lord's people in this land, with all the Acts of our faithful General Aſſemblies, Cauſes of the Lord's Wrath, *&c.* and now impudently and ſtubornly defending and pleading for their former, and later offences, and continuing therein, *No man repenting of his wickedneſs, in ſaying, what have I done,* Jer. viii. 6. Mal. i. 6, 7. and ii. 17. and iii. 8.

In former lawful and faithful General Aſſemblies the ground of their ſitting, voting and proceedings uſed, and ought to be the word of God, (Acts xv. 28. and xvi. 4.) the Confeſſion of Faith, Covenants, Acknowledgment of Sins, and Engagement to duties, with the Acts of former free and faithful General Aſſemblies, for which ſee the General Aſſembly, 1638. ſeſſion 26th, Decem. 20th.——But now the ground of all their moving, voting, and proceedings in their pretended Aſſemblies, is is their new, cliped, Eraſtian platform of Preſbyterian government (ſo called) with their King's letters and recommendations. See Brown's hiſtory of the Indulgence page 116. Object. 3.

Former Aſſemblies as they revived and ratified what former free and lawful General Aſſemblies did, ſo they annulled all former corrupt Aſſemblies. See Aſſembly 1638. who made many laudable acts. But now their acts are, at leaſt practically, and by many doctrinally condemned, and corrupt Aſſemblies approved, *viz.* theſe at Dundee, St. Andrews, and Edinburgh, Anno 1652. who juſtified and enacted, the taking in the malignants into places of power and truſt, and perſecuted their faithful proteſting brethren. And now, as not ſatisfied to tread in the ſame ſteps, their preſent pretended Aſſemblies labour by many ſtages to ſurpaſs them, notwithſtanding of the unparalleled perjury, bloodſhed, *&c.* and the Lord's wrath written in legible characters upon that defection: As witneſs their juſtifying, and refuſing to condemn their pretended Preſbyteries at Sanct-Andrews, Dip-

Dindeugh, and Edinburgh, for ſuſpending faithful preachers, as worthy Cameron, *&c.* And their ſeveral pretended aſſemblies after Bothwel for ſuppreſſing of faithful field-preaching; wherein they tranſacted and compacted with the then tyrant for accepting of Eraſtian indulgences, and drawing up of blaſphemous addreſſes, *&c.*

Former free and lawful General Aſſemblies, uſed diligently to ſearch for and purge out all who were under ſcandal, and guilty of bringing in novations, and carrying on defection contrary to the ſworn covenant and lawfully eſtabliſhed acts and conſtitutions of this church, founded upon the word of God; According to the order (in the 3d General Aſſembly of this church, *July* 1562) "that at the entry of every Aſſembly, the firſt "work is to be anent trying and purging the members "thereof, requiring all, as they render the glory of God "and the well of this kirk, and as they ſhall be anſwer"able to God,—that they give in the names and faults "of any of their number, for removing of the ſlander "which ariſes to the whole kirk by their admitting of "ſuch members. Likeas, it is appointed that any to "whoſe charge any thing is laid, ought to be removed "out of the Aſſembly until his cauſe be tried; and if "he be convicted, he can have no voice until the kirk "receive ſatisfaction."—The like is to be ſeen in the ſubſequent Aſſemblies, March 1568. Auguſt 6th, 1578. and 1580, 1581. Alſo all the faithful Aſſemblies of this church ſince the glorious reformation in the year 1638, have followed the ſame ſteps.

What ſhall we think of the pretended Aſſemblies now? where none are admitted to ſit amongſt them, but ſuch as are openly ſcandalous, guilty of both former and preſent defections, directly contrary to the ſolemn oaths, engagements, conſtitutions and acts of the church of Scotland; and witneſſed againſt by many declarations, remonſtrances, proteſtations, and blood and ſufferings. Witneſs their admitting the whole train of the indulged, addreſſers for the toleration, bonders, teſters, curate-hearers, who communicate with them; and ſuch as rode with the enemies for apprehending the Lord's people, ſat on their aſſizes, guarded them to ſcaffolds, *&c.* are admitted as elders, without repentance required or given; and of compliers with, and connivers at ſuch, almoſt the whole of their Aſſembly conſiſts. While they

debarred

debarred Meſſrs. Lining, Shields and Boyd for their former profeſſed faithfulneſs, till they acknowledged (by receiving patiently a reprimand for) their former faithfulneſs, as ſchiſm, diviſion, &c. and ſubmitted and ſubjected themſelves, their lives and doctrine to the cognizance of their judicatories; thus acknowledging duty to be ſin, and ſin to be duty ‡, Mal. iii. 14, 15.

Ah! may it not be a queſtion, Whether Prelates or pretended Preſbyterians have given the deepeſt wound to the church of Scotland, and ſhall have the greateſt challenge when the chief Shepherd comes to plead the controverſies of Zion?

In former times, after a defection the records of church and ſtate, were, and ought to be reviſed, and ſeen what we had attained unto, and thus entered ourſelves heirs unto our fathers, and built upon the good old foundation, (the rubiſh being once taken away) and ſo gone on to more perfection: But now we enter not with our old Maſter, Chriſt, but take a new charter from the open enemies and their accomplices, and enter not ourſelves heirs to our fathers purchaſe through blood and wreſtlings, but to our grandfathers, as broken heirs to evite the debt of the many vows and engagements,—and teſtimonies that we and the whole land are inviolably engaged unto: Far from the zeal and faithfulneſs of our fathers in the General Aſſembly 1638, who notwithſtanding of all the threatenings of enemies, did approve and revive the acts of former free and lawful General Aſſemblies, and condemned and annulled corrupt Aſſemblies, renewed the National Covenant,—depoſed and excommunicated the biſhops, &c. Whereas now many curates, guilty of perjury, blood and perſecution, are continued,—by virtue of a letter from their King, and acts of their pretended parliament, and platform of their Preſbyteries, ſo called,—and enacting in their pretended General Aſſembly, 1690, that they would depoſe no incumbents ſimply for their judgment anent church-government; and as is yet more palpable in their practice ſince, the civil powers ordaining collectors ſome of whom are Preſbyterian elders, (ſo called) to lift the vacant ſtipends for the maintenance of the Prelates and

‡ The reader will remember and compare this with the propoſal made by Mr. Lining at the Gen. Meet. Sept. 25th, 1689. and what was agreed upon by the meeting upon the 6th and 7th of November the ſame year.

and ſome profane Curates, contrary to our 2d book of diſcipline, chap. ix. which calls ſuch things deteſtable ſacrilege.—Yea theſe hirelings and ſoul-deſtroyers are ſuffered to preach, and adminiſter both ſacraments, and enjoy benefices, beſides meeting-houſes, in moſt places of the land; and collectors, ſurveyors, chamberlains, vintners, *&c.* in Charles' and York's time, who for ſeeming hazard durſt not preach the goſpel, are now admitted without a challenge.

In former times, after a defection, the renewing of our ſolemn covenants was always ſet about. This church according to many ſcripture precedents, Deut. xxix. 1, —12. Joſh. xxiv. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3. and xv. 12,—15. 2 Kings xi. 17. and that as a fit and excellent mean to attain the favour of God, and to unite and ſtrengthen them againſt the common enemy, and for the preſervation and propagation of the true reformed religion; as in the years 1557, 1559, 1560, 1586, 1638, 1639, 1643, and 1648. with the acknowledgment of Sins and Engagement to Duties.

Now what a dreadful and aſtoniſhing thing is it, that theſe ſolemn vows and covenants, the marriage contract betwixt Chriſt and theſe nations; a covenant to which Chriſt's witneſſes did always adhere, and for which they ſuffered, ſhould not only be burnt by enemies; but by theſe called Preſbyterian miniſters and profeſſors, now vilified, oppoſed and buried?

Ah! we have not kept up a due impreſſion of our ſolemn covenants with God, nor endeavoured to perform them; therefore hath given up the moſt part to a palpable diſowning, burying, renouncing and abjuring of them. The curſed thing which was before ſecretly with us, is now pleaded and diſputed for by our pretended ſeers and watchmen, called Preſbyterians. We have dealt treacherouſly with God, therefore he has given us up to treacherous dealers.

Covenant-breaking is a moſt dangerous and dreadful ſin, for which great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled againſt theſe lands becauſe of forſaking and deſpiſing the covenant, and often condemned, threatened, and ſeverely plagued of God, Pſalm lxxv iii. 34,—37. Jer. xi. 10. 2 Kings xvii. 15. Lev. xxvi. 25. Deut. xxix. 20,—24. Jer. xxii. 8, 9. Ezek. xvii. 15. Amos i. 9. Joſh. vii. 11, 12. 2 Sam. xxii. 1, 2.

A ſeventh

A ſeventh ſtep of defection and cauſe of mourning, is our not ſtudying perſonal reformation, and going before one another in the example of a real reformation: But rather many have been bad examples of deformation in our practices,—therefore the holy and jealous God has given us up to build again the things which we once deſtroyed, and to an avowed diſowning of our covenanted reformation. Neither endeavoured we, while God's candle ſhined upon our tabernacle, and his preſence and protection followed us in the wilderneſs as a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, to get our caſe ſearched and diſcovered, and our hearts ſprinkled from an evil conſcience; therefore moſt of us are given up to conſcience-waſting ſins. We have not drawn with joy from our wells of ſalvation while they were open, and running in pure and powerful ordinances; therefore God hath ſuffered, firſt the Philiſtines, and now our profeſſing, backſliding, and backbiting brethren to ſtop theſe wells.

An eight ſtep of defection and cauſe of mourning, is our promiſcuous admitting of ſeverals into our meetings and ſocieties, while known to be guilty of ſome one or more of theſe things, without any challenge or evidence of their ſenſe of, or ſorrow for the ſame; particularly admitting ſuch as ſtole away from Angus's regiment, or laid down their charge in it, without giving a teſtimony againſt it, and taking up their former ground and the good old way of managing it;—and likewiſe hearing and calling theſe three miniſters after all the diſcoveries of their relinquiſhing and betraying the cauſe;—and our ſecurity, impenitency, obſtinacy and incorrigibleneſs under all the dreadful tokens of the Lord's indignation againſt us becauſe of the ſame; ſo that while he continues to ſmite us, we are ſo far from humbling ourſelves that we look with an evil eye upon any that out of conſcience diſowns, or diſcountenances us in theſe courſes, ſo that we wax worſe and worſe, and ſin more and more, as if we had been delivered to commit all theſe abominations, Jer. viii. 5, 6, 7. Iſa, xlii. 23, 24, 25. Lev. xxvi. 14,—39.

Yea, a toleration of all errors, hereſies and blaſphemies is now promoted and pleaded for, and connived at, notwithſtanding the clear light of the ſcripture to the contrary, and alſo of reaſon both human and divine,—as is evident in many ſcriptures, particularly Gen. xxxv. 2, 3, 4. Exod. xxiii. 32, 33. chap. xxxiv. 12,—15. Deut.

Deut. vii. 2,—6, 25, 26. Josh. xxii. 10,—21. Deut. xiii. Psal. ci. Ezek. xliii. 7, 8. Zech. xiii. 2. John. ii. 15, 16. Rom. xiii. 3, 4. Rev. ii. It is contrary also to the Larger Catechism, in the 2d command; and to the Confession of Faith, chap. 20. § 4. and chap. 23. § 3. and contrary to our solemnly sworn national covenants, which are inviolably binding. Is a toleration of error the performing of these vows of God upon us? or is it not rather the way to cast loose the reformed religion in Scotland, to hinder the reformation of England, to mar uniformity in one confession of faith, *&c?* Shall we hereby *extirpate Prelacy, Erastianism, superstition, heresy, schism, profaneness, and whatsoever is contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness?* Or is it not rather a nursing them on our breasts, and dandling them upon our knees? Is this to *free ourselves of the guilt of other men's sins?* Or is it not rather to partake with them therein, and so to partake of their plagues? Shall by this *the Lord be one, and his name one in the three kingdoms?* Is it not rather to multiply our gods according to the number of our cities? Ezek. xvii. 18, 19. Neh. v. 13.

As a toleration was not then established by law, but only projected and pled for; it may not be improper here to give a few extracts from the dying testimonies of some of these old men, who lived until about the commencement thereof: Particularly (for brevity's sake) the dying testimony of old *John Wilson*, gardener in the shire of Air, dated at *Busbee, April* 10*th*, 1710. wherein he says:

——NEITHER dare I acknowledge these ministers to be faithful who complied with Prelacy, or the indulgence, or any who came in under the sconce of York's abominable toleration, and have not given a faithful testimony against the same. Very unlike the faithful testimonies of our faithful ministers in the times of purity; and especially that testimony given by the ministers of Perth and Fife against Cromwell's toleration; and the testimony of the General Assembly in their Declaration and Exhortation to their brethren in England. They say, "What is liberty of conscience, but liberty of error, scandal, schism, heresy, dishonour of God, op-

"poſing the truth, hindering reformation, ſeducing of "others, *&c.?*" And the miniſters of the county Palatine of Lancaſter in their harmonious teſtimony againſt toleration, ſubſcribed by them *March 7th*, 1647, do fitly add, "That a toleration is the putting a ſword in a mad "man's hand, a cup of poiſon in the hand of a child, a "letting looſe of madmen with firebrands in their hands, "an appointing of a city of refuge in men's conſciences "for the devil to flee to, and a laying of a ſtumbling-"block before the blind, a proclaiming liberty for the "wolves to come into Chriſt's fold, to prey upon his "lambs; a toleration of ſoul-murder, the greateſt of all "murder, *&c.*" Therefore I durſt not ſay a confederacy with, nor hear ſuch miniſters, nor own them as faithful miniſters;—becauſe they have never as yet laid down a cleanly way to purge the church of Scotland of all the abominable things that have been committed therein; and any amongſt them that appear to be more faithful and tender-hearted than others, they dare not uſe their freedom, for fear of being put out of their ſynagogue: So that now the church of Scotland ſeems to be in as ſad a caſe as ever ſhe was in, when by act of parliament they have ſold away all theſe noble rights both of church and ſtate that were ſo dearly conquiſhed in our father's days.

O how dreadful wickedneſs is in that ſinful union betwixt Scotland and England! The nobility of Scotland have given away their power to the beaſt.—And oh! how ſad! that ſo few of them have had a heart to give faithful teſtimony againſt the ſame; and any miniſters that are more free and faithful in giving warning to the poor miſled people, all the reſt are crying out againſt them with deſpite.—Therefore I leave my Proteſtation and teſtimony againſt all, both in church and ſtate, who have tranſacted, aſſiſted, conſented to or connived with them that did it, and that have not in their place and ſtation teſtified againſt it, for theſe have given their conſent to it in leſs or more: Yea, they are all guilty before the Lord who are not humbled and mourning before the Lord for the ſame.

Prelacy brake down and burnt our glorious covenanted reformation, and this baſtard Eraſtian Preſbytery hath buried it in deep forgetfulneſs. But I die in the faith of it, that the burying of it ſhall hereafter be its glorious reſurrection. But I am ſure of this, that there are ſad

days

days abiding Scotland before our Lord return to it again to build his ruined work. Blood, blood ſhall be ſhed in plenty in Scotland, for the innocent blood ſhed therein.——Thus far with mine own hand; but being ſo weak and bed-faſt, I muſt now uſe the hand of another.

Now having briefly told what I own and what I diſown, I think fit in the next place, to give an account when the Lord began to take a dealing with my ſoul which in all humility I deſire only to do for his glory, and to provoke others who ſhall ariſe, to fall in love with my kind Lord.

If ever I got good of the goſpel, it was under the miniſtry of that great and ſhining light Mr. William Guthrie. O! how ſweet did the Lord make the free offers of himſelf to my ſoul by dear Mr. Guthrie; ſo that after the miniſters, but eſpecially he, were caſt out of their churches, it was very ſad and heavy for me to bear. So my dear miniſter being removed, I began to enter into ſolemn covenanting with God.

The next remarkable paſſage of his love was at *Maybole* communion, where I took my communion with a ſolemn ſurrendering and giving away myſelf to the Lord.* O! the remembrance of that time hath often ſince refreſhed my ſoul; albeit I had heard the curates and the backſliden miniſters, yet the Lord made light to ariſe by ſeveral of them who were more faithful than others, as Mr. John Kid, Mr. John King, Mr. John Dickſon, but particularly by faithful Mr. Richard Cameron, who was helped pleaſantly to redd marches betwixt ſin and duty. After the defeat at Bothwel, I was intercommuned and declared rebel. The pleaſanteſt time that ever I enjoyed was then, when I was joined with that ſuffering remnant, while hunted as partridges on the mountains, in following the perſecuted goſpel, eſpecially in pleaſant Mr. Renwick's time, who was helped to be faithful in his life and at his death.

But as I may remember theſe days with joy and comfort; ſo with as much grief and ſorrow I may remember what followed: For he being gone, and having handed down a pleaſant and well-ſtated teſtimony;—after the re-

* There is extant five of his covenant tranſactions, the firſt is dated July 1664, the ſecond Auguſt 4th, 1678. the third February 26th, 1689. the fourth March 3d 1689. the fifth Jan. 1ſt, 1696.

volution, thoſe that ſhould have done the like, ſoon after treacherouſly betrayed it into the hands of its enemies, and put all into the ſaddeſt of confuſions; and not only ſo, but took the bulk of that pleaſant party along with them, who had been helped to ſtand it out faithfully during the heat of perſecution, who were now by the ſubtile draughts and fair ſpeeches of theſe three treacherous men, Meſſrs. Lining, Shields and Boyd, led aſide into defection, from one ſtep into another, until they were as foul as the time could make them. O! but theſe were ſad and breaking times; and I wanted not my part of the trials of theſe times, by reaſon of the great reſpect I bore to theſe perſons of quality in the place where I then reſided, (*viz.* Kerſland) and any thing I was then drawn into, when the Lord reckoned with me for it, was made as the terrors of death unto me.

O! that was a dark time, as ever mine eyes ſaw. But when it pleaſed the Lord to give a little light and a little comfort and help, by raiſing up and ſpiriting ſome to be means in his hand to gather ſome few of the once many ſcattered people of the Lord, and to bring them to underſtand their ways and one another's minds, and to take up the fallen teſtimony, (though in a private way and capacity); this was a new joy and comfort unto me. The cauſes of faſts were then ſweet. The public teſtimonies were then deſireable. Our meetings ſweet and refreſhful; pleaſant were our out-goings, and ſweet our home-comings. But after the death of brave Sir Robert Hamilton, the clouds began to darken our ſkies.

After many fruitleſs eſſays,—it pleaſed the Lord to ſend us a blink of the goſpel; but it hath but a winter beam or heat, how long it ſhall continue, God only knoweth. O that both miniſters and people may be tender and faithful both in the cauſe, and in their converſation, and then you may look for the longer continuance of it.

And now being on the borders of eternity, I dare not once doubt but he who hath begun this work, will alſo perfect and finiſh it. But O! to have it once fairly finiſhed. Neither dare I call in queſtion that this is the Lord's way that I die owning, he having ſo often confirmed my ſoul therein by his word and ſpirit, that it were a piece of great rebellion in me once to doubt it: Neither am I in the leaſt doubt but that his cauſe ſhall yet triumph,—let apoſtate miniſters and profeſſors do their

utmoſt

utmoſt to hinder it, yet in ſpite of them all, Chriſt ſhall get up and be glorious in Scotland.—But O! as ye would ever deſire to ſee it, ſtrive to be faithful to the cauſe, zealous, holy and tender in your practices,—and patient in well-doing. Weary not in following your duty, for the time may be lengthened out yet. The Lord be with you all. I ſhall ſay no more; but to him that muſt confirm, comfort and eſtabliſh you, and give me a fair landing, be praiſe both now and for ever. AMEN.

BUSREE, *April* 10, 1710. JOHN WILSON.

Here follows a few Extracts from the dying Teſtimony of Mr. ROBERT SMITH, *Student of Divinity*, &c.

IN our own country I heard that faithful ſervant of Jeſus Chriſt Mr. James Renwick on Heb. xiii. 13. Though my acceſs to it was with great difficulty, and ſeeming danger,—ſoon after, joining with the perſecuted party, I frequented their Meetings with pleaſure and delight. During which time the Lord was training me up for after times, and feeding me as a lamb in a large paſture, and clearing me about my ſouls intereſt from many ſweet ſcriptures, and anſwers of prayer, making me to devote, and dedicate myſelf to the Lord and his ſuffering cauſe (in the work of the miniſtry) and in teſtimony of his acceptance of my poor offer, he ſealed and confirmed the ſame with his Holy Spirit of truth upon my ſpirit, with the joys of the Holy Ghoſt, for about a year and a half.—But after the death of that pleaſant plant, faithful Mr. Renwick. The Revolution coming on, the breaking of the party ſoon followed. The three miniſters ſoon leaving us, joined with the corrupt eſtabliſhment 1690, ſins ſnares and defections growing apace,—after the breaking of the party, there were ſeveral Meetings betwixt the remaining diſſenters—at length by the firſt eight cauſes (or ſteps of * defection, called Tinnald Paper, upon which ſome Faſt-days were kept) and the Declaration 1692, a conſiderable party from the ſeveral

* Several of theſe old men in their dying teſtimonies mention theſe eight cauſes upon which their firſt faſt day was kept, as being the ſweeteſt faſt-day they had ſeen of a long time before, particularly old John Mattheſon, who was one of theſe baniſhed to Carolina.

veral ſhires came to be united again upon the old ground —and ſuitable meaſures for regulating their Meetings, laid down: And ſome from the other two nations hearing of our comely order, and that the Lord was amongſt us deſired our help to rectify diſorders amongſt them, and to erect fellowſhips: Whereupon the General Meeting ſent John Clark and me, twice to Ireland, and as often with others I was ſent to England, where we got fellowſhips erected according to our own order at home.—After the emiſſion of the foreſaid Declaration, perſecution ariſing a little, ſome of our number being taken and impriſoned (for eight months) others ſought after who fell not into their hands.—Mr. James Kid who was gone abroad about a year before to qualify himſelf at their Colleges in philoſophy and divinity for printing the ſaid Declaration together with Mr. Hugh Binning's piece againſt aſſociation, had been impriſoned there†. Whereupon,

† As an anonymous writer of the Life of Mr. Binning prefixed to the quarto volume of his ſermons, doubts, or almoſt denies Mr. Binning to be the author of his caſe of conſcience concerning aſſociation, *&c.* It may not be improper here to ſhew the groundleſſneſs of what the ſaid writer alleges on that head. He ſays, "It is much queſtioned by the moſt intelligent if that "book was really Mr. Binning's,——becauſe the Publiſher con- "ceals his name, and brings no manner of voucher ſhewing that "it was Mr. Binning's, *&c.*" This is ſomewhat ſtrange, that a Nameleſs AUTHOR ſhould quarrel that book becauſe the Publiſher hath omitted to tell his name, and hath only inſerted the Author's name. He might have known that it was not long a ſecret that Mr. James Kid (who was afterward ſettled miniſter in Queen's-ferry) was the Publiſher; and upon that account ſuffered both long long impriſonment at Utrecht, and the ſeizure of all that they could get of the books; and as for vouchers, Mrs. Binning, the relict of the worthy author being then alive, and having connexion, and much correſpondence with Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Renwick, and many of the perſecuted ſociety people, and of the ſame ſentiments with them, as appears by ſeveral letters yet extant in their own hand writ; and Mr. Renwick ſpeaks of her in ſome of his letters, as in the 49 and 104 pages of the printed volume of his letters: but eſpecially it appears by a paragraph which is omitted in the printed copy, page 58. which ſhall be here tranſcribed from the original written with his own hand, wherein he ſays, "Likewiſe (according to your "direction) I challenged Mrs. Binning—upon the commendati- "on ſhe gave to John Wilſon, in her Letter to you: But ſhe "ſays, That ſhe had not then ſeen his teſtimony, and was ſor- "ry when ſhe ſaw it, that it was ſo contrary both to her thoughts "and commendation of him." And likewiſe a poſtcript to the 20th Letter relative to the ſame matter, is alſo omitted. And about

upon, to know of his affairs, and to minister comfort unto him, the General Meeting made choice of me to go over to him; so with difficulty getting me loosed from my charge (being then in Earlstoun's, teaching his children) I went. But except the first packet of letters, I could get no more in to him, neither could I have access to him myself during the whole time of his imprisonment. So writing an account of this to these who sent me, and to know what was their will further,—they wrote again, ordering me to stay still there and go to some of their Colleges.—But I not seeing it fit—to go to Utrecht, lest I should be clapt up beside Mr. Kid, being of the same mind with him anent these things for which he was imprisoned, I went to Groningen College, where I commenced *master of arts*, no iniquious imposition being there laid upon me, which before in Glasgow I had shunned because of the oath then tendered to such as passed their degrees binding them to Prelacy, *&c.*—— Hearing of Mr. Kid's liberation, I went to Utrecht and sat

about the same time that Mr. Binning's book was printed, while Sir Robert Hamilton was prisoner upon the account of the declaration in 1693. he wrote a Letter to Mrs. Binning, wherein he complains of her unwonted silence, in his honourable bonds for such a noble Master; yet trusting her sympathy is not diminished, he adds, "O my worthy friend, I cannot express "Christ's love and kindness since the time of my bonds. He "hath broke up new treasures of felt love and sweetness; and "hath been pleased to give me visitations of love and access to "himself, to comfort and confirm poor feckless me many ways, "that this is his way that is now persecuted, and that it is his "precious truths, interests and concerns that I am now suffering "for, whatever enemies with their associated ministers and pro"fessors may allege, &c."

By which it is evident that they had much correspondence with Mrs Binning and there is yet a fair and correct manuscript copy of the forsaid books extant, which was in Sir Roberts custody, and it is more than probable that it was procured from Mrs Binning especially as she survived its publication without quarreling it.

It is unnecessary to notice what further is thrown out by the foresaid anonymous writer against the Book and the Publisher as Mr. Wodrow in the preface to Mr. Binnings octavo volume of Sermons printed 1760. hath modestly animadverted thereupon and says there is no reason to doubt if it was Mr. Binnings, he also ingenuously confesseth that there is in it the best collection of scriptures he knows concerning the sin and danger of joining with wicked and ungodly men &c. and that it was wrote in a smooth good stile, agreeable enough to Mr Binnings sentiments in some of his sermons.

ſit down with him there for another ſeſſion of that College, mean while finding him loſing his old ground and old principles, and drinking in the indulged lax Eraſtian principles, he became rather a ſnare, a burden, and a trial, than a comfort and help to me.—So ſeeing I could not obtain licence and ordination, I made all the haſte I could from thence. My experiences there, and returns of prayer were not ſo many as they were great and good ones.

When going off from Leith, I took on Jacob's Bethel-vow, with this addition, to be kept right in my principles; and therein the Lord heard me, and reſtored me ſafe both in body and principle, notwithſtanding of many great aſſaults I had, eſpecially from my own countrymen, to relinquiſh the ſame. Whereas Mr Kid returned not ſo.

When I returned, I ſojourned among the meetings for their encouragement and ſtrengthening; and indeed it was eaſy for me, ſo long as that great man Sir Robert Hamilton lived, and was able to travel among the party; for he, laying his worldly honour in the duſt, out of true love to his royal and princely Maſter's honour, was as a father to us all; and while he lived, things went well with us.

Not having room for any more of it, nor for others of the ſame nature; it may ſuffice at preſent to ſhew that there are extant about twenty dying teſtimonies of ſuch of the ſociety people as overlived the perſecuting period, many of whom died before, or ſhortly after the year 1700, wherein is ſhewed what they owned and what they diſowned, many of their exerciſes and ſpiritual experiences, and the comfort and aſſurance they had at their death, *&c.* which teſtimonies or extracts from them, theſe in whoſe cuſtody they are, ſhall willingly make public, if deſired.

F I N I S.

SOME

CONSIDERATIONS

Contributing unto the *Discovery* of the *Dangers* that threaten RELIGION, and the *Work* of REFORMATION in the Church of

SCOTLAND.

Published for informing the ignorant and inadvertent; for awakening the careless and secure; for stirring up unto the exercise of repentance and faith towards God; and for persuading unto a godly union and edifying peace, &c.

BY JAMES GUTHRIE, *Minister of the Gospel at* STIRLING.

The lion hath roared, who will not fear? The Lord God hath spoken, who will not prophesy? Amos iii. 8.

What meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not, Jonah i. 6.

I will come unto thee quickly, and remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent, Rev. ii. 5.

GLASGOW:

PRINTED IN THE YEAR, M, DCC, LXXX.

Conſideration Firſt.

From that ſwarm of peſtilent errors and hereſies that doth abound in the neighbour nation of England, *and our vicinity thereunto, and intimate and daily correſpondence therewith.*

IT is far from my purpoſe to caſt any imputation upon *England*, or to render the neighbour church and nation vile in the eyes of any, by diſcovering their nakedneſs, in reckoning up the many peſtilent errors and hereſies that many therein are infected with: I know there be many thouſands in that land who have not bowed their knees to *Baal*, nor defiled their garments by departing from the faith; but do ſadly bemoan, and faithfully bear witneſs againſt the falling away of others. And I do eaſily acknowledge, that *England* hath a great and honourable company of precious, and ſound, and able, and godly miniſters and profeſſors, as readily are to be found in any nation or church upon the earth; but I hope it ſhall be no injury nor offence to ſay, (and would to God I could ſpeak it with that cõmpaſſionate reſentment and ſerious affectedneſs of heart, that doth become in ſo ſad and ſoul-concerning a caſe) that a great many in that church and nation, are infected with many noiſome errors and peſtilent hereſies, which fret as a gangrene unto the deſtroying of many poor ſouls. Is there almoſt any of the precious and neceſſary truths of God, but hath ſome oppoſers and contradicters in *England?* Not only are the beautiful ſuperſtructures thrown down, but the very loweſt and moſt neceſſary foundations of the Chriſtian religion razed and plucked up by the roots by the blaſphemies of ſome. To diſpute, and declaim, and write againſt the bleſſed Trinity, againſt the divinity of the eternal Son of God, Jeſus Chriſt, who is over all, God bleſſed for ever, againſt the ſacred ſcriptures, that they are not the word of God, are, with

not a few, things common and ordinary: Yea, theſe very things whlch *Jews* and *Mahometans*, and not a few in Pagan nations do acknowledge; and which being denied, the condition of a man is little better than that of a beaſt; ſuch as, the immortality of the ſoul, the reſurrection of the dead, heaven and hell, eternal rewards and eternal puniſhments, are, by diverſe, wantonly debated, and by ſome pertinaciouſly denied and impugned. The time was, and that not many years ago, when *Independency*, *Eraſtianiſm*, *Browniſm*, and *Anabaptiſm* in that land, were looked upon as threatening danger to the churches and work of reformation in theſe nations; yet in compariſon to the errors that now abound in *England*, theſe are but as mole-hills to mountains. The whole body of *Arminianiſm*, *Antinomianiſm*, *Pelagianiſm*, *Socinianiſm*, *Familiſm*, *Quakeriſm*, and almoſt what not, that hath at any time been broached by the father of lies, and infeſted the Chriſtian church, but hath ſome brockers and patrons there. That theſe things are ſo, is but too ſadly true, and theſe things being ſo, Is not the church of Scotland by reaſon of it's vicinity unto, and intimate and daily correſpondence and commerce with *England*, in imminent hazard to be tainted with infection thereby? The vicinity and next neighbourhood of nations and churches, eſpecially when attended with intimate and ordinary fellowſhip, hath always had great influence upon the manners of one another, chiefly as to the depraving and corrupting of religion; to which all the ſons of men, by reaſon of their in-bred ignorance and inſtability, and the power of corrupt imaginations, are of themſelves but too prone. The children of Iſrael (not only) when they lived in the land of Egypt, were infected with many idolatrous and heatheniſh cuſtoms, Ezek. xxi. 27. (but even) when ſeparated and brought into Canaan, albeit railed in and fenced with the holy and perfect law of the Lord, to which was added the ſanction of many great and precious promiſes to ſuch as did obey, and of many dreadful threatnings againſt the diſobedient and rebellious, which were accordingly verified by God in eminent acts of his juſtice and goodneſs; the idolatrous opinions and practices of their neighbour nations had ſuch influence upon them, that they could not be kept (ſcarce at any time for one generation together) from learning their works, and going a whoring

after their corrupt cuſtoms, Pſal. cvi. 35, 36, 37, 38, 39. Yea, ſometimes came to be worſe than the heathen, whom the Lord had deſtroyed before them, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 9. and to change his judgments into wickedneſs, more than the nations, and his ſtatutes more than the countries that were round about them, Ezek. v. 6. eſpecially after that religion came to be corrupted amongſt the ten tribes by Jeroboam, his erecting the calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*. Judah and Jeruſalem, though they had the temple, and the ark, and the oracle, and the altar, with all the other ordinances of God, and alſo many prophets riſing up early, and ſpeaking to them in the name of the Lord, did then become treacherous, Jer. iii. 11. When *Aholah* ſaw what *Aholibah* had done, ſhe became *more corrupt in her inordinate love than ſhe, and in her whoredoms more than her ſiſter in her whoredoms*,——till the Lord *ſaw that ſhe was defiled*, and *that they took both one way* Ezek. xxiii. 11, 13. The hiſtories of the Engliſh and Scotch nations and churches, do teſtify, that they have for moſt part run one lot, both as to their reforming and corrupting of religion. This conſideration was the prime ground of theſe confederacies that were tranſacted, firſt, between Q. Eliz. of *England*, and the lords of the congregation in *Scotland*; and afterwards between that queen and king James the VI. It was alſo this eſpecially, that did induce theſe nations and churches to engage themſelves in the ſolemn league and covenant, *Anno* 1643. becauſe (as it is expreſſed by the miniſters of England in their letter to the General Aſſembly of the church of Scotland, *Anno* 1641) they ‘ did know and acknowledge, that theſe churches of ‘ England Scotland, ſeem both to be imbarked in the ‘ ſame bottom, to ſink and ſwim together, and are ſo ‘ nigh conjoined by ſo many ſtrong ties, not only as fel- ‘ low-members, under the ſame head, Chriſt, and fel- ‘ low-ſubjects, under the ſame king; but alſo by ſuch ‘ neighbourhood and vicinity of place, that if any evil ‘ ſhall much infeſt the one, the other cannot be altoge- ‘ ther free, or if for the preſent it ſhould, yet in pro- ‘ ceſs of time it would ſenſibly ſuffer alſo.’ Which is alſo homologated by the Aſſembly in their anſwer to that letter: ‘ We have learned (ſay they) by long experi- ‘ ence, ever ſince the time of reformation, and eſpecial- ‘ ly after the two kingdoms have been by the great good- ‘ neſs of God both, united under one head and monarch,

but

'but most of all, of late, which is not unknown to you, 'what danger and contagion in matters of kirk-govern- 'ment, of divine worship, and of doctrine, may come 'from the one kirk to the other; which besides all other 'reasons, may make us pray to God, and to desire you 'and all that love the honour of Christ, and the peace of 'these kirks and kingdoms, heartily to endeavour, that 'there might be in both kirks one Confession of Faith, 'one Directory for Public Worship, one Catechism, and 'one Form of Kirk-Government,' And the Commissioners of the Parliament of *England* in the propositions given by them to a Committee, to be presented to the General Assembly of this church, *Anno* 1643, for perswading of them to further and expedite the aid and assistance, then demanded by both Houses from the kingdom of *Scotland*, after they have given them to understand, that by reason of the prevailing of Papists, the Prelatical faction, and other malignant enemies to these who desired reformation, the hopeful beginnings thereof, were likely not only to be rendered ineffectual, but all the former evils, superstitions and corruptions to be introduced by strong hand.

They do in the next place tell them, 'That if once 'these again should take root in the church and king- 'dom of *England*, they would quickly spread their ven- 'om and infection into the church, and kingdom of '*Scotland*;' the truth of which being well known, both to our church and state, did prevail upon them to concur with *England* in counsels and forces, for suppressing and preventing of these things, as may be seen in their answers to the declarations of the honourable houses of the Parliament of *England*, concerning that purpose. Upon the same ground, the church of *Scotland* did frequently by her commissioners at *London*, and by her letters to the Parliament of *England*, and to the Assembly of Divines at *Westminster*, and by her exhortations to her brethren of *England*, often warn of the danger of errors and heresies, when they were but yet in their first buddings, and far from the height that they are now at in *England*. The words of the Assembly in their declaration and brotherly exhortation to their brethren of *England*, *Anno* 1647, are worth the repeating in this case: (say they) while in the neighbour kingdom, 'The 'staves of beauty, and bands, covenant, and brother- 'hood, are broken by many, the horn of malignants

'and

'and ſectaries exalted, the beſt affected borne down, re-
'formation ebbing, hereſy and ſchiſm flowing: It can-
'hardly be marvelled at by any perſon of prudence and
'diſcretion, if we be full of ſuch fears, and apprehen-
'ſions, as uſe to be in theſe who dwell near to a houſe
'ſet on fire, or a family infected, eſpecially being taught
'by the ſad experience of the Prelatical times; how
'eaſily a gangrene in the one half of this Iſland may ſpread
'through the whole, knowing alſo the inveterate and
'inſatiable malice of the enemies of this cauſe and co-
'venant, againſt this church and kingdom, which we
'cannot be ignorant of, unleſs we would ſhut our eyes,
'and ſtop our ears:' I might cite many things to this purpoſe out of the public records of both churches and nations, but theſe few I hope do ſufficiently witneſs, what were the thoughts and apprehenſions of men of judgment and underſtanding in both, but a very few years ago, as to the danger of religion in *Scotland* in the caſe of *England's* being infected with errors and hereſies. And if there was reaſon then ſo to judge, how much more now, when beſides the vicinity and contignity of theſe two, and the daily commerce and correſpondency that is between the people thereof, *Scotland*, is incorporated into one civil body and government with *England*, and have alſo the bar of civil laws for keeping out, and curbing of many errors and hereſies taken away, and toleration and protection allowed thereunto, by which it cometh to paſs, that the danger which was formerly nigh unto us, is now alſo in our bowels. And to this I ſhall ſpeak in the next place.

Conſideration Second.

From the Infection of Errors and Hereſies already begun, and the footing that they have already got in this Church and Nation.

THOUGH the plague when near unto us is dangerous, and fire in our neighbour's houſe, can hardly be kept from taking hold of our own, yet infection in

our

our own body is more dangerous; and much harder it is to keep our houſe from burning when the fire hath already ſeized upon it, and the flames are flaſhing about our ears; and this is the caſe that the church of *Scotland*, and religion therein do ſtand in at this day: Not only have we amongſt us many ſtrangers who vent their errors at will, and without controulment, but ſundry alſo of our own church and nation, are come to be infected therewith. The miniſtry of the land, though differing in that unhappy queſtion about the public reſolutions, yet are by the ſingular mercy and goodneſs of God, for any thing that yet doth appear, kept ſound and unanimous in their judgments againſt the errors of the times; and ſo alſo is the body of the people according to the meaſure of their knowledge in their ſeveral ranks and degrees; neither have ſectaries ſo much cauſe to boaſt of their number and growth in *Scotland*, as commonly they do give out; they are (bleſſed be the God of truth and of mercy for it) as yet but very few, and inconſiderable in compariſon to the body of this church, ſcarce one to a thouſand; yet is the infection ſuch, as ought not to be deſpiſed or neglected, as threatning no danger to religion and the work of reformation amongſt us: Beſides ſundry others who are infected with errors in ſeveral ſorts, there being not a few of theſe monſtrouſly erring-ſouls, commonly called *Quakers*, who ſtrike at the root of Chriſtian religion, by denying the ſcriptures to be the word of God, and ſetting up, and holding forth their own doting fancies, and fooliſh imaginations, under the name of the light within them, as the infallible dictates of the Spirit of truth, and by denying the in-being of ſin, and aſſerting the perfection of the new creature in the regenerated, even to ſuch a meaſure of righteouſneſs and holineſs, as is equal with that of our bleſſed Saviour, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, and by denying the reſurrection of the body from the dead, and maintaining many other errors, which though abominable and vile in themſelves, yet are boldly vented and actively ſpread by theſe perſons; and which is more lamentable, ſad experience proveth in both nations, that not a few, and theſe not of the moſt ignorant and ſeemingly profane, are apt to receive, and be carried away with theſe ſtrange deluſions: And therefore ſhould we not be ſo ſlothful and ſecure, as to think that religion is not in hazard by the infection already begun amongſt us.

The

The apoſtle telleth us, *That a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump*, 1 Cor. v. 6. And if the church of *Corinth* was in hazard by one inceſtuous perſon, ſinning againſt the light of nature, ſhall we not judge ourſelves to be in hazard by ſome hundreds; the leaven of whoſe errors is not ſo ſour to the natural man's taſte. As the infection of the plague of peſtilence hath in a little time derived itſelf into many, and at laſt brought forth the ruin of great and populous cities and ſocieties, ſo hath the gangrene of error often ſpread itſelf from one or a few members of particular viſible churches unto the body of viſible profeſſors therein; that from the ſole of the foot unto the top of the head, there has been little or no ſoundneſs, but wounds, and bruiſes, and putrifying ſores. The *Arrian* hereſy, which was one of the moſt dangerous and dreadful, that ever troubled the Chriſtian church, had its beginning from one Preſbyter in the church of *Alexandria* in *Egypt*, and yet did run ſo faſt and ſo far, that in a few years, it did overſpread a great part of the Chriſtian world, which made *Jerome* ſay, that the world did groan and wonder at itſelf, that it was become *Arian*. We will ordinarily find, that the greateſt and moſt prevailing hereſies, have had their riſe and original from very ſmall beginnings, and that their authors and abettors have been at firſt but very few and inconſiderable. If we will not believe our ears, and that which our fathers have told us, yet let us believe our eyes, and that which experience hath taught us. How few and inconſiderable were the ſectaries in theſe nations ſome eighteen or twenty years ago? And how numerous are they at this day? The *Quakers* (beſides many others of ſeveral ſorts) do boaſt themſelves to be for number ſundry ten thouſands; And yet I do believe, that within theſe ſixteen years, or little more, ſcarce were ten ſingle perſons of that judgment, heard of in any place of theſe nations; and their increaſing in ſo ſhort a time to ſo great a number, may convincingly teach us, that we may and ought to fear the growth and increaſe of ſectaries in *Scotland*, albeit their number for the preſent be not great: And though haply there be not in every reſpect, ſuch an aptitude in the people in this nation to receive errors, nor ſuch parts and abilities for ſpreading of them as in ſundry of the *Engliſh*; and that we have alſo the advantage of church-diſcipline for curbing of them; yet ſhould we not upon ſuch apprehenſions

as theſe, be ſecure: Errors have got no ſmall footing amongſt us already, and if the infection could enter, while the body is more intire and ſound; how much more is it like to ſpread, when ſundry of the members are corrupted. If we ſhall take a view of the many great advantages, that the ſpirit of error and deluſion hath at this time, for ſtrengthening and enlarging itſelf in this land, a man that hath but half an eye, may ſee, that religion is eminently in hazard thereby. Therefore I ſhall now proceed to ſpeak ſomewhat unto theſe.

Conſideration Third.

From the Toleration and Protection that is pleaded for, and allowed to many groſs Errors and Hereſies.

THAT the civil magiſtrate is appointed of GOD to take care, not only of theſe things that do belong unto righteouſneſs, and concern the civil peace, and natural life of man, but alſo of the things that concern religion, and do reſpect the glory of God, and the good of ſouls: And that in ſubordination to theſe ends, ſuch outward impediments and obſtructions as do hinder the ſame, ought by him to be removed out of the way, and not to be tolerated in a Chriſtian common-wealth; is a truth ſo clearly ſet down in the ſcriptures, and ſo fully confirmed in the writings of divines, and ſo plainly and ſolemnly engaged unto in the Solemn League and Covenant, that it were needleſs for me to inſiſt upon the proof thereof: Neither is this my purpoſe, if any do deſire to furniſh themſelves with ſcripture and reaſon, in theſe things, they will find ſomewhat for their help in the former Teſtimony, and in the Warning and Teſtimony of the reverend Preſbytery of *Edinburgh*, lately emitted againſt that ſinful and unſeaſonable Petition of ſome of our unhappy country-men to the Parliament of *England*: That which we have to lament, is, That notwithſtanding the clear light of the ſcriptures, and that reaſon both divine and human, do ſtrongly plead the contrary, and that theſe nations are ſolemnly engaged by the public vows of God upon them, without reſpect of

perſons, to endeavour the extirpation of *Popery, Prelacy, Superſtition, Hereſy, Schiſm, Prophaneneſs;* and whatſoever ſhall be found contrary to ſound doctrine, and to the power of godlineſs: Yet a very vaſt toleration is not only pleaded for, and promoted by many, but alſo framed into a law; by which, protection and encouragement is allowed unto many groſs errors and hereſies, that do not only deny and deſtroy many of the beautiful ſuperſtructures, but do alſo ſtrike at not a few of the corner-ſtones, and chief foundations of Chriſtian religion; which doth miniſter ſingular advantage to the ſpirit of deluſion, for ſtrengthening and ſpreading of itſelf, unto the corrupting of the truth of God, and ſubverting of ſouls. The corrupt nature of man, is of itſelf moſt fertile of vain imaginations, and moſt prone to carnal liberty, and to tranſgreſs the bounds, and remove the land-marks that are ſet unto it of God; ſo that even when curbed and hemmed in with the rail of his law, and with the utmoſt extent of the care and diligence, and faithfulneſs, and zeal, both of ſpiritual and civil rulers, it can hardly be kept from debording into many groſs extravagancies in the things of God, and from turning into its courſe, as the horſe ruſheth into the battle. What then can be expected, when not only the yoke is taken off its jaws, but that it is alſo foſtered upon the breaſts, and dandled upon the knees of protection, and countenance and encouragement, and ſuffered to grow up under the warm ſhadow of civil authority; but that the fountains of the great deep ſhall be opened up, and overflow the face of the whole land? when Satan is looſed out of his priſon, ſhall he not deceive the nations? and when the ſerpent's bands are taken off, ſhall he not caſt water out of his mouth as a flood after the woman, that he may cauſe her to be carried away of the flood? Let us but a little conſider, what hath been the fruits of ſuch toleration in theſe churches and ſtates where it has got footing. I ſhall not go ſo far back as to the firſt ages of the world, in which men being left to themſelves in the things of God, *profeſſing themſelves to be wiſe, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four footed beaſts, and creeping things.* Neither ſhall I ſpeak of the condition of religion, in ſome Proteſtant ſtates beyond ſea, in which toleration is allowed; but I deſire it to be conſidered:

1. How

1. How it fared with the church of *Judah* in theſe periods of time, when toleration got any footing therein: I ſhall not now ſtand to debate, whether it was at any time eſtabliſhed in *Judah* by a law; but it is clear enough, that when any of the kings of *Judah*, whether through negligence or want of integrity, or upon carnal and politick conſiderations, did not reſtrain, but tolerate falſe prophets, and idolaters, and corrupters of the worſhip of God, and perverters of his truth, that idolatry, and the leproſy of manifold errors and corruptions, did quickly ſpread themſelves over the face of that church and nation; that if the Lord had not been graciouſly pleaſed to raiſe up ſome good kings, who in the zeal of God, and conſcience of their duty, did employ their power for deſtroying of idolatry and falſe worſhip, and for making the people *ſerve the Lord God of their fathers, according to the law, and the teſtimony*; it had fared no better with them, than it did with the church of *Iſrael*, or of the ten tribes, who came by their ſinful neglect of the things of God, and tolerating and protecting of falſe worſhip, in a few generations, to loſe the ſubſtantials of religion, and the very face of a church, and of a ſtate too. What ſad inſtances were of theſe things in the days of *Solomon*, *Rehoboam*, *Abijah*, *Jehoram*, *Ahaziah*, *Joaſh*, *Amaziah*, *Ahaz*, *Manaſſeh*, *Amnon*, *Jehoiakim*, &c.

2. When about the time of the incarnation of our bleſſed Lord, and his being on the earth, ſundry ſects were tolerated in the church of the *Jews*, did they not come at laſt to be all overgrown with nettles and thorns, and to loſe the being and face of a church? It is worthy of obſervation, that the men of that time, who were zealous patrons of toleration, were in the juſt judgment of God given up to themſelves, to be zealous oppoſers of the goſpel, and to crucify the Lord of glory.

3. It ſhould be conſidered, what hath already been the ſad and dreadful effects of this toleration; is not the glory of God trodden under foot, the precious truths of the goſpel corrupted and perverted, the ordinances of Jeſus Chriſt contemned and cried down, the government and diſcipline of the kirk in a great meaſure overthrown, the worſhip of God deſpiſed and prophaned, the Lord's-day diſregarded and caſten looſe, the power of godlineſs eaten out, and the whole work of reformation obſtructed, and in many things overturned, many

ſouls ſubverted, *Popery*, *Libertiniſm*, *Superſtition*, *Hereſy*, *Schiſm*, *Scepticiſm*, *Atheiſm*, *Profaneneſs*, and many things contrary to ſound doctrine, increaſed? And if there be ſuch a growth of ſo dreadful evils, in ſo few years, and whilſt that generation is yet living, whom God brought back from the borders of *Babylon*, (to which we were threatened to be carried captive under the corruptions and tyranny of the *Prelate?*) and who have ſeen the wonderful works of the Lord in that great deliverance, and have lifted up our hands to heaven, to ſwear by him that liveth, and reigneth for evermore, that we would endeavour the extirpation of theſe things? What is to be expected if this toleration ſhall continue, and be tranſmitted to our poſterity, but darkneſs, inſtead of divination, and that darkneſs ſhall cover the land, and groſs darkneſs the people?

4. Let us ſuppoſe, that ſuch a toleration were granted unto men, in the things that relate unto the duties of righteouſneſs, that are commanded in the ſecond table of the law, *viz.* that they might without controulment of the civil authority, and with aſſurance of protection from the ſame, walk in theſe things, according to the dictates of their own ſpirits, and imaginations, and inclinations of their own hearts; were it poſſible, that there could be long peace to him that goes out, or to him that cometh in; or that goods, or good name, or chaſtity, or life, could be long preſerved; ſhould not thy whole land in a very ſhort time be filled with rapine, and oppreſſion, and violence, with thefts and robberies, and ſlanders, with fornications, adulteries, and inceſts, with blood, and murder, and every ſort of abominations? And is there not in the heart of man, as great, if not greater pravity, in order to the duties of the firſt table, as to theſe of the ſecond table? Nature's light in our corrupt ſtate, being more eclipſed and depraved in the one, than in the other: Can we then expect any better fruit of this toleration, in order to the things of God, and that do concern religion, than it would produce in reference to the things of men, and that do concern righteouſneſs? Upon this account it is, That as God hath revealed in his word, the rule both of religion and righteouſneſs, according to which he hath commanded us to walk in his matters, and in the matters of men, and not according to the imaginations of our own hearts,

doing

doing what ſeemeth good unto us in our own eyes, either in the one or in the other; ſo hath he appointed civil governments and magiſtrates among the children of men, that they might be keepers of both tables of his law, and that by keeping of both, they might preſerve both religion and righteouſneſs; which do otherwiſe (without a mighty hand of more than ordinary providence) ſoon go to ruin, when rulers are not a terror to evil works that are done againſt both.

5. As toleration doth bring forth the ſad fruits already mentioned; ſo doth the mother and daughter both of them, provoke the Lord to give up men to vile affections, and to give them over to a reprobate mind, to do things not convenient, as appeareth from the laſt part of the firſt chapter of the epiſtle to the Romans; and ſo bringeth at laſt the ruin both of religion and righteouſneſs, and deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. All which, with many other obvious conſiderations, that would be tedious to inſiſt upon, may make it evident to ſuch as will impartially and without prejudice weigh the ſame in the balance of the Lord's ſanctuary, and of reaſon and experience, that as the ſpirit of error and deluſion hath ſingular advantage; ſo religion is in imminent hazard thereby.

Conſideration Fourth.

From the ignorance, unfruitfulneſs, inſtability, looſeneſs and profanity that do abound in the land at this time.

DANGERS and diſeaſes, whether natural, or moral, or ſpiritual, are more or leſs to be feared, according to the weakneſs or ſtrength, the diſpoſition or indiſpoſition of the object about which they are converſant, to reſiſt or to receive the ſame. As weak and ill-complexioned bodies are readily obnoxious to ſickneſs, and do ſoon receive infection; and unwiſe and unvigilant ſtates are eaſily deceived and ſoon broken, and put into confuſion; ſo ignorant, or unſtable, or carnal,

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or profane ſouls, do eaſily become a prey to temptations, whether in the matter of their profeſſion or of their converſation; their ignorance and want of watchfulneſs, rendering them blind as to the diſcovering of the ſnare; and their want of ſpiritual life and ſtrength, rendering them impotent and indiſpoſed, as to the avoiding and reſiſting of it; and their inſtability and looſeneſs inclining and diſpoſing them to tamper and dally with it: By which it cometh to paſs, that they are eaſily and often intangled, eſpecially in a time of abounding temptations; yea, it is righteous with the Lord, becauſe they do not like to retain him in their knowledge, to give them up to a mind void of judgment; and becauſe they receive not the love of the truth, to ſend them ſtrong deluſion to believe a lie. Hence it was that the world in older times, both before and after the flood, came to be drowned in groſs ſuperſtition and abominable idolatry; and that a great part of the Chriſtian church in later ages, came to be drowned in Mahometaniſm and Popery. Now if we ſhall look through the breadth of our land, may we not find that there are multitudes of ignorant ſouls, who do ſcarce know the firſt and moſt common principles of the Chriſtian religion, much leſs have they their ſenſes exerciſed in the knowledge of the truth, and of the holy ſcriptures, which are the ground thereof? And how many do ſit down ſatisfied with a very ſmall meaſure of knowledge, taking many precious and neceſſary truths upon mere tradition from their anceſtors and teachers, without ſearching the ſcriptures whether theſe things be ſo, that they may attain in themſelves a warrantable and well-grounded perſuaſion thereof? By which it cometh to paſs, that ſundry ſuch, meeting with deceivers, come to be ſoon ſhaken in their minds. Be there not alſo many ſimple and unſtable ſouls, who are as reeds ſhaken with the wind, and apt to be driven to and fro with every wind of doctrine? And be there not many lukewarm and indifferent, and of a carnally politic ſpirit, who care for none of theſe things? Be there not many looſe and profane? All which are apt to caſt off the profeſſion of the truth, and to be eaſily ſeduced and drawn away into error; becauſe, though happily many ſuch do not much regard either truth or error, yet when error is like to prevail and come in reputation, and the owning thereof to be attended with carnal or civil advantages, they can eaſily be induced to ſhape their

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garments, and wear their cloaths according to the fashion of the time; yea, their carnal minds, which are enmity to God, are also enmity to his truth, and doth dispose them to cast off the yoke thereof; which they are easily perswaded to do, when there is nothing to hinder it but naked respect to the truth itself. Every man is in some sense naturally a heretic, having the seeds of error in his soul, and an aptitude and inclination to bring forth these bitter grapes of wormwood and of gall; and the more that he liveth in formality, and hypocrisy, and looseness, these seeds do in the common body of sin that is in him, receive the more increase and strength, and become the more apt to bring forth their own native fruit. There is also no doubt, a great sibness between errors of judgment and looseness of conversation, and an easy passage from the one to the other. A heretic is easily made vicious and profane, and a vicious and profane man is easily made a heretic. A great part of the Christian world first turned formal and carnal, then *Arian* and *Nestorian*, &c. and in the end *Mahometan*. Do we not see that looseness and profanity in the conversation of sundry, doth easily usher in Popery in their profession; but much more swiftly do such men by swarms decline from the truth and embrace errors, when to their natural inclination and corrupt disposition temporary advantages or disadvantages, the countenance or disrespect, the command or threatning of civil authority, cometh to be super-added. Hence it is, that the bulk of sundry people and nations, have, after receiving and professing the truth, sometimes suddenly shaken it off again, and turned aside into errors; whereof we have many instances, both in sacred and in church-history. Therefore, albeit the truth is for the present professed in purity by the inhabitants of this land; yet, there being amongst the body of the people such a multitude of ignorant, lukewarm, unstable, loose souls, who have lived and grown up in these sins for many years together, under the light of the gospel, as they may be easily made a prey to the temptations unto error and delusion that do already abound among us, so there is just cause to fear, that if the Lord shall, for the further punishment of our provocations, give us up into the hand of a popish or heretical power, who should enjoin their profession by law, that many such would soon turn popish or heretical.

cal. And whether this may not be our lot to be exerciſed with ſuch a trial, I leave it to wiſe men to judge.

Conſideration Fifth.

From the great decay of a true public ſpirit, and of diligence, and zeal, and watchfulneſs in the things of God; and from the great increaſe of a ſpirit of ſloth, and neutrality, and ſecurity amongſt us.

THOUGH in the things of God it be eminently true, that *except the Lord build the houſe, the builder buildeth in vain*, except *the Lord keep the city, the watchman watcheth in vain:* Yet doth he call upon, and command his people to be zealous for his houſe, and to be faithful and watchful in the things that relate thereunto. The bleſſing is his, and the duty is ours: And as it is a token for good when his people are cordial and active for his intereſts; ſo it is a prognoſtic of ruin and decay when they become neutral and indifferent, and deal with a ſlack hand, and wax ſecure in the midſt of dangers. In ſpeaking to this, it is not my purpoſe to charge backſliding upon any party or perſon in the land, upon the account of public differences; I think, that without reflecting upon theſe, or giving offence to any that are concerned therein upon one hand or another, that taking the body of this church complexly, it may be truly ſaid, that there is a great decay of a true public ſpirit, and of former integrity and diligence, zeal and watchfulneſs for the things of God amongſt us; and that no party are ſo inſenſible of their own guilt, or ſo tenacious of their own innocency, that they will deny this. I do not ſpeak as to appearing or acting in civil capacities, the Lord having broken our civil government to pieces, and caſt bye our governors as broken veſſels, whereof he maketh no uſe for the defence and preſervation of religion; but what a decay is upon us as to many of theſe things that do beſeem us as Chriſtians, eſpecially in ſuch an hour of temptation; and when the public cauſe of God, and all the precious intereſts of Jeſus Chriſt and of his kingdom

kingdom, are in ſo imminent hazard. It is true, that every man hath his gifts and ſtation aſſigned him of God, according to the meaſure and bounds of which, without over-reaching, (a thing too common in theſe evil days) he is to demean himſelf. But it is alſo true, that all of us being members of the body of Chriſt, and having an intereſt in the things that concern his kingdom, we ought to be ſo far of public ſpirits, as not only cordially to wiſh well unto, and pray for the common intereſt thereof, but alſo according to the talents we have received of him, and in our ſtation, and as we are thereunto called of God, to put forth ourſelves cheerfully and actively for the good of the ſame whether by doing or ſuffering. The public cauſe and work of God was wont to be precious and dear unto us; and the time was when no pains, nor expence, nor hazard was declined, for preſerving or promoving thereof: we were wont to ſtir up ourſelves, and to ſtir up one another, and to wreſtle with God in prayer and ſupplication together, and apart, for ſetting up of Jeruſalem, and making her a praiſe in the earth. The time was, when upon the appearing of any danger to religion, though haply but afar off, and far inferior to many dangers that are now within our bowels, ſeaſonable and clear warning was given thereof by the body of the watchmen in the land and many private Chriſtians made it their work to deal ſeriouſly with God in the ſecret watches of the night, for preventing of the ſame, and many were found of every rank and condition throughout the land, who did readily put forth themſelves in their ſtations and callings to prevent future, and remove preſent prejudices to religion. The time was, when the things of God were more minded and ſought than our own things; his matters were wont to have the preference in all public councils and tranſactions amongſt us; and as public motions and overtures did tend to the promoving or prejudiſing of the things of God; ſo they were wont to be entertained or rejected in public meetings. Civil intereſts were wont to be carried on in ſubordination to theſe that are ſpiritual; our own ſafety and ſecurity were wont to be minded, in ſubordination to the ſafety and ſecurity of religion, and of the kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt; but now ſuch a public and tender, and vigilant ſpirit is in a great meaſure gone, from amongſt us; and inſtead thereof, neutrality, and indifferency, and carnal

ſecurity poſſeſs many, as to what concerneth religion and the kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt; and to many it ſeemeth to be but of ſmall concernment, whether the Lord's matters ſink or ſwim; many ſeek their own things, and ſtudy to ſecure themſelves, and their own matters, but few ſeek the things of Jeſus Chriſt, or care for the preſerving or ſecuring of his intereſt. Is it not for a lamentation, that in the public meetings which have been kept in the ſeveral ſhires of this nation theſe eight or nine years paſt, there hath been little or no care, or reſentment of religion, or of the work of God, but theſe things have been in a great meaſure forgotten or laid aſide, as if we were not a people devoted to the Lord; or, as if religion were nothing of our concernment; or as if all that care did belong to miniſters only? On theſe it is indeed in a ſpecial way incumbent to take care thereof; and would to God, that all of us who bear that name, did endeavour to be faithful and vigilant in this hour of tentation. There is no doubt but we, even we alſo, have our own faintings and failings as to many things that are called for in ſuch a day, and that our breaches have both weakened ourſelves, and blunted and ſtumbled others: But ſurely neither all the fault, nor all the duty is ours only. As the ſeveral ranks and eſtates of the land were honoured of God to be eminently inſtrumental both in the beginning and progreſs of the work of reformation for ſundry years together; ſo there is no queſtion but it is ſtill incumbent to them in duty, in their ſeveral ſtations and callings, according to the oath of God in the covenant, really, conſtantly and ſincerely, all the days of their life, to endeavour the preſervation of the reformed religion in the church of *Scotland*, in doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline and government; and not to give themſelves over to indifferency and neutrality thereanent, or to give themſelves to be poſſeſſed with a ſpirit of carnal ſecurity and negligence in reference thereunto. I do not doubt but the conſcience and care of their duty is upon the hearts of ſome of all ranks in the land; but who can deny, that a ſpirit of ſecurity and neutrality hath prevailed upon many: Fleſh and blood, and carnal wiſdom will not want excuſes in theſe matters: But if we ſhall enter into the ſanctuary of the Lord, and weigh it in his balance, it cannot be excuſed, that the covenant and cauſe of God, that religion and the intereſts of Jeſus Chriſt ſhould be ſo much forgotten

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l aſide ; and that there ſhould be ſo ſmall reſentment the injuries that are done thereunto ; and that no ſe- ity nor remedy againſt the encroachments that are de thereupon, and the dangers that threaten the ſame uld be ſo much as propounded or deſired. How far his from that which we were once at ? And is there cauſe to fear, that becauſe of this lukewarmneſs, God ll ſpue us out of his mouth, as he threateneth to do o the church of Laodicea, becauſe ſhe was neither nor cold, but lukewarm in the matters of God, v. iii. 16.

Conſideration Sixth.

From the diviſions that are amongſt us.

WHILST I am ſpeaking of theſe dangers that are inteſtine, and do miniſter advantage to the ſpi- of error and deluſion ; I cannot overpaſs our diviſions, t being a danger that is none of the ſmalleſt. It is aſſertion of our bleſſed Lord Jeſus, which reaſon and erience do verify, that *a kingdom divided againſt it- cannot ſtand* ; and how ſad are theſe diviſions which in Scotland at this day? I ſhall not inſiſt on theſe that concern civil government, which yet (wherever they) have no ſmall influence upon things religious ; men ng oftentimes apt to follow that way, even in the ngs of God, that ſeemeth moſt to contribute for ſet- up or ſettling theſe civil governments or governors ich their hearts do moſt affect ; and their endeavours reanent, together with the reciprocal endeavours of ſe governors themſelves, having oftentimes no ſmall dency unto the altering or changing ſomewhat in re- on : but waving theſe things, Is there not diffe- ce and diviſion amongſt us, even in order to ngs religious, *viz.* the diſcipline and government of church, and the covenant, and a great part of the work of reformation, *&c* ? It is true, there hath n external ſubjection in theſe things by the body of inhabitants of this land ; but it were to ſhut our eyes

and to befool ourſelves in the clear day, to think, that all theſe who did externally ſubject thereunto, before the year 1650, do now approve thereof; the practices and profeſſion of many witneſſing the contrary; ſome being openly fallen off to Independency; ſome to Anabaptiſm; ſome to Quakeriſm; and many being fraught with the old malignant enmity againſt the covenant and work of reformation, and the diſcipline and government of the church; ſpeaking evil of, and reproaching theſe things at their pleaſure, and making it manifeſt, that they would be glad of any means and opportunity to bear down and overturn the ſame: And how ſad are theſe diviſions that are amongſt us of the miniſtry? How are the watchmen who ought to ſee with one eye, and to ſpeak with one tongue, and to bear with one ſhoulder, divided amongſt ourſelves? It is not my purpoſe, at preſent, to diſcover the fountain of this evil, or to impute the guilt thereof to one rather than to another; neither do I mean from the bad conſequences of our diviſions, to debate innocency and truth into ſilence, or to perſuade to an union upon any terms, though with the increaſe of our ſin againſt God, and with the greater prejudice of his work, and with more offence to the conſciences of theſe that are truly tender and godly; but ſimply to hold forth that diviſion doth, in many reſpects, threaten danger to religion and the ordinances of Jeſus Chriſt amongſt us, that ſo the true cauſes and right cure thereof may be ſearched into, and ſtudied.

1. It giveth advantage to adverſaries to caſt ſlanders and imputations upon our church and the government thereof, as having (if they may be believed) little or nothing of that unity and peace, and love that becometh the true church and paſtors of Jeſus Chriſt.

2. It doth lay a ſtumbling-block in the way not only of ignorant, carnal and profane men, to make them caſt at religion and reformation; but alſo of ſome leſs knowing and weak amongſt the godly, who are brought to doubt which way to follow, whilſt they ſee ſome learned and godly miniſters pleading for one thing, and others alſo learned and godly pleading for another.

3. It doth much harden and confirm ſuch of that party in the land, who formerly oppoſed the work of reformation, and do retain their enmity thereto, that it is not a work that hath been of God, as having no conſiſ-

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tence, nor concord with itself, but like to pull down and destroy itself by the divisions that are among the chief instruments thereof.

4. It doth divert the judicatories of the kirk, and the members thereof, from employing themselves against the common adversaries, and promoting the exercises and power of godliness.

5. It maketh discipline and church censures sundry times to be disregarded, as not proceeding from Presbyteries and Synods jointly, but oftentimes in a divided way.

6. It breedeth sundry inconveniencies in the planting of churches, sometimes obstructing the plantation for sundry years together; sometimes planting them with men not satisfyingly qualified; sometimes making two differing plantations in one congregation, by which, both the ministers and the people come to be divided, or the dissatisfied party, if they cannot win at a minister, to be casten loose, and left without a ministry and the benefit of the public ordinances.

7. The door is thereby shut sundry times against sundry able and godly expectants, who are thereby kept from entering into the ministry.

8. Advantage is thereby given to disaffected people in some congregations, to separate and withdraw from their own lawful pastors, and either to cast themselves loose of the ordinances, or else to call and set up others in an inorderly way.

9. It doth retard and obstruct the purging of the church from insufficient and scandalous ministers and elders, who do shelter themselves, and are but taken too little notice of, under these differences and divisions.

10. It doth occasion men in the heat of their debates anent these differences, to run too far upon the asserting and venting of things for the defence of their own opinions and judgments, that may prove seeds and inlets to tenets and evils that are of greater and more dangerous consequence.

11. It doth in no small measure alienate the minds, and estrange the hearts and affections of good men one from another, and weaken them in their prayers before God one for another, and in that confidence and cordialness that they should have in their joint carrying on of common end uncontroverted duties; all which, as they

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are preſent prejudices to religion and the work of God; ſo being continued, are like to prove more and more dangerous and deſtructive thereunto.

Conſideration Seventh.

From the Attempts and Aſſaults that are made by many upon the Ordinances of Jeſus Chriſt.

AS this inferior world without the light of the ſun, would be but a maſs of darkneſs and confuſion, ſo would the church militant without ordinances; and as food is neceſſary for preſerving of the life of the body, ſo hath God appointed, that in our pilgrim condition here below, the ſoul's life ſhould depend upon the uſe of his ordinances: What is religion but a conſcientious worſhiping of God, after the manner, and in the uſe of the ordinances preſcribed by himſelf? And yet I do not know, if in any generation the ordinances of God have been more directly ſtruck at, than they are by many in theſe nations at this day: I ſhall paſs that fanatick generation of *Familiſts*, that cry down all worſhip and ordinances, as things below a ſaints condition, ſundry of which as wandering ſtars be travelling up and down theſe lands: But let us a little conſider what attempts and aſſaults are made by many againſt the word of God, and the preaching thereof, againſt the ſacraments, againſt the Lord's-day, againſt the miniſtry, and againſt the diſcipline and government of the church; which things are the very pillars of religion, that being deſtroyed, religion cannot but evaniſh and turn into nothing. As to the holy word of God contained in the ſcriptures of truth; there be not only ſundry *Jeſuits* and *Seminary-Prieſts* lurking in ſundry places of the land, who cry down the perfection and authority of the ſcriptures, and the reading thereof in our vulgar tongue, and the Bibles which are in people's hands, as falſe, and corrupt, and heretical tranſlations, and do commend unto them the authority of the church of *Rome*, and her traditions, for the ground of ſalvation, and the old Latin verſion for

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the authentic text of the ſcripture, and the Bible of *Doway* for the beſt and pureſt *Engliſh* verſion, and all our public worſhip as corrupt; but we have alſo the whole tribe of the *Quakers* concurring and conſpiring to the utmoſt of their power, to cry down the divinity and authority of the written word of God, and to perſuade ſuch as will believe them, that the ſcriptures have no authority over men's conſciences, and that no command in ſcripture that was given to others, doth bind us, ſave what we have an impulſe upon our own ſpirits for, and that every man in the world hath a light within him, ſufficient to guide him unto ſalvation, without the help of any outward light or diſcovery, and that the dictates of this inward light, are the infallible dictates of the Spirit of God, which every one is bound to hearken unto. This, as it is one of the moſt impudent, ſo it is one of the moſt compendious ways that ever was taken by Satan, for ſtriking at the root of Chriſtian religion, and baniſhing of it out of the world. If the ſcriptures be not the word of God, what have we for the ground of our faith, and rule of our duty? The light that is within us, when not derived from, and founded upon, and agreeable unto the law and the teſtimony, is but darkneſs, and leadeth us unto as many by-paths of diviſion and deſtruction, as our corrupt fancy can deviſe, or the father of lies ſuggeſt unto us: Neither are theſe men any greater friends to the ſacraments inſtituted and appointed by Jeſus Chriſt under the goſpel: they cry down baptiſm with water, and the Lord's Supper, as being but types and ſhadows ceaſing upon the appearance of Chriſt within them. The *Anabaptiſts* alſo, tho' they do not ſimply deny or oppugn the ordinance of baptiſm, yet by denying and oppugning the baptiſm of infants, born within the viſible church, they do not only at one dath un-baptize and un-church all the thouſands of our *Iſrael*, but do alſo leave our children and poſterity, in regard of any covenant-privilege, or ſeal, in little or no better condition, than theſe of Infidels or Pagans; and how prevailing an opinion and party this is in theſe nations at this day, is manifeſt enough. The Lord's day, though a moral and divine inſtitution, and generally acknowledged in the churches of Chriſt, to be the key of religion, and that ordinance which keepeth all the reſt in life and being, by ſeparating us one day of every week from the world and worldly buſineſſes, to be

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ſolemnly ſet apart and exerciſed in religious duties, chiefly theſe that concern the public worſhip of God, in the public aſſemblies of his people; yet is by many of the ſectaries of this time, alſo cried down, and the keeping thereof, ſlighted and oppoſed, which being added to that natural averſeneſs and enmity that is in the hearts of all carnal and profane men, (the number of which in all quarters of our land is not ſmall) unto the giving or keeping a day unto the Lord, threaten no ſmall danger unto this moſt neceſſary and divine inſtitution, and to the whole public worſhip of God. What is more like to take with worldly-minded men, and wanton perſons, and carnal libertines, than this, that all days are alike, and that the Lord's-day is but a device of man, and a yoke, and a bondage upon the necks of the diſciples, from which they ought to deliver themſelves? This being one of the things which carnal hearts do moſt deſire and hunt after: When carnal liberty getteth conſcience upon its ſide, and carnal and licentious practices get under the ſhadow of religious opinions, they do then wax bold as lions, and tear in pieces the precious truths and commandments of God, that ſtand in their way; and thus it is like to prove in the matter of the Lord's-day. And not only are miniſters had in deriſion, and contempt, and railed upon, and reviled as deceivers, thieves, robbers, *Baal's* prieſts, conjurers, Antichriſts, witches, devils, *Symons*, ſerpents, bloody Herodians, ſcarlet-coloured beaſts, *Babylon's* merchants, wolves, dogs, ſwine, *Sodomites*, murders, miniſters of darkneſs, curſed ſpeakers, *Cain's* ſtock, vagabonds, who walk in the way of *Cain*, *Balaam* and *Core*, and what not, that a malicious heart can invent, and a violent tongue utter; but the ordinance of the miniſtry itſelf is alſo cried down, as altogether needleſs, and burdenſome to the Lord's people under the goſpel, who (if ſome of theſe men may be believed) have no need of any outward teaching, by reading or hearing the ſcriptures opened or applied, that light within them being ſufficient to teach them in the knowledge of the will of God: As to all theſe things that concern their duty and ſalvation, or as others of theſe men will have it, all of them are warranted to be teachers themſelves, and that a peculiar office of a teaching or preaching miniſtry, is no ordinance of Chriſt: Or, if any ſuch be, that they are not to be by any mediate call from man, but by an immediate call from God,

and

and the peculiar inſtinct of the Holy Ghoſt. I may add to theſe things, the general diſreſpect and diſeſteem that prevaileth on the hearts, and appeareth in the carriage of diſſaffected and profane men, to the miniſtry; together with a ſtrong inclination that is in many, to have miniſters according to their own hearts, who will ſpeak ſmooth things unto them, and heal their hurt ſlightly, and that the maintenance of intrants to the miniſtry, to which there was wont to be free and legal acceſs by virtue of their ordination, is now ſeized upon by their civil power, who do not allow it to any, but upon condition of their declaring their reſolution to live peaceably under the preſent government: And for the diſcipline and government of the church, not only are the civil laws that concern the upholding thereof, and giving obedience thereunto, repealed, and liberty allowed to all theſe who are pleaſed to ſpeak or write againſt it, or withdraw their ſubjection therefrom; but other ſorts alſo of kirk diſcipline and government that are deſtructive thereunto, are ſet up and promoted, and protected, and countenanced amongſt us. Theſe things being ſo, is it not paſt all queſtion, that the pillars of religion, which is wiſdom's houſe, are in hazard to be overthrown by the malicious and ſubtile devices of Satan? And that it is high time for us to awake, and ſee our danger, leſt, ere we be aware, we be ſpoiled of the precious treaſure of the goſpel, and bleſſed ordinances of Jeſus Chriſt, by which we live, and in which is the life of our ſouls.

Danger Eight.

From the Growth and Increaſe of Popery in the Land.

THAT the Pope and his party have theſe many many years paſt, had a ſpecial eye upon *Britain*, and upon this nation as a part thereof, for reducing the ſame into the obedience of the See of *Rome*, is better known than that I need to inſiſt upon the proof of it; and therefore hath he always had his emiſſaries the *Jeſuits* and *Seminary-prieſts*, travelling up and down in

this Iſland, under diverſe maſks, for perverting of ſouls, and ſetting plots and conſpiracies on foot, for compaſſing that deſign. How much their hopes were heightned, and in what a fair way they were for bringing it about, before the year 1638. is freſh in remembrance: And although theſe hopes were in a great meaſure blaſted by the reformation, then begun in *Scotland*, and proſperouſly carried on in both nations for ſundry years thereafter; yet are they now again revived under our preſent diſtempers and confuſions, which (eſpecially by reaſon of the vaſt toleration of errors and hereſies, of which I have already ſpoke) do miniſter unto Papiſts great and ſingular advantages, for promoting and compaſſing their deſign. Not only is liberty afforded them to vent moſt part of the popiſh doctrine, (which keeping off the Pope's ſupremacy, and the popiſh hierarchy, with ſome other things of that kind, they may do without hazard) but theſe penal ſtatutes and laws, which concern men's coming to church, and attending the word and ſacraments, &c. being taken away; they have liberty to withdraw themſelves from the ordinances and means of conviction and inſtruction, and may keep their own private meetings with their ghoſtly fathers at home, without regard to the cenſures of the church; and in the mean while *Jeſuits* and *Seminary-prieſts*, come not a few of them into the country, and do import, or cauſe to be imported, numbers of popiſh pamphlets, which are induſtriouſly ſpread, and put into the hands of ſuch as they perceive in any meaſure inclinable to their way, or by reaſon of their malignant diſpoſition, to be in diſlike with the covenant, or the government and diſcipline of the church, or any part of the work of reformation, or to be ignorant or looſe in their converſation: Neither are ſundry of them wanting in the mean while, to the utmoſt of their power, by ſubtle and fair ſpeeches, to draw away ſuch from the purity of their profeſſion, and to inſtil into them, the love of the way of the church of *Rome*, as that which was the religion of our fore-fathers. Not a few papiſts alſo, who had formerly left the country, becauſe of the ſtrictneſs of the laws, do now return home again, and others who ſtaid at home, and did profeſs ſubjection and conformity to the church, do now withdraw and openly avow themſelves to be papiſts: Neither is their advantage ſmall by the remnant of the malignant and Prelatical party, that

is yet amongſt us: Theſe alſo having a great enmity againſt the covenant and government of the church, and the work of reformation: And there being in ſundry things a great ſympathy between theſe parties, and a great ſibneſs in their principles and ways, and a deal of readineſs to correſpond together, and to countenance one another: By theſe means, and ſuch as theſe, it comes to paſs, that popery grows and ſpreads in ſeveral places of the land from year to year; to which if we ſhall add, the correſpondence that Papiſts have with, and the encouragements they have from their friends abroad; together with the deſign (which hath been long a hatching) of the popiſh leaguers beyond ſea, of invading *Britain* as the ſtrongeſt bulwark of the proteſtant cauſe, that it being brought under, they may the more eaſily make a prey of the reſt of the Proteſtant ſtates and churches; and that this invaſion is like to be ſtated upon ſuch a quarrel, and carried on under ſuch a pretext as will engage the affection and aſſiſtance of ſome, and blunt the oppoſition of others: Do not all theſe things, put together, much heighten the danger of the true Proteſtant religion in *Scotland?*

Danger Ninth.

From our Guiltineſs in many of theſe things for which the Lord threateneth to depart, and remove his candleſtick.

I HAVE ſpoke to ſundry ſins that do abound amongſt us, as they do weaken the ſoul, in reſiſting of temptations, and in following of theſe duties that are neceſſary, for preſerving of religion in its purity and power, and as inlets to diſpoſe unto things, that are contrary and deſtructive thereunto. I ſhall now reſume ſome of theſe ſins, and add thereunto ſome others, whereof we are in a great meaſure guilty, for which the Lord threateneth to depart, and to remove his candleſtick. The firſt I name, is, That groſs ignorance of the goſpel, and of the neceſſary truths of God that poſſeſſeth

titudes of our land in this clear goſpel-day, and under the plenty of the means of knowledge. Is not this the condemnation of many, that light is come amongſt us, and that they love darkneſs rather than light? the ignorance of many is affected and perverſe, and therefore without excuſe: Is there not cauſe to fear that dreadful word, *It is a people of no underſtanding, Therefore he that made them, will have no mercy on them, and he that formed them, will ſhew them no favour*, Iſa. xxvii. 11.? And that of another of the prophets, *Be thou inſtructed, O Jeruſalem, leſt my ſoul depart from thee*, Jer. vi. 8.? The ſecond, is, The abounding and prevailing formality that is amongſt us, or a form of godlineſs without the power thereof: becauſe of this, the Lord threatens to ſend deluſion, ſtrong deluſion upon a people that they may believe a lie, 2 Theſſ. ii. 10, 11, 12. yea, to chuſe their deluſions, and bring their fears upon them, Iſa. lxvi. 3, 4. And do not ſuch deluſions ſeem to be the proper plague of theſe nations at this time, choſen and ſent of God for puniſhing our formality? Hath there been at any time more ſtrong deluſion, whether we look into the multiplicity and monſtrouſneſs of the errors that are hatched and vented, or multitude of the perſons that have come quickly to be infected therewith? This is doubtleſs a piece of the hour and power of darkneſs, wherein Satan is looſed out of his priſon, and is gone forth to deceive theſe nations, and when deluſions are choſen and ſent of God, and the holy One doth in his ſpotleſs and righteous providence, for puniſhing the ſins of men, ſay to the lying ſpirit, who offers himſelf to be the miniſter of enticing ſouls, go forth, and thou ſhalt prevail: have not all of us reaſon to tremble and fear, *Let him that thinketh he ſtandeth, take heed, leſt he fall*, 1 Cor. x. 12. The third, is, barrenneſs, and unfruitfulneſs under the goſpel, for which the Lord threatens to take away the hedge of his vineyard, and it ſhall be eaten up; to break down the wall thereof and it ſhall be trodden down; to lay it waſte, and it ſhall not be prunned nor digged, Iſa. v. 6, 7. A charge is given by the Maſter of the vineyard, to cut down the fig-tree that yielded no fruit for three years, Luke xiii. 7. And the apoſtle telleth us, *That the earth that drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth nothing but thorns and thiſtles*, is rejected and near unto *curſing*, Heb. vi. 8. And is not this in an eminent meaſure the ſin

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of our land, that notwithſtanding the Lord doth plentifully water us with the dew of heaven, and with the ſweet rain of the goſpel, day by day, yet are we, as to moſt of us an empty vine, that bringeth forth fruit unto ourſelves, but not unto God?

The fourth is, Slighting, loathing and wearying of the precious things of God, and the bleſſed opportunities thereof, and preferring our own carnal and worldly advantages thereunto, for which the Lord threatens that he will cauſe the ſun go down at noon-day, and that he will darken the earth in the clear day, and that he will ſend a famine of hearing the words of the Lord, and that his people ſhall wander from ſea to ſea, and from the north even to the eaſt, they ſhall run to and fro to ſeek the word of the Lord, and ſhall not find it, Amos viii. 4, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12. And this ſin alſo reigneth among us. How many lothe the ordinances, and ſlight the opportunities thereof? How many weary of the Lord's day, and halve it between God and the world? How is our bleſſed Lord Jeſus and the ineſtimable treaſure of the goſpel valued by many at a very low rate, many times leſs than thirty pieces of ſilver? that he may juſtly take up that ſad complaint, *A goodly price that I was prized at of them*, Zach. xi. 13. and break his ſtatutes and be gone.

The fifth is, Refuſing to hearken unto God, for which my God, ſaith the prophet Hoſea, chap. ix. 17. *will caſt them away.* Are we not a rebellious and gain-ſaying people, who neither fear the threatenings of God to repent, nor entertain his promiſes to believe, nor regard his commandments to obey? and may not the Lord upbraid us as he did theſe cities wherein moſt of his mighty works were done, becauſe they repented not, and bring upon us the judgments and deſolation threatened in that place? Matth. xi. 21, 22, 23, 24. May he not becauſe of our unbelief, cut us off as he did the church of the Jews, Rom. xi. 20.? Doth not their example call upon us not to be high-minded, but to fear? May he not, becauſe of our diſobedience, and that ſo many of us do refuſe to ſuffer him to reign over us, paſs upon us that ſad ſentence that is recorded, Luke xix. 27?

The ſixth is, That which is written as the ſin of the prophets, Jer. vi. 14. Ezek. xiii. 10, 16, 22. chap. xxxiv. 18, 19, 20, 21. Mic. iii. 5. for which the Lord threatens that night ſhall be unto them, and that they

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ſhall not have a viſion, that it ſhall be dark unto them, that they ſhall not divine, and that the ſun ſhall go down over them. I do not intend the application of this to any upon the account of public differences; but without reſpect to parties or differences, it can hardly be denied, that though (bleſſed be God for it) there be in the land many precious miniſters of both judgments who ſtudy to divide the word of God aright, warning the wicked to turn from the evil of their ways, and encouraging the godly in the purſuit and practice of godlineſs, and ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to weary ſouls: Yet there be not a few who heal the hurt of the daughter of the Lord's people ſlightly, and do ſpeak peace to theſe to whom the Lord doth not ſpeak peace; who thruſt with the ſide and the ſhoulder, and bite with the teeth thoſe who ought to be encouraged and comforted.

It is ſadly bemoaned by the ſerious ſeekers of God in many places of the land, that the work of ſome miniſters is, not to commend themſelves to every man's conſcience as in the ſight of God; but to handle the word of God deceitfully, in making ſad the hearts of the righteous by turning the edge of their doctrine againſt them, under the notion of hypocrites and ſectaries, and ſuch like; and in ſtrengthening the hands of the wicked, that he ſhould not return from his wicked way, by promiſing him life; by which it cometh to paſs, that ſundry of the people in ſundry congregations, do bleſs themſelves in their hearts, and ſay, that they *ſhall have peace, though they walk in the imagination of their hearts, adding drunkenneſs to thirſt*; and that the few ſeekers of God that are in theſe congregations, or in the country about, are looked upon by ſuch as the vileſt and moſt hateful of men, and their way more ſcarred at than that of the drunkard, or the common ſwearer; becauſe of this there is cauſe to fear that the Lord ſhall accompliſh the threatening of the prophet, by ſending darkneſs inſtead of divination.

The *ſeventh* is, Dealing treacherouſly with God in the matter of his covenant, for which the Lord threateneth dreadful deſolation, Deut. xxix. 22, 23, 24, 25. And in many ſcriptures beſides, which threatenings he hath eminently verified againſt the church of the Jews, who becauſe of breach of covenant were caſt out of his ſight many hundred years ago, and have continued in that doleful and deſolate condition unto this day; and

are not we, even we alſo, theſe who have been unſted-faſt, and have dealt falſely in the covenant of God? I ſhall not deſcend into particulars about which there may be difference; but ſure I am, that cleaving unto God, and cloſe walking with him, and zeal for the kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt, and againſt the open enemies and adverſaries thereof, and the reforming of ourſelves and our followers in our ſeveral ſtations and capacities, will be denied by none, to be amongſt the great ends, whether of our baptiſmal covenant, or of our national covenant, or of the ſolemn league and covenant. And that every tender heart among us, will alſo acknowledge, that moſt of us have not only come exceedingly ſhort, but moſt palpably and groſly tranſgreſſed in order to all theſe things, in ſo far that the very obligation thereunto, is not only forgotten, but trodden under foot of many; a ſin that is much heightened by the greatneſs of the Lord's mercies and wonderful works manifeſted and done in our behalf, in the contriving and carrying on of theſe covenants, and by the openneſs and ſolemnity of our way, in engaging ourſelves thereunto. We may ſay, that becauſe of the oath of the covenant the land mourneth, and that God hath a great and ſore controverſy with us for this thing, and that there is juſt cauſe to fear, that as he hath begun, ſo he will continue to purſue the quarrel thereof, until he bring darkneſs and deſolation upon us, unleſs mercy ſhall prevent us, by giving us to repent and turn again to himſelf.

The eight, is, forſaking our firſt love, for which the Lord threatens to remove the candleſtick of the church of Epheſus, Rev. ii. 4. which may alſo breed us great fear, that our candleſtick ſhall be removed; and that upon theſe two grounds, firſt, becauſe we have in a great meaſure left our firſt love, and declined from our former attainments. I ſhall not compare this generation of our church with the generation of our fathers; I mean, thoſe who did ſhake off the yoke of the Roman Antichriſt, and embrace the light of the goſpel, from whoſe zeal we are far degenerated; but let us compare ourſelves with ourſelves, I mean what we are now with what we once were, and that but a very few years ago, and ſee if there be not cauſe to ſay, we have left our firſt love. I ſhall name but a few particulars, *firſt*, There was in our love not long ago a tender reſpect to all the precious truths of God, with a fervent deſire and ſerious endea-

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vour of attaining and poſſeſſing them in their purity, which brought forth a deal of abhorrence and indignation againſt every thing that tended unto the leavening or corrupting of the ſame. What if the toleration that is now amongſt us, had been but moved in *Scotland* ſome ten years ago? Would it have been brooked with ſo many cloſe mouths, and with ſo many dry eyes as it is this day? *Secondly*, There was in our love a wonderful zeal for the privileges of the church, and for Chriſt's viſible kingdom amongſt us, that theſe might not be encroached upon, nor borne down by the powers of the world. But now we can hear and ſee ſad encroachments made upon theſe, and ſay little or nothing againſt it, either before God or men *Thirdly*, There was in our love a great deal of zeal againſt that bitter root of malignancy; I mean, that which is ſo diametrically oppoſite to godlineſs, and to the kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt; but now it getteth leave to grow up kindly under our ſhadow; and many are ſo favourable to it that they will ſcarce once name it, or ſuffer it to be named. *Fourthly*, There was in our love a holy ſeverity in the exerciſe of church-diſcipline for purging of the houſe of God, eſpecially againſt corrupt church-officers; but that is now in a great meaſure ſlacked and gone. *Fifthly*, There was in our love much Chriſtian and cordial reſpect one to another, which brought forth ſweet union, concord and harmony in the judicatories of the kirk, and amongſt the miniſters of the houſe of God: but now we bite and devour one another. I might alſo name the abating of our love to the ordinances, and to holy duties, and to Chriſtian fellowſhip and tenderneſs of converſation.

But paſſing theſe, I come to the other ground of fear, and that is, That we ſeem to be much more fallen from our firſt love at this day, than the church of Epheſus was fallen from her's, when God threatened to remove her candleſtick. Let us look upon the text, and ſee what Epheſus then was; *I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience*, ſaith Jeſus Chriſt unto her, *and how thou canſt not bear them which are evil, and thou haſt tried them which ſay they are apoſtles, and are not, and haſt found them liars; and haſt borne, and haſt patience, and for my name's ſake haſt laboured, and haſt not fainted.* Do we deſerve ſo great a teſtimony as this? Or are we not far ſhort in all theſe things? Where are our works, and where is our labour and patience, and where is our zeal

againſt

againſt theſe that are evil? Are we not a barren and fruitleſs people? Is not our way the way of the ſluggard, and full of murmuring and fretting? Do we not bear with many who are evil, and do we not ſuffer many to to go without trial, who ſay they are paſtors, and are not? Do we not decline the croſs of Jeſus Chriſt, and refuſe to bear and labour for his name? And do we not either faint or turn aſide to crooked ways? And ſhall we in all theſe things fall ſo far ſhort of Epheſus, and of her carriage, even when the removal of her candleſtick was threatened, and yet not fear the removal of our candleſtick? If we deal impartially with ourſelves, by conſidering all theſe our provocations which I have already named, and many more that are but too obvious and would be tedious to inſiſt upon, we cannot but be affrighted that the Lord ſhall depart from amongſt us; yea, he hath in no ſmall meaſure departed already, and this is that to which I ſhall ſpeak ſomewhat in the next place.

Danger Tenth.

That the Lord who is our light, life and ſtrength, is in no ſmall meaſure departed from us, and hath ſmitten us with many plagues of heart.

THE preſence and appearances of God amongſt a people, are either ſuch as do concern them ſimply, as men united together in civil ſociety under civil government, in order to righteouſneſs and peace, or ſuch as concern them as Chriſtian men united in a church ſtate, under eccleſiaſtic and ſpiritual government, in order to truth and holineſs. Of the firſt ſort are theſe which are manifeſted in the common operations and effects of the Spirit, when he giveth unto them the gifts of knowledge, wiſdom, fortitude, temperance, juſtice, courage and ſuch like, in reference to civil adminiſtrations, and bleſſeth and proſpereth them in the exerciſe thereof; ſo the Lord was with Cyrus, whoſe right hand he did hold to ſubdue nations before him, and to looſe the loins of kings, and to open before him the two-leaved gates, *&c.* Iſa. xlv. 1. *&c.* Of the other ſort are either theſe which are manifeſted in the more peculiar operations and effects of his Spirit, (which yet are but common in oppoſition to ſaving grace) when he giveth

unto his people the gift of prophecy, or miniſtry, or teaching, or exhortation, or church-ruling, and countenanceth them in the exerciſe thereof, for perfecting of the ſaints, and edifying of the body of Chriſt, Rom. xii. 6, 7. Eph. iv. 8, 11, 12. or elſe theſe which are manifeſted in the ſpecial operations of his renewing ſpirit, when he giveth ſanctifying and ſaving grace, and by his continued breathings thereupon, maketh his people to be more and more renewed in the inward man day by day; ſo he was with his ſervant Paul in the midſt of all his tribulations and afflictions, 2 Cor. iv. 16. and according to the meaſure of the appearances or withdrawings of God in theſe things; ſo do the matters of his people, whether civil, eccleſiaſtic or ſpiritual, proſper or decay. Now in reference to all theſe, God is in no ſmall meaſure departed from amongſt us, and hath left us under a cloud of deſertion, and ſmitten us with ſundry plagues of heart. As to civil adminiſtrations, wiſdom and underſtanding courage, ſtrength and ſucceſs were taken from us, and the Lord did ſmite us with blindneſs, confuſion and aſtoniſhment, and trembling of heart; wiſdom was not to be found with the antient, nor underſtanding and counſel with the prudent. He mingled a perverſe ſpirit in the midſt of us, that cauſed us to err in every work. He went not forth with our armies, and therefore our princes became like harts that find no paſture, and that fly before the purſuer; and the men of might did not find their hands, but became like unto women that were affrighted and did fear, becauſe of the ſhaking of the hand of the Lord of hoſts which he ſhook over our land. He made all our ſtrong-holds to be like fig-trees with the firſt ripe figs which fall into the mouth of the eater when they are ſhaken, and the gates of our land to be ſet open to our enemies; and his hand was againſt us until he had taken from us the mighty man and the man of war, the judge and the prudent, the whole ſtay of armies and ſtaff of our civil government; neither is his wrath in theſe things turned away, but his hand is ſtretched out ſtill. Our nobles are not of ourſelves, nor do our governours proceed from the midſt of us, but ſtrangers do bear rule over us, and the home-born ſons are broken as the breaking of a potter's veſſel that is broken to pieces; ſo that there is not found in the burſting of it, a ſheard to take fire from the hearth, or to take water out of the pit. Neither is the Lord's departure ſmall in reference to our church and church-adminiſtrations. He hath

ſorely cracked if not broken to pieces both the ſtaves, the ſtaff of beauty and the ſtaff of bands, the unity and authority of paſtors and church-judicatories; he hath divided us in his anger, and poured contempt upon us, and tho' we have eſſayed to heal our wound and recover our ſtrength, yet have all our eſſays hitherto, for moſt part, been fruſtrated of the Lord. Do we not come together many times for the worſe and not for the better? Is there not bruiſing inſtead of binding up, and much bitter contention and ſtrife in many of our meetings? Inſtead of the ſweet fruits of an edifying union and peace, whilſt we ſhould draw with one ſhoulder in the work of the Lord, do not ſome draw one way and others another, rendering our endeavours almoſt uſeleſs to the church, comfortleſs to ourſelves, and deſpicable to others? Hath not God in his holy and juſt indignation mingled ſomewhat of a perverſe ſpirit in the midſt of us? and are we not full of the fury of the Lord, and of the rebuke of our God? We wait for light, but behold obſcurity, for brightneſs, but we walk in darkneſs; we grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes, we ſtumble at noonday as in the night, we are in deſolate places as dead men, we look for judgment, but there is none, for ſalvation, but it is far from us. And is not the Lord's hand alſo upon his ordinances, to reſtrain and withhold the bleſſing thereof; in this reſpect much is ſown and little brought in. The word of ſalvation, as to any ſenſible evidence thereof, is but rarely bleſſed in the hand of the miniſters unto the converting of ſouls, and turning men from darkneſs unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God. It is the complaint of faithful miniſters in many places of the land, that they labour in vain and ſpend their ſtrength for nothing; yea, how doleful and dreadful is the withering and decay that is upon many ſouls who lay claim to converſion and a real intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt? The generation of the righteous in the land do bemoan this thing, and complain, day by day, that light is darkned, that life is withered, that ſtrength is abated, that preſence is evaniſhed, that tenderneſs is gone, that influences are withholden, that prayer is reſtrained and ſhut out, that faith faileth, that love is grown cold, that hearts are hardened as ſtones, that there is little or no delight in God or in his word, or in the fellowſhip of his people, that corruptions are aloft, and heart plagues do abound, that God hideth his face and is as a ſtranger unto his people, and leaveth them to wreſtle alone in their duties and difficulties,

ſo that to deny the withdrawings of God from his people, were to deny what they feel written upon their hearts, and upon their way in a continued tract of ſad experiences now for a long time. And yet whilſt it is confeſſedly thus, How little ado is there for his departings, even among thoſe who are convinced, and do acknowledge that he is in a great meaſure gone? ſome remembrance there is of a better condition, whilſt we did enjoy his fellowſhip, and his countenance did ſhine upon us, and ſome light to diſcover our loſs and the evils that do attend it, which bring a ſort of deſire to recover our former ſtate; but theſe how faint and feckleſs are they? and how many of us are in a manner content to live without God, and to ſuffer him to be gone without taking hold on the ſkirts of his garments? It may juſtly be ſaid, that *we do fade as a leaf, and* that *our iniquities like the wind do take us away*, and that there be few among us that call upon his name, or ſtir up themſelves to take hold on him; for he hath hid his face from us, and doth conſume us becauſe of our iniquities. If his gracious influences were ſtrong upon our hearts, we would not, we could not eaſily brook his departing, nor would we, or could we be ſatisfied, or hold our peace, night and day, until he did return and revive his work, and renew his ſtrength, and repair the ruins and build up the breaches of his people; and our ſitting almoſt ſatisfied and ſilent under his withdrawings, doth ſay, that many of us, tho' we have a name that we are living, yet we are dead, and that the ſpiritual life which remains in others is ready to die; which things do ſay, that our gourd is withering at the root, that religion is wounded at the heart, and ſmitten in its vitals, in the ſpiritual powers of the ſoul; all which, if the Lord breathe not from above, by pouring out his ſpirit from on high, will ſoon make any fruit or leaves of profeſſion that do remain without, to wither and decay, and leave us like Nebuchadnezzar, his tree, which by the command of the Watcher and holy One that came down from heaven, was hewn down, and had it's branches cut, and it's leaves ſhaken, and it's fruit ſcattered, and the beaſts driven from under it, and the fowls from its branches, and the ſtump of its roots only left in the earth, bound with a band of iron and of braſs, until ſeven times did paſs over it.

FINIS.

COLLECTION

OF VERY VALUABLE

SERMONS

Preached on ſeveral SUBJECTS and in divers Places in the time of the Late PERSECUTION.

By theſe EMINENT SERVANTS of JESUS CHRIST, Meſſrs JOHN KID, JOHN KING, JOHN WELCH, JOHN BLACKADDER, JOHN DICKSON, and GABRIEL SEMPLE.

COLLECTED and TRANSCRIBED from different MANUSCRIPTS, by JOHN HOWIE; and Publiſhed at the requeſt of thoſe who deſire to OWN the the ſame TESTIMONY, that ſome of theſe AUTHORS OWNED and SEALED with their BLOOD.

We are ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us, we pray you in Chriſt's ſtead be ye reconciled unto God.—2 COR. v. 20.

GLASGOW:

Printed by JOHN BRYCE, and Sold at his SHOP, *Salt-market.*—1780.

11 OCT 1902

TO THE READER.

THERE ſeems to be little or no neceſſity for treating here of the the Lives and Contendings of the Authors of the following Diſcourſes, theſe being all, except two*, touched at in the *Scots Biography*, a ſecond Edition of which is now intended.—Neither can it be rationally expected, that I ſhould now inſiſt upon the ſubject matter, ſcope or deſign of theſe diſcourſes; ſeeing that I had ſo lately an opportunity for that purpoſe in a Publication of this kind, which, I preſume, is in the hands of not a few.—All, therefore, that I ſhall hint of this nature at preſent, is, juſt to obſerve,

1ſt, THAT

* *VIZ.* Meſſrs *John Blackadder; Gabriel Semple*, of whom take the following hints. Mr. *John Blackadder* was ordained miniſter at *Traquair*, 1653, was from thence ejected after the Reſtoration, preached afterward in the fields under many hardſhips, was declared a rebel 1670,—was apprehended after many remarkable eſcapes, and brought before the Council, 1687, where he boldly avowed his preaching in the fields and his Maſter's warrant ſo to do; and being on the reſerve as to the *Torwood* Excommunication he was by them ſent to the *Baſs*, where he continued priſoner until he entered into his Maſter's joys about the year 1686.

Mr. *Gabriel Semple* was ſon to Sir *Bryce Semple* of *Cathcart*, was ſettled miniſter at *Kilpatrick* Durham before the Reſtoration; but was thruſt from thence by the *Glaſgow* Act, 1662; after which he repaired to the houſe of *Corſack* where the field preachings firſt began. He preached to the horſemen when they took the Covenants at *Lanerk* 1666, and was at *Pentland*;—after which he preached in the fields for ſome time. At laſt he was apprehended and brought before the Council: he was then liberated; but in a few weeks ſummoned to appear again; but retired to *England*, where he continued till the Revolution, when he was ſettled miniſter at Jedburgh, where he continued till his death, *Anno* 1706.

1*ſt*, THAT as to the ſubject matter or ſcope of theſe Sermons, they are ſound and ſolid, ſetting forth the ſalvation of ſinners to be ſolely of free grace, in and thro' the Mediatory offices the doing and dying of the God-Man Jeſus Chriſt in a moſt lively and ſtriking manner.—And for a doctrinal teſtimony none can be more explicit, than ſome of the Authors of theſe Sermons are in aſſerting Chriſt's headſhip over the church, the *Jus Divinum* of Preſbytery, in oppoſition to Popery, Prelacy, Sectarianiſm, and every error and hereſy whatſoever, with the duty of both private and public Covenanting, and the binding obligation of theſe National Vows that our forefathers came under in theſe lands unto the Moſt High.—And for practical religion, and cloſing with Chriſt in the goſpel offer, it is in theſe diſcourſes preſſed and recommended in the warmeſt manner. And how neceſſary and requiſite are ſuch doctrines as theſe, in this inſidious and lukewarm generation? Wherein there are not only ſuch ſwarms of Arminian caterpillars, Socinian vipers, and Deiſtical locuſts aſcending *out of the bottomleſs pit*, who daily live by corroding and gnawing at the vitals of religion, and whoſe conſtant employment conſiſts in undermining and ſapping the foundation of man's ſalvation; the productions of whom are conſtantly teeming from both Preſs and Pulpit,—*whoſe words do eat as doth a canker,—Bringing in damnable hereſy, even denying the Lord that bought them.* But even ſome of theſe bearing the Preſbyterian name, and who would have themſelves called orthodox teachers are now planing out to themſelves a ſcheme of ſentiments, which, if proſecuted in a conſiſtency with themſelves, would not only enervate the ſinews, and unhinge the whole ſyſtem or frame of Preſbyterian principles anent church-government, but even, if poſſible, relieve their implicit followers (who imbibe theſe pernicious notions) from every ſacred tye, bond or obligation: Nay, bear with me if I ſhould ſays the ſeal, of the covenant not excepted†: which

† Perhaps ſome may think, that I am here more liberal in charging than proving. But for Church-communion and public Covenanting ſee their own writings lately publiſhed to the world on that head. And for perſonal Covenanting, it is alſo by ſome denied; nay that there is any thing of the nature of an engagement in Communicating-work, or in requiring the Sacrament of the Supper. There remains therefore only the other ſeal of the Covenant, Baptiſm, and that muſt alſo fall of courſe with the other. For

which, in effect, says (whatever flaming pretences to piety and religion they may make) *let us break their bands asunder, and cast their cords from us.*—And for true practical religion, although we may say that we seem to be the generation on whom that part of the antient prophecy is fulfilled;—*many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased;* yet at the same time, many are lost for want of wholesome doctrine and instruction:—*my people perish for lack of knowledge.* This at first view may appear to be a paradox; and yet alas! it will be found an awful, and a certain truth, that there are many sitting daily under the drop of a standing ministry, that are ignorant of the very first principles of Christianity. And how many more are utterly strangers to the power and efficacious working of the holy Spirit, to convincing, converting and regenerating grace, which terminate in a godly sorrow for sin, hatred of it, turning from it unto Christ, resting and relying on the promises, uniting the soul unto him for sanctification and holiness, the happy result of that experimental knowledge or inward and spiritual feeling of what we hear and believe concerning him, being invested by the Spirit of the living GOD, putting on the new man,—*which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.*

2*dly*, As to the character and principles of some of the Authors of the following Sermons, I know it is objected,

1. In Baptism we are engaged (at least our parents for us) to renounce the devil, the world, and the flesh; which three in substance comprehend the whole duty we owe to God and one another: and what is personal or public Covenanting either, but a more explicit engagement unto these; and deny this, deny the other also. And

2. They object, it was our forefathers only that took these Covenants, and what have we to to with them, or what right had they to engage for us? But the same holds good here in Baptism: It is our parents that engage for us; and what right have they in the one more than in the other, when both are commanded duties? Deny the binding obligation of the one, the other must of necessity fall to the ground also.

Lastly, It must be equally absurd to say, that these Covenants cannot be of a moral nature, or morally binding, because there are political clauses in them: for can it be denied, that the supporting, upholding, assisting and defending of the lawful magistrate in the exercises of his office, is a commanded duty in scripture; and yet pray, how can these be done except in a political way.

jected, that they were not ſo ſtaunch in point of judgment, as the more faithful party were: as to this it muſt be granted, that ſome of theſe men, particularly, Mr. *Welch*, did not act ſuch an honeſt part, eſpecially in the affair of *Bothwel*, as could have been wiſhed or expected: But this ſeems to proceed from his want of clearneſs to caſt off the king's (I may ſay the tyrant's) authority in things civil, or rather his not knowing when to put the period betwixt a king and a tyrant, he having been once a lawful Covenanted King. And yet I muſt ſay in his behalf, that none of theſe men whoſe Sermons are here given to the Public, were ever indulged or yet approved of the indulgence, (if I miſtake not). And notwithſtanding their want of clearneſs in this point; yet they were witneſſes, and ſuffered much for the cauſe of Chriſt.—And likewiſe theſe Sermons were delivered before any compliance they can be charged with exiſted: and were it here expedient, I could produce a number of inſtances, ſhewing that great and good men in the church have thro' an erring judgment have been left to make foul ſlips of compliance.—And further, it is well known that not long before this, Mr. *Cargil* preached along with Mr. *John Blackadder*‡: and it is accounted a gem in Mr. *Cargil's* character, the teſtimony that Mr. *Blackadder* that day gave of him. And

Laſtly, LET it be obſerved, that on account the *Regiſter* ſwelled in the Preſs, above what was expected, there are none of the Lectures, and but a few of the Sermons got here printed that were propoſed, or intended at leaſt, to have been Publiſhed, could the Volume have admitted of it.

AND as I formerly noticed, as theſe diſcourſes were only taken down in ſhort-hand from the mouths of the Authors, (and moſtly by unlearned men) when delivered, they muſt be far inferior to what they would have been, had they been written and corrected by the Authors themſelves, or even now by ſome more able hands.—But in this it is hoped that the intelligent, and more indulgent Reader will throw the mantle of charity over

‡ The Reader is deſired to obſerve, it was Mr. *William Blackadder* who made the compliance in the affair of *Bothwel*, and not Mr. *John Blackadder* whoſe Sermons are now publiſhed.

any failing or imperfection he ſhall here meet with, either as to matter or order of method;—and for typographical miſtakes, neither the Authors nor Tranſcriber can otherwiſe be anſwerable or accountable.—But not to inſiſt or detain the Reader any longer, may he—*who hath choſen the fooliſh things of the world, to confound the wiſe,—and choſen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty*, The GOD that appeared to *Jacob* at *Luz* in the land of *Canaan*, the Angel of the Covenant, that bleſſed him at *Peniel* and *Mahanaim*, bleſs theſe Diſcourſes, and thoſe formerly publiſhed, with every other mean of inſtruction, for his own glory, the advancement of the Mediator's kingdom, and the edification and conſolation of his own people, that they may increaſe and perſevere in truth and true holineſs, until they are wafted over the brinks of *Jordan* unto the flowery banks of EMANUEL's land in light and glory:—for if I could perform any part of acceptable ſervice before God, with the apoſtle, *My earneſt deſire and prayer is*, (at leaſt would be) *that Iſrael may be ſaved.*

LOCHGOIN, *July 28th*, 1780.

A COL-

EDINBURGH 11-10-1902

A

COLLECTION OF SERMONS, &c.

Two SERMONS Preached by Mr. John Kid, *July* —, 1678.

Galatians v 1.

Stand faſt, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made you free.

[Forenoon's Sermon.]

SOME of you may perhaps remember what progreſs we have already made upon theſe words. We told you, that the apoſtle had here to do with a number of people, even a company of unfixed and unſtable ſouls and fleeting profeſſors: they were like children toſſed too and fro, going hither and thither. Such a practice was unbecoming the goſpel and Chriſtian liberty, whereby they were admitted unto and privileged with the New Teſtament diſpenſation. And thoſe who lived in ignorance in theſe times God winked at; but now he calls all men to repent and pray, &c. But it may be, ſome of you neither pray in private, nor in public, nor in families: and O but it is a ſhameful thing (not to ſpeak of the ſin) to ſee a man or woman living in Scotland, and not to pray; and yet I believe there are thouſands in Scotland that pray none at all.

Now, do you know how ſoon you will have to appear before God? and what will ye anſwer when he ſhall aſk, where did ye live when upon earth? 'Lord I lived in *Scotland;*' in Scotland, that was a praying land. What

time lived ye there? 'I lived there betwixt 1638 and 1649.' Indeed that was a praying time, when the gospel was both powerful and purely preached: and lived ye all that time in the land without being a praying man or woman? Remember, Sirs, that I tell you, that these days are coming upon you, when such an accompt will be sought for at you hand, when the Lord will say unto you, 'how durst ye live without God, *and without Christ in the world?*'—Man or woman, did ye not read the Bible? Perhaps some may say, I cannot read it: but that is no excuse; ye might have heard it read by others. But I'll tell you, that, by the bye, there are some that cannot read the Bible that will pray more spiritually and to better purpose than many that can read it; yea, better than many of the greatest doctors and clergy men amongst us†. Then says the Lord, 'how comes it that ye did not pray? in what case came ye before my bar?' what will your answer be? Ye will then be speechless; for then ye will appear without the wedding garment; and yet will say, *Lord, open unto us:* But he will answer and say, how came ye hither? Ye are not praying men and women: *depart from me; for I know you not: take and bind them hand and foot, and cast them into utter darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

But it may be, ye believe not these things; but whether ye believe them or not, all that ever received breath in Adam, shall stand before the judgment-seat, and there must give an account. It will be a strange company: The Lord will say in that day to believers, where came ye from? Lord, I came from such and such a place in the world; and while I was in it, thou madest me a praying man, or a praying woman, lad or lass, through thy grace? Then he will say, poor things, come in: ye are of them *that have come out of many tribulations*, &c. Ye are welcome: Come and take your rest; for you are mine. O Sirs, if ye knew how acceptable such are unto

† Here I might observe, that through the paucity of teachers the distance from Seminaries of learning, the negligence of parents, or their straitning circumstances: numbers of the inferior rank in these times were not (as we call it) book-learned; and yet some of these had more real religion by heart, than many of the learned Rabbies of this day have by rote. But as the want of this was matter of grief unto them, let none be encouraged thereby to a neglect of such a valuable privilege, when they can have it now with small expences (at least common learning) and with no great difficulty.

to the Lord; ye would all become praying folk, if ye knew the worth that is in this word, SAVIOUR. The Holy Ghoſt has choſen that word of purpoſe that his people might lay hold upon it; that is, conſolation; and to let you ſee what room ye have in God's heart, (ſo to ſpeak) that he might quadrate to our neceſſity and up-taking:—If he had expreſt and ſet forth himſelf under ſome great name ſuitable unto himſelf, ye could not have taken it up: but he revealed the name ſuitable unto the office a SAVIOUR, and we know and can take up that: For to them that are guilty ſinners, there is a kindly ſympathy betwixt ſinners (penitent ſinners) and a ſaviour.

Here the apoſtle draws a concluſion of the former premiſe; and buckle as ye will, ye ſtand in need of an admonition; *Stand faſt in the liberty*, &c. And there are none but what ſtand in need of this admonition, *Stand faſt*. Honeſt people, he puts them all in one catalogue: there is none but they ſtand in need of this admonition; nay, we muſt admoniſh ourſelves. Will ye ſtand?—*Stand faſt*. That imports fixedneſs, and not ſtaggering: it is a noble thing, Chriſtians, to be fixed; and when ye have done all, to ſtand, *Stand faſt*, ſays the apoſtle, *and quit yourſelves like men*. Know ye what profeſſion ye are of? Are ye under the king's colours? And have ye the king's badge? Then ye are under an honourable Maſter and profeſſion.

If ye will ſtand, quit yourſelves like men; and let the temptation know that ye are not like children toſſed to and fro; but that ye are men of great minds to ſtand and be fixed: and though there were no more to encourage you, this commendation of ſtedfaſtneſs might encourage you.—If there be any thinking folk amongſt you, it is thoſe who ſtand and are ſtedfaſt; and what is the reaſon, that one will thrive as much in one year, as another will do in twenty years? The reaſon is, the one is fixed, and the other is unſtable; the one is ſtedfaſt and ſtrict, and the other is lax and not ſtraight in his converſation.—So that if ye would be ripe (or ready) for any good turn, then be ſtedfaſt, and ſtand faſt, and pray that ye may be *ſanctified, and made meet for the inheritance of the ſaints in light* and glory. Seek to ſee your evils; and you may ſee as much now as you may ever ſee again. And as you ſee yourſelves enemies to God by luſts and corruption, ſtrive to have them mortified.

Ye

Ye think it a hard task to mortify these lusts and idols that are as dear unto you as your right-hand and right-eye; but you must quit them, although they should seem a thousand times more so. I confess mortification is a hard task; that is, to *go from strength to strength, until every one of them appear in Zion before God.*

But consider the idols that continue latent in your bosom; and when you have found them out, make use of the sacrificing knife to kill and crucify them: It is one of the pleas the Lord has with Scotland, their not mortifying of sin; there is not that mortifying of sin that should be among us: and the reason is, we are at a stand; but we should go forward, forward, and still forward: We should go up and down in his name; and on *in strength of God the Lord.*

Now, that which we last observed from these words, (you may remember) was, That the Christian is the only privileged man and woman in the world. What serves all other things without this? If they had mountains of gold and silver, O Christians, ye have more than them all, since ye can claim that inheritance. O but ye will be a joyful sight unto him, and a joyful sight to yourselves, when ye can claim a right unto all the privileges of true Christians' Ye are privileged men indeed; for ye shall be admitted to *see him as he is*, and to see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob: These will be your company in the kingdom of God. It is true, it is not so easy to be a Christian, as some may suppose it to be: But such as are made to stand in this liberty wherein *Christ hath made them free*, when they see it, they will be made to think it was nothing in them that made them so; but will say, it was God that came into my heart, and wrought there, and determined my heart to love and follow him, though I before followed the devil a foot.—But Christ passed by, and said, Sirs, follow him no more, but come *and follow me.* That was a brave word, that he spake to Peter and John: he said nothing more unto them at first but *Follow me*, and they did so. It is always good when folk make no hesitation when he calls them to follow him.

Then, Sirs, remember that the Christian man is a privileged man: he is so here, and shall be so through all eternity: and though he be laid in the grave, he shall not so rot as to be annihilated: he shall rise and live again. Ye may, while here, be in trouble and pain, and have

have brought forth *nothing but wind*; but hear what he says, *Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise: Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust*, &c. Isa. xxvi. 19. Ye shall rise that day, and be made capable to converse and dwell together throughout all eternity.

And here we shall speak unto a few things wherein the Christian is privileged beyond what we have formerly spoken; but perhaps we may not get through these privileges at present.—And it is even to you that we speak, O Christians, that ye may still review your privileges.——Abraham commanded his servant Eleazar to go to the land of his kindred for a wife to his son Isaac; which he did: And when he came to that good woman Rebecca, he said, Wilt thou go to my Master? He is his Father's only son, and he is a good man, and in covenant with God: Wilt thou go with me unto a far country? What answer shall I take back? What say you? Wilt thou go with this man? *And she said, I will go.* The very report of an Isaac engaged her heart to consent to go.—But, Sirs, here is a greater Isaac offered unto you this day: Will ye go unto our Lord Jesus Christ? This day we are sent as Eleazar to tell you, That he is his Father's only son; he is rich; and he wants for nothing: and he is in covenant with you. What shall we answer his Father this day concerning your consent? Will ye go and take him to be your Lord and Husband? or will ye go without him? He is *blessed, and shall be blessed*, and they are a happy and blessed people who accept of him: You may all cast down your caps before this matchless one,—who has all the blessings of the covenant to bestow upon you?—Then come and take him with all his blessings, for all grace is in him, for verily *in him is all grace and glory.* Come away, then, unto this precious and glorious Isaac: young men and young women, will ye fall in love with him? Ye will never sustain any loss by him. It were a thousand pities to let him go, and not accept of him: Come then and espouse him. Will none of you come? Will not some one or other of you come and marry this Isaac? Come and go with him, when your hearts are black and decayed: Then take a view of your privileges: Look unto all the four airths of heaven, and ye shall not find such a lovely one to match with as our Lord Jesus Christ. He is a blessed man that can review all his privileges: Tell you

and

and tell you over again, when we have done what we can, we will not get to the far end of them.

I left off laſt at ſome directions for improving of your privileges or liberty; and ye that have ſtrength to improve them, improve them; for God has given you a ſtock. Exerciſe your faith, and exerciſe your hope: It is not for yourſelf only you have got it: It is given you to benefit others; make the country-ſide the better for it. O trade with it, Sirs, and improve it. We ſpoke to ſeven or eight graces that many folk are faulty or deficient in. We ſhall now ſpeak a word unto theſe nine or ten more. And

1. *Haſt thou faith? have it for thyſelf.* We will not ſay, that a parent can ſave his child; but we ſay, a faithful praying parent, by prayer and fervent ſupplication to God, may do a child good. It is true, a godly father may have an ungodly child, (we have ſeen it ſo) and an ungodly father may have a godly child; but that which is your duty at preſent, is, to make your calling and election ſure: Pray and pray in faith, and yet know that prayer will not ſave you: Many good words will not ſave you, nor do your turn. But

2. You ſhould improve the grace of hope. When Iſrael had travelled a few days in the wilderneſs, after they had ſo lately ſeen the wonderful works of the Lord, then they had hope enough: But when they got not their beaſtly appetites ſatisfied, then they murmured and reflected upon the Lord, and upon his ſervant Moſes. They ſaid, we had better have died in Egypt, when we did eat the onions and the garlick, and were ſatisfied with the fleſh pots, *&c.* Therefore it was ſo with the Lord's people, when he began to deal with them: and he deals with their hearts to love him as here, when there was nothing but communion and fellowſhip with God: he delights in them and they in him: But when a ſtorm ariſes and flies in their faces, their hope and confidences evaniſh. The Lord ſaid, he would give them the land as he promiſed to Abraham, Iſaac and Jacob; yet they cried more after their luſts, than after the promiſed land. It was better, ſay they, with us when in Egypt, than it is likely to be with us now: when we did eat the onions and garlick, then we had hope.—Sirs, it was ſo with us in Scotland, when the work of reformation began; then we had armies in the field for the Lord, his work and covenants; but as ſoon as theſe were gone away, then we loſt all hope; and now we conclude, that all is

loſt

loſt and gone. The Lord ſaid, I will have Abraham better tried; I will ſee what hope he hath in me: Go, Abraham, and offer up your only begotten ſon Iſaac: and it is ſaid of him, Rom. iv. 18.—*who againſt hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations: he believed in hope.* And I will not ſay, that this generation will live to ſee the decayed and ruined work of reformation revived and raiſed up, and reſtored unto its former purity and integrity ——But this I believe, and ye ought to believe it, that Scotland is a covenanted land. Our land is promiſed unto Chriſt, Pſal. ii. 8. *I will give the utmoſt parts of the earth for thy poſſeſſion.*—It is a land married unto the Lord; and therefore he will not forſake it utterly. Bleſs God; but for what? Bleſs him daily for what he has done for us, and for what he has done for poor Scotland. Let your hope be improved, and pray more and more, ſo as your hope be not marred. Chriſtians not improving their hope hinders them from ſeeing their privileges. Many care not whether Chriſt ſtay with, or go from Scotland: they are not troubled about it. But hope is much decayed: There are ſtrong giant-corruptions to hinder you in the war.—God took Scotland by the hand, when it was low, and none cared for us. Do not bring up an evil report of the good land. I hope that God will yet put a new ſong in our mouths, for all that is come and gone with us.

3. There is the grace of heavenly mindedneſs: that is now decayed amongſt us. There is no more religion ſeen, at leaſt amongſt the moſt part, either upon the Lord's day or on a week-day, than amongſt thoſe that live in the wilds of America. It was not wont to be ſo: when God began with you, ye carried ſo, that the tears would have been ſeen to trickle down your cheeks. In the day of your eſpouſals, reading, preaching, hearing, and converſing, learned from heaven, might have been then read in your converſation: when any went by the way, it was refreſhing to hear that method.—There was nothing heard but what was for edification. Then were opportunities taken for prayer, and what was ſpoken was for God. But now this is in a great meaſure laid bye. We ſpeak now of our own worldly things: we think our own thoughts; and ſince it is ſo, what wonder is it, that the Lord repent and diſclaim us? We walk not with God, nor are right in heart with him:—our carnal language ſays, that the Lord is *not in all our thoughts.*—Are

we then a thriving land or people? Alas, may it not be ſeen that our practices differ little from the practices of profane wicked men on his holy day?—His day is not improved; and no wonder ye ſee not your privileges.—Are ye looking within the ſuburbs of heaven? Are ye reading and praying, and your hearts therein? O what a deſirable thing is it to have your hearts in heaven, to be heavenly as God is ſo, to ſee him face to face; and to *ſee him as he is*. Remember that a holy God is taking notice of you; and therefore ſpeak ſo, and hear ſo, and reſolve to walk more holy, and ſay, This ſhall be my work in time to come.—Up-ſitten Chriſtians, are ye not aſhamed that a poor laſs or lad (as we commonly call them) have made more progreſs, and profited more in Chriſtianity in one year, than ye have done in twenty, nay, than ſome of you in thirty years? Oh, oh, that it ſhould be ſo, and not laid to heart by you. And

4. There is the grace of humility, that is not made progreſs in by us. We all mind our own things, Baruch-like: he was a man afflicted for his own things; and Jeremiah reproves him for it.—*Seekeſt thou great things for thyſelf? ſeek them not.* It was not a fit time to ſeek after theſe things.—Nay, it is a more fit time to endeavour after abaſement and humility; for it will ſuit and become the time much better. The man that is humble and abaſeth himſelf unto the duſt, is the man that the Lord delights to dwell with: he *will dwell with the humble and contrite in heart*; the man that is taken up with God and heaven. God's cauſe and worſhip when encroached upon, go neareſt his heart; for it is ſuitable that the people of God lie low, when the houſe of God and the city of our father's ſepulchres lies waſte. If the deſolate waſte thereof were lying near our hearts, as it ought, it would ſweep away all our own things, that they would not come ſo much to our remembrance; and then we would be crying unto the Lord, when we ſee breach upon breach. If Scotland were rightly improving the diſpenſation that it is under at this day, we would be praying more and crying more that the Lord would root up and caſt out every plant that *his own right-hand has not planted*.—We are in a ſad caſe, and you may ſay how can we be but grieved when our brethren and acquaintances are led into captivity before the enemy? We do not improve the matters of God as we ought: for if we did ſo, it would go better with our own mat-

ters,

ters, even the matters betwixt God and us: Yea the conſideration of this, rightly laid to heart, would make us all weep and humble ourſelves, that the glory of God in Scotland is like to be ruined, burnt up and ſold unto captivity, as it is at this day.—Do theſe things lie near your heart? When did you mind the violence done unto her, *viz.* the church of Chriſt in Scotland, as you ought? If you were right in heart, theſe things would otherwiſe affect you, and lie more near your hearts than oftimes they do. But

5. There is ſincerity: and we are guilty and faulty if we do not improve this our ſincerity. Shall we ſay, that many of you have been but hypocrites? Indeed we fear many of you have been ſo: but we exhort you to be ſincere. The apoſtle Paul unto the Philippians does ſo:—*That ye may be ſincere and without offence, till the day of Chriſt*, Phil. i. 10. A great man in our land, (he was a man amongſt a thouſand) ſaid, he had been ſtudying ſincerity for many years, and yet he acknowledged he knew not what it was ‡. He muſt be a ſincere man that is rightly improving his privileges; but if we were ſenſible of our not improving them, it were ſo far good: but what can we expect from God, while we improve them not? Try and ſearch your own ſelves, and be not reprobate. But Chriſtian ſincerity lies here, to improve your privileges. Ye ſhould, in order to this, be acquainted with God and lie more near him, and be more knowing in his matters, and every moment be ready to appear in God's matters; and he will be found a diſſembler that does not ſo: That ſoul that abides near God, will ever be judging itſelf; it will ever be laying hold upon God by faith. God will lie near unto him: he will *be lying all night between his breaſts*: Each moment he will admit of no beloved but Jeſus Chriſt: wife, children, land, rents, &c. will be nothing in compariſon of him: All theſe will not ſatisfy, if I want him, (ſays the ſpouſe) *Saw ye him whom my ſoul loveth?—He is mine, and I am his: he feedeth amongſt the lillies.*—O Sirs, lie near him, that the power of his death and virtue of his reſurrection may come, and enable you to improve your privileges. Let ſin, every luſt and abomination

‡ According to the manuſcript, this was one of the Meſſrs. Gu hrie's: probaby, it was Mr. William Gu hrie ſometime miniſter at Fin wick.

that makes you unlike him be mortified and killed: Seek to get them all thruſt to the door, and to have ſin ſlain, that ye may live, die, and riſe again, as he did. A ſoul that is ſo, nothing will ſatisfy, but more of God's ordinances; prayer and preaching will be empty, if Chriſt be not there, and it ſee *his outgoings as the morning*. Ye ſhould cry out, Oh to be like him. It is theſe that are in neareſt fellowſhip with him, that enjoy their privileges, and have ordinances green and ſavoury: There is nothing that will pleaſe ſuch a ſoul but that.—— But

6. There is ſtability: people are not improving ſtability. Now, Sirs, what are ye to ſtand for? and what is become of us all in this reſpect? where is that going on *in the ſtrength of God the Lord?* Folk are now given to flinch in many things. The ſtedfaſt man that ſtands or keeps his ground, the more trials and difficulties he meets with, he grows the more: they put him not one ſtep back; but over them he prevails; and ſo he improves his ſtedfaſtneſs.—Therefore ſtand faſt; mark your ground before, or elſe a trial or temptation will ſoon caſt you upon your backs: it did ſo with David, and Peter. Then improve your ſtedfaſtneſs; and the more, becauſe many are going off both into right and left-hand extremes. O therefore improve ſtability, that ye turn not from the right way of the Lord. But

7. There is ſingularity; and we do not improve that. We ought to be very ſingular, if we would walk as true practical Chriſtians. If we would be juſtified and ſanctified, we muſt be ſingular; not men ſelf-conceited of vain glory; we muſt be men improving our mercies; we muſt be men of ſingular reſolution like David or Joſhua, who ſaid, Joſh. xxiv. 13. *As for me and my houſe, we will ſerve the Lord.*—Although the reſt ſhould go on in an evil and bad courſe, ſerving their own luſts and the world; yet (ſays he) I *and my* family have reſolved to ſerve the Lord. One poor man or woman will prove ſtable in their reſolutions, when another turns aſide: many in Joſhua's days went wrong, when he kept the right way. Then ſtudy more ſingularity in this; for the times call for it, even theſe times wherein our lot is fallen. Noah walked with God, and it is ſaid, *That he was a perfect man in his generation*, i. e. he walked according to the rule; and he was a preacher of righteouſneſs;

neſs; he exhorted them all to repentance: but did they do it? no, they did not.—Enoch walked with God: and it is ſaid, *He was not, becauſe God took him.*—There are thouſands in Scotland this day, that walk not with God; and yet there is a great reward provided for them that walk with him, go where they will.—So he will be a ſingular man, and a praying man, and has a happy iſſue; and this I declare unto you.

8. The grace of ſelf-examination is not in exerciſe in this our day. Then try yourſelves: we have taken an eaſy way now: we are not found in the exerciſes of this duty: men and women have left that; and it is now many years ſince it was rightly practiſed; that is to ſay, that we were going out from Egypt; but alas! we are returning back unto it again. So you muſt examine your ſtate; and ſee, whether ye are in the faith or not? whether ye be following hard after God or not? he is, as it were hovering over you: therefore ſtudy to be praying folk: try whether ye be in a thriving condition, following the Lord, and advancing in Chriſtianity. See if ye be mortifying ſin and corruption. Lay yourſelves in God's balance. Deal impartially as before God. Indeed the grace of ſelf-examination is become very rare in theſe days: but O Sirs, believe in Chriſt, and weigh yourſelves, and ſee what weight of mettle ye have, and what ye are of: ſee whether ye be of good or bad mettle. We exhort you to weigh yourſelves before God.—Many amongſt you have complied with theſe that hate God: yea, they hate God and Chriſt both: and even when his back is at the wall, (ſo to ſpeak). Therefore examine into that, and ſee your ſin in ſo doing, and be humbled for it; for the ſtreſs of your buſineſs lies in avowing of God. We are concerned to own him, and to own the government of his houſe, and to own his covenants that ye and the land did ſwear.—Examine your own particular engagements, that ye have come under at communion-days, or faſt-days. Weigh theſe things, I ſay, and ſee how anſwerably ye have walked unto them; or elſe the Lord will weigh them and you both; or rather you for the abuſing of them.—There are many may have the root of the matter in them, and yet things not be right between God and them: but the exerciſe of grace will keep things right; but the habit of grace will not keep you right, if ye be not aſſiſted by the exerciſes thereof. But

9. There

9. There is another thing that we ſhall name, and that is, ſelf-denial: it is alſo in decay amongſt us; and we cannot well tell what ſay to that. But it was a leſſon taught by Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, Mark viii. 34. *Whoſoever will come after me, let him deny himſelf, and take up his croſs, and follow me.* In what do ye deny yourſelves? What are ye doing in Scotland? Do we avow Chriſt? nay, the rulers in Scotland deny Chriſt in this: it is a requiſite duty for Chriſtians to avow Chriſt at all times, and eſpecially at this time. You muſt reſolve to ſtand and fall with his intereſt. Study to be looſed from all things that ye are ſo knit to in this world. Whatever ye are gropping after, keep a looſe grip of it: He that will not deny himſelf for Chriſt, cannot be his diſciple. Ye muſt bear with the loſs of all. What if God call for a teſtimony from you, if it be to ſuffer the loſs of goods, gear, impriſonment, baniſhment unto a ſtrange land: yea, if it be to death itſelf on a ſcaffold §, reſolve in his ſtrength to give obedience, and ſay, What have I here? there is nothing but toil, trouble and travel: ſay, my hope is in heaven. Have ye your hope there? improve this grace, and ſee if ye have a heart to ſell all things, and to *buy this pearl of great price*: It is a moſt rational reſolution: if you would be wiſe merchants, buy that; ſell all, and buy it: The want of reſolution to buy this pearl of great price, makes you undetermined in your duty. Ye are under engagements; ſtudy to acquit yourſelves: forego and quit all; and keep your engagements: reſign all away but Chriſt, and keep a ſtrong gripe of him; and keep a looſe gripe of all other enjoyments, whether it be land, rents, wife or children: keep a looſe gripe of them.—We exhort you not to mind theſe things too much;—for if we were Chriſtians indeed, we would be living in heaven, while here upon earth.—Now, Sirs, then let ſelf-denial be made conſcience of: Let it be in a dependency on God; which is the

10. And laſt grace (we ſhall mention) that we come ſhort of, *viz.* dependence on God. Let your ſouls depend

§ Here obſerve, that the Lord did enable this his witneſs, not only to practiſe and perform what he himſelf heretaugh, but alſo to ſeal the ſame with his blood; which he did upon the 14th of Auguſt next year at the croſs of Edinburgh before many witneſſes: *But them that ſleep in Jeſus, will God bring with him.*

pend on God. Where is the ſoul that is truſting and depending on him? The Spirit of God ſays, *Though the mountains were removed, and caſt into the midſt of the ſea*, &c. *And though the fig-tree ſhould not bloſſom*, ſays the church, *yet truly we will truſt in the Lord, and joy in the God of our ſalvation,—who rules in Jacob to the ends of the earth.* Know ye that all our rulers are ſet againſt God the Lord? Yet rejoice, becauſe God reigns: let your ſouls have dependence on him. Of all the reaſons why the Chriſtians in Scotland are ſo far from God, this is one of the chief: they have no truſt in or dependence on him. Who amongſt us has any truſt in or dependence on him as we ought to have?

Now (for a concluſion) what ſay ye to this? Will ye wait, and wait on? Do ye believe, that God has power, *and that the God of Jacob will be your refuge?* Are ye at that with David, Pſal. iv. 8. *I will both lay me down and ſleep; for thou, Lord, only makeſt me to dwell in ſafety?* And that ye will not care *what man can do unto you*: why? Becauſe ye have dependence on him: This is that which makes Chriſtians rejoice, although they ſhould be diſperſed through many nations, that he has promiſed to be a little ſanctuary unto them.—Say, that God and you ſhall never part: and be where you will, he ſhall be your ſanctuary that will abide wind and weather.—Dependence on God will make the Chriſtian ſuffer the loſs of all things. O ſay, *The Lord is on my ſide, I ſhall not be moved.—He is my ſtrength and my ſaving health,—my rock and ſtrong tower*; and I truſt in him, and therefore I ſhall ſtand faſt, and not fall.

Now he that can truly ſay this, is a bleſſed and a happy man: dependence on God will make folk take *joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods*: and the reaſon is, becauſe that man has his treaſure and privileges in heaven:—he has the Bible here, wherein is contained that covenant of free grace; and on that he depends. So depend on God, that he may clear up your ſky a little: depend on God with your ſouls, and that will make you improve diſpenſations: fix on God: take him as he has offered himſelf in the promiſes of the goſpel.—And to him be the praiſe. AMEN.

SERMON

SERMON II.

GALATIANS V. 1.

Stand faſt therefore in the liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made us free.—

[The ſecond SERMON on this Text.]

I WAS telling you that Chriſtians were a privileged people, beyond any other in the world. If ye be true Chriſtians, ye may look up and down through your privileges, as they are to be found in the ſcriptures: I ſay, ye may turn over the whole Bible, and yet not come to take up all your privileges: and well may ye enjoy your privileges, and much joy may ye have in them:—for none will take them from you. Therefore think much good of them, and of him who gave you them,—It was neither father nor mother that gave them unto you: it was Chriſt that made you free; and that is the perſon, I hope, that ye will think much good of,—and ye have good reaſon for it, and I hope ye will have much honeſty (or credit) of it, and much good of him, when all the reſt of the world will be made to ſtand at his left-hand trembling. We bid you neither ſay, ſpeak nor think againſt them; beware of that.

Chriſt your portion is up yonder; look up to him, while ſojourning here. When trials come upon you, then look up unto him.—Yea, I aſſure you, man cannot tell you what he is: Chriſtians cannot tell you; nay, all the world cannot tell you rightly what he is: heaven and earth cannot tell you what he is; and you may tell them, I cannot tell them:—for I cannot tell where a Chriſtian's privilege lies if Chriſt be out of it; what worth is in it?—Alas! if ye knew rightly what religion were,

and

and if ye were more in it! O mind, mind this, Sirs; and look over yonder tribulations: what is the matter, if ye become his? and what is the matter what ye be, if heaven become yours? All your loſſes ſhall be then made up unto you. O Chriſtians, ye that have grace ſing praiſe:—he hath made you a privileged people. Exalt him, and be aſhamed, if ye will not do it.—Are ye aſhamed of him? Then go your way, ye have nothing to do with him here. The day is coming, bleſſed be God, that ye ſhall not be aſhamed for his ſake. The day is coming, that ye may ſay, I ſhall count to a thouſand degrees of kindred, for I ſhall be a near kinſman to him. O then lay claim to him: I exhort you in the ſight of God, (and all that is looking through theſe elements) that ye make uſe of Chriſt and this ſalvation. What ſay ye to this? Are ye ſaying, wells us, that ever we had the offer of this ſalvation; that ever princely Jeſus came in your way, and that the day may be haſtened, when he and you ſhall finally meet together.

Now, ſoon may he come, and well may he come: ſay, *Come, Lord Jeſus,* to thy houſe again in Scotland: Pray, pray that Chriſt may come again to the palaces in Scotland. It is a wonder to me, that ſome are in their right-minds, and not breaking their very hearts for his return. What do ye ſay? Tell him from me, my heart is with him. My ſoul is with him: my heart goes out after him; and I am ſick of love.—Be aſhamed, all ye profeſſors in Scotland; we are all affronted for evermore. O Sirs, we have ſinned away Chriſt from amongſt us in all the pariſhes round about. And how many broken hearts are there amongſt us all for him? And wherefore ſerves preaching or ordinances, if Chriſt be not in them? Preaching is not worth the wagg of one's finger, if he be not there:—Now, what think ye of him? I doubt not but believers will think much good of him: all the world cannot expreſs the thoughts that they have of him. O if we ſaw but one blink of his face, we would be made to wonder at him. But I fear we loſe him while amongſt our hands: we do not hold or gripe to him; nay there are many of you that care not for him in receiving of him: ye walk only by rule of thumb, (as we uſe to ſay): if ye get him, ye will take him; and if ye get him not, ye can deliberately want him.

But prize him, ye that are privileged Chriſtians. If ye do not, come not again here the next day. And tho'

all ſhould lie bye, ſee that ye who are privileged people, lie not bye. He ſhall have a generation yet in Scotland that ſhall praiſe him; when he returns back, hands, heart, and feet and all ſhall ſet forth his praiſe. Now for the time, where are your hearts? are they going out after him? what think ye of him? I cannot tell you; but if ye ſerve and exalt him, it ſhall not be for nought: ſo ſtudy to be in him. And ye that are privileged folk, bleſs him every day; and ye are faulty, if ye do it not: what ye have here is but the earneſt of what ye are to receive hereafter: your great things are reſerved to be given you at the great day. If ye knew it, ye would long after him.

Many a brave day are ye to have there. There will be no preaching in heaven, no ordinances there: Chriſt Jeſus is the light there unto all that fair company and houſhold. Will it not be a fair family, when all the *general aſſembly of the firſt born* ſhall be conveened and met yonder in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air? There ſhall not be one a-wanting; but there ſhall be a perfect number in that day with the Father and the Son, when they ſhall all meet up in the higher houſe with Abraham, Iſaac and Jacob. Ye are great folk; ye are Chriſtians; but many ſhall fall away betwixt this and that day. Therefore guard well, whilſt you are here; and God will help you to it.—If we had our ſalvation aguiding, but God be thanked, it is in a ſurer hand than ours: our help is laid upon one who is mighty, and can guide well, *i. e.* upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who is the captain of our ſalvation. There is many a poor man and woman up yonder, that he hath guided thither. Therefore, we exhort you and preſs you, in this king's name, to begin now and bleſs him in the midſt of all your troubles. Bleſs, bleſs him that ever the captain of our ſalvation *was made perfect through ſuffering.*

Now, there will be a fair company of you there, that neither gout, gravel, nor any other diſeaſe will ſeize upon through all the ages of eternity. Ah! ah! think on your privileges; and much good may ye have of them: but if ye ſlight your mercy now, it is a hundred to one, if ever ye repent, and if ever ye ſhall have theſe offers again, if ye ſlight them now.—I tell you that angels are now taking notice what entertainment ye are giving him; men and women, lads and laſſes, are ye receiving, or will ye enter into a covenant with him never

to

to be forgotten ?—Now, men and women, what ſay ye to the offer ? Say ye, we will not accept of him ? then I am afraid, that it be ſaid by him, ye ſhall have no more of it from me. But if ye will accept of him, then come and delay not.—There have been much of this language in Scotland : he had ſtaid long from it, if he had not loved it better than ever we have loved him. While he hath reſpect to us, improve it : and O improve it now ; and when ye find him, part not with him again ; but follow him whitherſoever he goeth : Follow him in all terms and upon all hazards : and do not quit him or turn your backs upon him. *Stand faſt in the liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made you free.*

Now at this time, we ſhall only ſpeak a few things by way of direction unto thoſe who never knew Chriſt.—And, in the name of the Lord, I charge and command all to embrace him,—And there are theſe five things to prove, how much he is in earneſt with you in this matter : and our deſire is, that you and he may now meet and go home together ; and if ye get a meeting with him, you may go home joyfully, and ſing praiſe unto him in your ſmoking cottages.

Now we ſay unto you, both you that know him, and you that know him not ; We beſeech and obteſt you in the name of the Lord, that ye renew and make a ſure bargain with him ; for he will give you good entertainment this afternoon, and it is hard to ſay, if ever ye find him upon ſuch terms again. And

1*ſt*, The ground that he gives you to receive and accept of him, is this : He is come to bewail and lament over you. If ſcripture had not expreſt this, we durſt not have ſaid it. He is wailing over us, having gathered usafar off and near hand.—*How often would I have gathered thy children together*, &c. So aſſure yourſelves, if ye ſlight him now, it will be dear-bought unto you : if ye ſlight him, he will complain of you as he juſtly did, Iſa. v. 14. *What could have been done more to my vineyard, than I have done in it*, &c. And I tell you he hath given you the great things of his law : he hath had his delight with you in Chriſt before the mountains were laid.—What could Chriſt have done more amongſt you and for you, that he hath not done ? He hath been in earneſt with you, and wailing over you.—Sirs, he hath given you preaching in abundance, communion-days, faſt-days, and thankſgiving days :—He hath been ſaying to-day,

What could I have done more to the inhabitants of Clydſdale, and of Clyde-ſide †, and the inhabitants of Glaſgow? I have been looking for grapes, but *ye have brought forth wild grapes*: When I looked for a praying people, I have not got it. We command you to take this charge, in the name of the Lord, that when the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is weeping over us, it well beſeems us to wail over ourſelves, that we have given him ſuch a bad requital. Will ye bewail yourſelves? for he will take notice of every poor man or woman amongſt you, if ye ſet unto this duty. I tell you, Chriſt our Lord is in good earneſt: come and embrace your privileges: come and make them your own.—Is there not one perſon in all this great company, that will pity this tender hearted Lord and Saviour? it will be a ſad buſineſs and a ſore matter, if he be obliged to return to heaven, and complain to the Father in this manner: I have been wailing over yonder great company, and there is not a man nor woman, lad nor laſs, not one of many hundreds, that will accept of, or that cares for me. O Sirs, if this be ſo, it will draw deep: The conſideration of it ſhould have much weight with you. But

2*dly*, As Chriſt is wailing over you, in order to embrace you, ſo he is (as it were) weeping over you to accept of him. The poor Jews when they ſaw him weeping over Lazarus's grave, took notice of it, and ſaid, *behold how he loved him.* Will ye alſo take notice, lay it to heart. We would have you this day conſidering how matters go in Scotland, and what Chriſt is doing with us. We think he is doing ſimilar to that Luk. xix. 41. When he was come near he beheld the city (*viz* Jeruſalem) *and wept over it* &c. It may be, Chriſt is paſſing over Scotland, and weeping over it; he is giving you faſt-days; theſe are viſits: do not therefore grieve his tender heart by rejecting him. What? are ye a ſtupid people under immediate wrath and great hazard? we exhort you again and again, grieve not Chriſt's tender heart; for perhaps it will lie upon you, when ye cannot help it: his heart is tender, (as it were) melting over you. He ſaid to Jeruſalem, *O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, how often would I have gathered thee, as a hen doth her brood under her wings, and ye would not.* So Chriſt ſays to

† It would appear that theſe Sermons were preached near the River Clyde.

to Scotland, O Scotland, Scotland, how often would I have gathered thee!—and ye would not. What mean his exhortations, and his invitations? the report of them says this: Is it thus, that Christ would be far in amongst you in Scotland, and you care not for him? O if you would not grieve his heart, (we wot not how to word it) but we say this: that there was never a poor pitiful tender hearted mother more indulgent to a tender and beloved child, then Christ has been to us. Well then, will ye come to him and accept of him? I can assure you, he will make you welcome; and if ye will not receive him, I further assure you, that this offer shall stand on record against you, as long as sun and moon endure. Therefore, as ye would not then be guilty of your own blood, I must yet use the expression do not break, (or grieve) Christ's tender heart: and I again charge you, in his name, to embrace him; for it will not go well over with you, when he shall tell you at last, I took much pains upon you; but ye refused and rejected me.

3*dly*, We shall give you this inducement to embrace him: and we would fain hope that some of you will do it: be not refractory, but do it, Sirs:—for Christ hath waited many days and years upon your accepting of him, and is yet waiting upon you. What have ye to return in answer to his call? or what say ye unto us who are sent to call you in his name? what? say ye, he hath been waiting to be gracious: he hath been, (as it were,) looking down from heaven, day by day: he hath waited upon you from duty to duty: he might have sent you to condemnation, ere ever ye saw the Bible.—I tell you God is giving you to day a glorious offer: and he is waiting what answer ye will give. Are ye content to take him? and if not, what fault find ye in him? we bid you take him and all advantages with him; let it not be said that he hath opened his shop and yet sold no wares:—for have ye been idolaters,—swearers,—sabbath-breakers,—drunkards,—mockers of God, and his work, *&c.* if ye will now give up your names, he will accept of you for all the wrongs ye have done to him: indeed it does not become him to wait on such as you; but the scripture says, that he waits to be gracious. He hath let down (as it were) a rope from heaven, that ye may by faith gripe unto it: he is giving you a new invitation to day: and if ye would accept of it, Christ and all his angels in heaven would rejoice; this would be a marriage

day;

day: If we could buckle a certain number of you to Jesus Christ, he would go unto the Father and say, yonder is a number of poor things that have accepted of me in the offer of the gospel: and the angels in heaven would rejoice at your accepting of him: and can ye think or find in your heart to put him away? dare ye do it? if ye do, we take heaven and earth, yea and that firmament above you to witness against you; if ye do it not, it will be the dearest refusal ye ever heard of in your life.

4*thly*, To induce you farther to accept of him, he here offers himself; yea unto the most ignorant amongst you this day, he is (as it were) looking through a narrow casement in heaven to see and hear what you are doing and saying this day: are you saying, I will take him? and I will have no other beloved than him: do it, and ye will have a sweet look from him; such a look as he gave poor Peter. A little godless girl made him swear, that he knew not his Lord and Master.—Yet his tender hearted Master had more good will to him, than to forsake him utterly for all that. If ye will accept of him, go where he will, he will be for you, and he will look to you; and his look will be like a two edged sword; it will cut and pierce you wherever it comes: there will be no resisting of this: he can make one of his words go thro' you as it did Peter: his look like a sword will cut between the joints and the marrow. When he looked to Peter, it made Peter weep, and that bitterly, (and I suppose) that denying of his Master made him weep while he was in this world: and had he not reason? when he had denied his precious Lord and Master. Some of you have turned your back upon and denied your Master Christ; have ye not got such a look of him? if that have brought you to repentance, then ye have got a blessed look, and will be ashamed of your ways, and say, Oh! that ever I should have denied such a Master.—He hath got the wrong by you, and yet he makes the mends to it: Peter found it so; he proved a coward in the day of adversity: but after that, he never did such a turn again: he boldly avowed him before councils, judicatories, and great men: he still minded, that a poor girl caused him to deny him who was a kind Master: he thus still minded what he did long since: when he was before their rulers and elders, Acts iv. he spake boldly and avowed his Master, and would not be dissuaded from preaching the gospel,

goſpel, as if he had ſaid, I remember that I once denied my Maſter with oaths; but I ſhall not do this again; I ſhall avow him, and I ſhall preach him, while I live: *Whether it be right to hearken unto you more than God, judge ye: for we cannot but ſpeak the things that we have ſeen and heard.*—I will, ſays he, give him a good word, and ſpeak much to the commendation of his name.—And this may yet come to your door, to give a teſtimony to his name: ſee that ye ſpeak much then to his commendation †. Do not deny him: he may come and take goods and land from you, and do not deny him theſe, as ſome of you have already done: if ye have done it, do it no more: Let our Lord's cauſe and glory in his kingly office and his laws be executed; let it be avowed; let a teſtimony be given for it: he is King in his own houſe, and ſhall be ſo, who will or who will not: Yet have I ſet my king upon my holy hill in Zion.—And thanks be to God that we had fathers and progenitors before us, who by prayer and ſupplication, tranſmitted unto us the pure ordinances of the goſpel which we enjoy. And thus did they pray, and were privileged from God with theſe, and we have them: but what have we done for our poſterity? what can we do for them? although we cannot do any thing for ourſelves, yet will we do ſomething for the following generations. There are means now uſed by the powers of the land for robbing us of the goſpel of Chriſt. They ſent a godleſs hoſt of ſavages amongſt you, to baniſh Chriſt from amongſt us; but we hope when they came and went, ye have loſt nothing ‡: Venture yet for Chriſt; keep the word of his patience, and he ſhall keep you in the hour of temptation. Keep the word of his teſtimony: your courage in that went through heaven and earth; when ſuch and ſuch a family was plundered, hardly put to it, and ſpoiled by thoſe who did what lay in them to ruin you. Well, ſays the Lord, I have ſeen their patience, and am well con-

† This came to be the caſe with ſeveral of theſe who probably were in this auditory, a few years after this.—Neither were his exhortations in vain, when we find ſuch encomiums given to the commendation of Chriſt, his headſhip, ſovereign grace, and free mercy, in their laſt ſpeeches and dying teſtimonies.

‡ Here he ſeems to mean the Highland hoſt or militia, who in the beginning of this year were poured in upon the Weſtern ſhires of Scotland.

content with their patience and moderation: *I have ſeen, I have ſeen their affliction.* I will bleſs what remains behind: their children ſhall not miſs what is taken away: it was their ſuperfluities: I gave them it, I will give them more. I will bleſs their children, and I will bleſs their offspring. Come away then, Sirs, and ſerve this Lord: ſtrike a bargain with him. Serve him; for he is a goodly Lord and Maſter: he is waiting on you; although it ſets you better to wait upon him. What do ye ſay, all around this company? are ye content to take him, dead or living? one look of his bleſſed face will be worth all that ye can ſuffer for him? Are ye content to cloſe with him, young and old? then come and ſay, it is a bargain: "I give him my hand and my heart; and I take heaven "and earth to witneſs, that I cloſe now with him, and "him alone for my Lord and Saviour." Now I will warrant you, Sirs, Chriſt and all his bleſſed company in the higher houſe are now beholding what ye are doing: and he will ſay, Father, ſee yonder poor things are accepting of me in the offers of the goſpel: *Father, I will that they alſo whom thou haſt given me be with me, where I am,* &c. We tell you ye would all be Chriſtians, if ye knew what privileges follow them, and come to them. What art thou, ſays Chriſt? Why I am the Chriſtian whom thou gainedſt by thy goſpel. Says Chriſt, What wilt thou then do for me? Why, I will through thy grace ſuffer the worſt of hardſhips. Now ſuch as ſay ſo, or would deſire to ſay ſo, he would gladly be at it with them, (ſo to ſay). He is going through Scotland, he is walking among the ſeven golden candleſticks, to ſee who will accept of him; and well may he go, and much ſpeed may he come,—Say, Lord, ride through the nations upon thy white horſe; ride conquering and to conquer; proſpering and to proſper; from Egypt to the river, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.—He hath ſent you too many faithful Eliazers, to court or invite you to him, and to commend him unto you:—may I aſk who is he that walks in the field yonder? It is your godly Iſaac, and match with him: He is his fathers only Son: he will put him in the covenant; and that is better then gold or all worldly treaſure: he is more precious than all the kings of the earth; yea he *is the heir of all things.* You know, Iſaac was gone forth to meditate in the evening: and this, by the bye, may reprove many folk that match with the ungodly: be

godly ſhould match with the godly. Iſaac was a godly man; Rebecca a godly modeſt woman: She covered her face with a vail for modeſty; but it is not ſo with many of the great women in our land; moſt of them have loſt all modeſty, they have laid bye their vails, except when their pride or vain glory put them to it. Now we exhort you at leaſt to accept of him: he is going about to engage you, and if ye do not, perhaps ye ſhall never all get ſuch an offer again. He is calling for a peremptory anſwer from you this day. What, do ye ſay we ſhall adviſe, and give an anſwer the next day? No, no, accept of him without delay. Tell not Chriſt that tale: go no farther: reſolve upon it: Chriſt is walking now amongſt the ſeven golden candleſticks: it ſays, that Chriſt would be about with you, (allow me to uſe the expreſſion). Give up with all and take him: Quit relations, and ſay thou muſt be my God, and I muſt covenant with thee. But

5*thly*, (or *Laſtly*), To prove that Chriſt is in earneſt with us; he is wearied out with the offering of himſelf ſo often and ſo long as he hath done unto us: he hath been inviting you to take him as in that lxv. and 2. of Iſaiah, *I have ſpread forth my hands all the day unto a rebellious people*, &c. When he is ſtretching forth his hands, men and women, will ye come and accept of him? Take him and make him your own; I ſay, if ye will do it, he will give you a warm reception: he will make you welcome: he will meet you, like young babes that never knew any thing of him all their life: will ye then come and ſay, I will be for him, and not for another: I will be for thee, and take thee, and all that follows thee. Now if ye ſay ſo, it ſhall be a bargain, and it ſhall not fail. So do not weary our Lord's patience to wait upon you any longer; and if ye refuſe, ye ſhall repent it.—Remember, that the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is (as it were) hovering over you;—he is wailing over you;—he is weeping over you; he is ſtretching out his hands to accept of you;—ſay then, I will be thine; I will go with thee: it is a meeting: Lord, I will make a bargain. And the good Lord bleſs the bargain.—And to his name be the praiſe.

N. B. Should any think the two foregoing diſcourſes not ſo methodical, as what ſome Sermons are; yet they are, in their matter, both preſſing and

practical; and muſt be rather looked upon as an application unto what he had formerly delivered from this text, than any new doctrinal branch of the ſubject.—There is alſo before me in manuſcript, a pretty large Sermon (or rather a Lecture) of Mr. Kid's upon Mark viii. 27,———38. And a ſhort Sermon from theſe words, 1 Sam. iv. 21. *And ſhe named the child Ichabod, ſaying, the glory is departed from Iſrael*, &c. which for want of room, could not be here got publiſhed. This laſt diſcourſe was preached in Eaſt-Monkland, Sept. 23d, 1678.

A

PREFACE AND SERMON,

Preached by Mr. JOHN KING upon a FAST-DAY, in the Parish of KILMARNOCK, *August* 22*d*, 1678.

PREFACE.

BELOVED Friends, here is a great wonder, that ever ſuch an unkindly generation ſhould have ſo many precious evidences of the Lord towards them. This is indeed a wonder: and yet when we conſider the love, free grace and goodneſs of God, that he beſtows where and upon whom he will, and that it is not for any worth in us that he confers ſuch effects of himſelf upon [illegible] we may acknowledge it again to be no wonder, that [illegible]

whom he will, he loves and ſaves, and whom he will, he paſſes by and hardens. And if we conſider what we are in ourſelves, we may wonder that ever he ſhould have conferred any of his goodneſs upon us in theſe corners of the country, as he has done.

Now you muſt know, Sirs, that this is a day of humiliation; a day of mourning; and we cannot tell, Sirs, who has the greateſt cauſe of mourning. Though the whole country round about ſhould ſorrow and cloath themſelves with ſackcloth; the pariſhes about Dumbarton, Leven and Kilmaronock, particularly, have need to be humbled, conſidering what great wickedneſs has been done amongſt them againſt the Lord.—The Lord is calling in thoſe outcaſts; and if ye come in this day, and be from henceforth reconciled to God, and ſay as it is in Pſalm cvi. 6. *We have ſinned with our fathers; we have committed iniquity; we have done wickedly.* If ye will come and give him your hand and ſay, that ye will never do as ye have done, what might be promiſed unto your hands?—Now, theſe cauſes of humiliation are ſo obvious and ſo many, that we cannot number them: and there are many public ſins that we ſhould mourn for this day; the ſin of the land and the nation;—national ſins that abounds this day.—And then there are perſonal ſins; ſins of profeſſors, namely, thoſe that have had a name for a conſiderable time. I ſhall only hint at theſe few things following.

1*ſt*, The little eſteem that the hearers of the goſpel have had of the precious goſpel-offers of Jeſus Chriſt. This is a thing evident and manifeſt. And

2*dly*, The little ſucceſs it has amongſt us at this time; may not that be matter of ſorrow and humiliation, and a reaſon to ly low in the duſt and aſhes, and to proſtrate ourſelves before the Lord and in his ſight, that he has offered himſelf in the goſpel, and we have thought nothing of it?—and that we have never ſtudied to have it promoted and advanced in the place where we have lived? How little have ye hereabout ſought after the goſpel? and how little matter of mourning is it unto you, that ye have done ſo little to promote the work of God and intereſt of the goſpel amongſt you? And

3*dly*, The dreadful wickedneſs and impiety that now abounds amongſt all ranks: May not that be matter of ſorrow amongſt us this day?—ſuch as, blaſphemy, lyeing, ſweariug, perjury, drunkenneſs, uncleanneſs, ban-

ning, and other crimes which might be reckoned up, which may be grounds of our humiliation. As few places in the land are innocent in these things, we trow, the places here about are as guilty as any, all sorts of impieties being done amongst you.

4thly, There is the dreadful enmity that is had at the gospel, and the servants of Christ and his people: and ought not this to be matter of deep humiliation? O the enmity they have: they declare it as the sun that shines: if they could have their will, what would they do against his church, servants and people? and this must this day be matter of grief and mourning. And

5thly, There is the breach and violation of the covenants; which must be matter of mourning, sorrow and sad lamentation. Sirs, we know not how many things are wrought now in opposition to the work of God: there is ground of humiliation from all these.——And then

6thly, The dreadful formality of many, who are sitting down and lying bye satisfied with, and resting upon what they have attained, neglecting the inside of the duty, careful only about the external part; neglecting practical holiness that sometime they professed to be in practice of. O but this is sad, that folk cannot be reclaimed; we stick closs to the sins we should confess; We cannot say but we have been sinners, and some of us loose and profane; but do we refrain from these? Do we refrain from banning, swearing, and other gross immoralities, and neglect of duty? You acknowledge you have done so and so; but grow no better; acknowledge this to be a sin, and that to be a sin, and that we have done all this to the provoking of God; but nothing done for our amendment of life. And is not this ground of mourning this day? But we fear our fasts are not acceptable unto the Lord: Will *you call this an acceptable day to the Lord?* And

Lastly, There is incorrigibleness against all the strokes of God; against all we met with of old or of late: We never mind it; but go on obstinately. O sad! there is no fruit for all the pains he has taken upon us.—We would intreat you, in this your day, when ye appear to fast and to humble yourselves before the Lord, to acknowledge your own sins, and the sins of the land, and the sins of all ranks therein, sins of kings, princes, nobles, council and colleges of justice,—ministers faults, and

people's

people's faults; we intreat you, Sirs, to look that ye deal not falſly with him; See that ye mock not God this day: better you had ſitten at home, or that ſuch a day had not been appointed in ſuch a place, than have ſuch a matter as a mock faſt.—You ſay, you come to afflict your ſouls; But I fear, there be very little affliction of ſouls for all that, amongſt you. If there be any thing of it, let it be ſeen afterwards: it is not in this day that ye can do all, or that we can ſeek it; but from this day begin with it, and let it be ſeen afterwards.—But not to inſiſt, let us turn to the Lord, and ſeek a bleſſing from him to begin with. *So let us pray.*

SERMON III.

HABAKKUK iii. 2.

——O Lord, revive thy work in the midſt of the years: in the midſt of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy.

THIS prophecy, as you will ſee by reading it, contains a moſt ſpecial exerciſe of a believer, either in reference to judgments threatened, or judgments inflicted: I ſay, it contains a moſt lively exerciſe, eſpecially in troublous times of the church. It was indeed a troublous time in the church; and you ſee the exerciſe he is now engaged in: why, this prophecy holds it out, and it is ſet forth by way of dialogue between the Lord and his ſervant. The prophet, as you will ſee by reading the whole prophecy, in chap. i. had been ſadly complaining of the iniquities of the times, of theſe ſad things that were ſinful amongſt the people of the Jews; and he gets an anſwer which holds out a ſad denunciation of anger and wrath againſt Iſrael and the Jews for the ſins they had perpetrated and committed againſt him.—And we have the prophet endeavouring to intercede, notwithſtanding

ſtanding all the denunciation of wrath, and of the Chaldeans coming againſt them: and in chap. ii. he gets an anſwer in which he exhorts the prophet to bid them wait. It is true, that they deſerved wrath, and that they ſhould be broken, and that he ſhould execute the fierceneſs of his wrath upon them: Yet, ſays he, let them wait on, and I will have a care of my people; if they will confeſs and take with their faults, then I will take care of them. And in this chapter, ye have the anſwer: and here is his prayer; he falls upon a prayer for fear of the ſad things threatened.

The inſcription of the chapter ver. 1. The chapter is divided,

1. His prayer to God in order to comfort his church in her troubles, ver. 1, 2.

2. Ye have the confidence he had in God as to the amendment of the church: And

3. The confidence he had that there would be an outgate and relief to all his ſervants, from ver. 17. to the end of the chapter. Says he, *Although the fig-tree ſhall not bloſſom, neither ſhall fruit be on the vines, the labour of the olives ſhall fail, and the fields ſhall yield no meat, the flock ſhall be cut off from the fold, and there ſhall be no herd in the ſtalls;—yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my ſalvation.*—So you ſee, what height of confidence he attained by the Lord's manifeſting of himſelf; and promiſing to give them an outgate from that wicked crew that had ſo oppreſſed and borne them down.

1ſt, In the verſe read, we have ſhortly an introduction to this prayer, and the prayer itſelf: and there is the object for which he prays to God, which is the Lord's work; *revive thy work:* that is the thing he is concerned about. But, I trow, few of us are taken up about that: Who is he that goes about this duty aright amongſt us all with theſe words, *O Lord, revive thy work in the midſt of the years*, &c. ?

2dly, We have the grounds of it: it was for fear of threatened wrath and judgments; *When I heard thy ſpeech:* what was that? when I heard of thy terrible judgments, I could not hold my peace for fear of the intereſt of God: *When I heard thy ſpeech, I was* mightily *troubled;* it affected me when I heard thy ſpeech, Mic. vi. 9. *The Lord's voice crieth unto the city; and the man of wiſdom ſhall ſee thy name: hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it.* Rods have a voice; and he gives a charge

charge to take heed unto them. Thus the Lord's judgments affected him. And then

3*dly*, We have the thing the prayer is for; and it is contained in three things: (1.) It is a reviving of his work. O that the Lord would yet keep his work from ruin, and put the life in it that wicked men endeavour to deprive it of; even these wicked Chaldeans: This is the thing he prays for.

(2.) It is a hasty speech, it is a broken speech; he breaks off abruptly: *Make known in the midst of the years.* What is it that he should make known? Why, it is that he would give some gracious manifestation of his love, in order to their escape in the midst of these years: in the midst of their captivity in Babylon, give some proof that thou art God; and let thy mighty hand be seen; and give to us some special manifestation of thy hand, that this is thy work. The

(3.) Thing is, that he deprecates wrath because of sin; and he prays that it might be turned away: *In the midst of wrath remember mercy.* For all my prayers, I am afraid of wrath: We are a sinful people; we are under great wrath; he prays, Turn it away, if it be thy good will: *In the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy.*

This is the scope of the whole. We cannot stay to speak to every subject herein: but a word from the inscription, *A prayer of Habakkuk upon Sigionoth;* or, to the several tunes, as in the margin of some of your Bibles. Some render it, a prayer concerning the strange dispensation of the Chaldeans pressing them on all hands: A prayer indeed, many ways for the comforting of the poor people of God. You will see this upon the margin of some of your Bibles, *upon the several songs or tunes.* You will see that the prayers of the people of God are not all upon one and the same tune (so to speak). Some being upon one address, and some tune upon another. Sometimes they are up, and sometimes down. His people have sometimes cause to mourn, and sometimes cause to rejoice: Sometimes their hearts are up, and again sometimes they are down.—I say, his people in their addresses unto God are various: sometimes like Hezekiah, when he says, *Like a crane, or a swallow, so did I chatter, I did mourn as a dove,* &c. This oftimes falls out to be the case of the people of God; and sometimes they roar and cry out, as David: *My bones waxed old through*

my

my roaring all the day long, Pſal. xxxii. 3. And ſometimes they are made to look, ſigh and groan, and can do no more. Their addreſſes are changeable; and what are the reaſons of this? Why their exerciſes are ſo, as David; ſometimes he ſays,—*I ſhall now periſh one day by the hand of Saul*, &c. This was his exerciſe, 1 Sam. xxvii. 1. and yet again he ſays, Pſal. xxiii. 4.—*Yea, tho' I walk through the valley of the ſhadow of death, I will fear no evil.* Many and various are the exerciſes of the people of God in their addreſſes unto him.

Well, then, Sirs, I name them for this end, to let folk ſee the worthleſſneſs of many of our prayers: as I trow, the prayers and addreſſes that many of us have, are not much worth: What is the reaſon of this? Why, there is no alteration: we care not whether the work of God be up or down: few changes and little exerciſe. I fear, the exerciſe and addreſs of many in this place that hold their heads high, are little worth.—Many folk ſay, God be thanked, I never changed my prayer: many folk never change their tune and their prayers; except it be for ſome worldly thing, which will perhaps make you turn your tune; but though the intereſt of God, and your ſoul's caſe be of ſo great concernment, you never trouble yourſelves with theſe. O this will caſt many folk that can pray; or think ſo. But remember the prayers of his people are various, and their exerciſes are changeable.

Again, their prayers cannot be ſpiritual, becauſe there are no changes, nor ups and downs with them: they cannot addreſs themſelves to God.—I cannot tell, if their prayers be much worth; on the contrary, it is a good evidence that our addreſſes to God either for the work of God, or in behalf of our own ſoul's caſe, are acceptable, when you find many ups and downs in your own ſoul's caſe. But I trow, Sirs, there is little of this exerciſe amongſt us at preſent.

But the next thing, or note of obſervation, is, that the firſt word imports, that the prophet is looking upon the proſperity of the wicked, and the ſad caſe of the godly. When perſons look to that, they will think themſelves far out: it is myſterious to fleſh and blood to ſee the Lord caſting down his own people, laying them low, and ſuffering them to be trodden and trampled upon as ſo many earth's worms, by enemies and adverſaries, who have all things going well with them. In this we

will find a perplexing buſineſs: how did it perplex Jeremiah? chap. xii. 1. when he ſaw ſuch diſpenſations, this made him ſay,—*Wherefore doth the way of the wicked proſper? Wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherouſly?* And yet he dares not ſay, but the *Lord is righteous:* and in the third verſe, he prays the Lord to pull them out like ſheep for the ſlaughter: this was perplexing to him. And Aſaph was ſo perplexed, Pſalm lxxiii.—You muſt not ſcar at religion: new beginners, ſcar not ye at the croſs: but if ye get the croſs upon your back as well as others, will ye be afraid? or will ye ſuffer? will ye lay down your lives, if called unto it‡? The Pſalmiſt wonders; and it is matter of admiration, that he was afflicted all the day long; and when he gets ſtrokes all the day long, it was mighty perplexing unto him, as in Pſal. lxxiii. 14. *For all the day long have I been plagued, and chaſtned every morning.* He was ſaying, as you will ſay, *I have waſhed my hands in innocency:* but, Sirs, you ſee he turns unto another tune. Well then, ſet yourſelves for it: know, that though you meet with evil things; yet the good of all is coming. Therefore let not this ſcar you at religion and the purſuit of godlineſs, though it was perplexing to the pſalmiſt.

And then notice this: that it was a prayer of Habakkuk upon Sigionoth: it makes a perplexing caſe, the wicked proſpering, and the church caſt down: we wot not what to do; we are plagued, and they proſper.—The beſt way to get out of all this, is, to go to God by prayer: Habakkuk prayed, (as you have it in the text) and that godly man in Pſal. lxxiii. falls a-praying, when almoſt off his feet, for all his raſh ſaying, that he *had cleanſed his heart in vain*, &c. and he continued ay till he went to the ſanctuary, and then he ſaw their end.—*Then underſtood I their end. Surely thou didſt ſet them in ſlippery places:* it was not all gold that gliſtered with them: nay, it was not ſo much as the picture of happineſs: *Surely thou haſt ſet them in ſlippery places;* and what follows? *thou caſteſt them down to deſtruction.*—The proſperity of the wicked ſometimes is not long; and you know not how ſoon the vengeance of God may light upon them.—Many, now a-days, ſay that their moun-

‡ Here remark, that this worthy teacher laid down his own life for it at the market croſs of Edinburgh next year with Mr. Kid as notified above.

tain ſtands ſtrong, and that they ſhall never be moved; but ye know not how ſoon they ſhall be brought to deſtruction, and ſo come to nought. And thanks be to God, that all that they can get of his people here is but temporary;—but the ſorrows of the wicked are for long *ever-more*.

Do not grudge for your perſecution and hard uſage. You muſt be content with what you get along with the reſt of his children, while here away, and get what he allots you.——Of many things that might be noticed from theſe words, we offer only the following doctrine.

DOCT. *That God's work may be near ruin, but not quite ruined.*—REVIVE THY WORK.

1*ſt*, The caſe of the church and people of God may not only be near ruin, but there may be much deadneſs upon their ſpirits. *Revive thy work in the midſt of the years.*

2*dly*, They may not only be near ruin and dead, but alſo inſenſible of it: all of us have need to pray for reviving.

3*dly*, This may be for years, or a conſiderable time. *Revive thy work in the midſt of the years.* They were long in Babylon: a conſiderable time in trouble. We have not yet had ſo long a time of it, but we may have more. Yea, you may have fifty years of it. If you weary for theſe ſixteen or eighteen years, how would you ſtand it out, were it fifty years, or a hundred years, or, it may be, all your days? O ſay you, how will we weather it out? But you muſt go to God. There are great acts and wondrous works to do to lengthen out the troubles of his people in theſe days. One thing to comfort you, is, your troubles will end ſhortly. But the troubles of the wicked are endleſs troubles. But

4*thly*, Another thing, and then we ſhall cloſe, leſt we ſhould hinder the reſt of the work of the day §; and that is, to ſpeak a little of the duty of the hearers of the goſpel in this their day: They ſhould be much taken up about his work, and the reviving of his work.—But what is your work that ye muſt be about? Ye have been toiling all your days: but now the work we would have ye

§ It appears that Mr. Archbald Riddel preached in the afternoon from Iſa. lxvi. 18.

you about is the Lord's work: *Revive thy work in the midst of these years.* There are five or six works you must be about in your day. The

1. Thing he calls a work, is, the gathering of a church unto himself: and who should be more careful in this than you? Isa. xix. 25. *Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of mine hands, and Israel mine inheritance.* Then be careful about the church: O Sirs, this may give a deep challenge to many, that this piece of work has been little cared for by you. What care have you taken of it? If we were all brought in to give our answer, what would we say? It is true, we are no more called to be careful than our stations reach; for magistrates and those in power you see how careful they have been about that: and look even to ministers, and see what care they have had about his work. O, I fear, ministers have not been so careful of his church as we ought to have been: this is lamentable.—This belongs to you and every one of you, in your particular stations. This belongs to magistrates and ministers, masters of families and servants: No, say they, what have we to do? What can we do? Nothing. Are you sent into the world to do nothing? Ay, you should both do, and be able to do: Though you be not high members, you may be useful in your station: though not the hand or the head, yet you may be a finger or toe. So we should be all careful of the church of God: but what should we do in reference to the church? Why, look to the text; and if you can do more, lay out all your interest, all you can do or have, for the church in your capacity; and if ye can do no more, will you pray for the church, the work, and interest of God. Pray that he would advance his own work, and take care of his own church. Another thing; are we not in a capacity to do more, even to ride and to run, and to act and do for the church? Now who does that? We are all at ease: and the work of God is laid bye. But says the Spirit of God, Isaiah xlv. 11.—*Concerning the works of my hands, command ye me.*—Then,

2. There is the reformation and building up of his house. The house of God gets a stop and hindrance: See then to the building of his house; see Nehemiah chap. iii. This was one of his works that they were to fall about; to reform and build the house of God, that the Babylonians had destroyed: you should have that done

done: that is one of his works, and we ſhould all endeavour to do it. O that we could get it done. Some are not in a capacity to do this; and yet labour to do all that ye can. O Sirs, we had once a well ordered church: but what is it now? and what have we done for the building up of his work? as in that ſecond chapter of Haggai; a ſad word; they made a croſs; they wanted gold and ſilver, &c. It is true, they had many enemies: they had laid bye the building the houſe of God, and they fell to building their own houſes: and he reproves them for it, chap. i. 4. *Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houſes, and this houſe ly waſte!* Have not many done ſo now a-days? And this houſe is lying in aſhes: this is lamentable indeed, that we have not been careful in rebuilding and reſtoring the houſe of God. Let not this man and that woman; but let every one's conſcience tell him or her of this. A

3. Piece of work, that the Lord calls his work; and that is, the preaching of the goſpel; that we ſhould take care of. We ſhould all (as it were) hold our hands faſt about this; were it not for ſome, we would not know where the preaching of the goſpel would go.—Ye ſhould promote the preaching of the goſpel: it is one of his works: it is his great work. Now a-days, Sirs, and that he ſends ſome through with the preaching of the goſpel, and ſince he is doing ſo, ought we not to take care of it? It concerns our eternal happineſs: and will it not be an aggravation of our grief, if we ſhall be found careleſs of it? So that it is a wonder, that he ſhould have this care of us at all: it is a wonder, that this earth opens not its mouth to ſwallow us up, and that we go not down to the pit, ſeeing we are ſo careleſs of that which is our eternal happineſs. O how careful will we be about our own things in the world! It is an old Proverb, "Who ſhould care for us who care not "for ourſelves."——There is a

4. Piece of his work; and that is, the worſhip of God. It is called the work of God, Neh. x. 33. *All that was to make an atonement for Iſrael, and for all the work of the houſe of our God.* Nehemiah was careful about theſe things; and O that there were many Nehemiahs in our day, to pray for the work and worſhip of God. We cannot tell what we are, nor what we have done, in order to the worſhip of the houſe of God, either magiſtrate, miniſter, or people, maſter, or ſervant: Little

carefulneſs about the houſe of God, and for his worſhip. No care is taken to get it ſet up in our families: O little care amongſt us that the whole work of God ſhould be ſo ſeen unto. And

5. This is his work, the work of grace in your and my heart; and O how little care is there about that? it is called the work of grace, 1 Cor. xv. It is one of his works; therefore you would do well to ſee what care you have taken of that; or how to get it, or how to keep it when gotten; this is his work, ſays our bleſſed Lord himſelf, John vi. 29.—*This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath ſent*, to get faith's exerciſes, when rocks of temptation are like to drive you over; It is fit then to get faith in exerciſe. O if we had faith to lay hold upon his promiſes, we might ſtand upon our feet, for all that enemies could do unto us. But we want faith, and that takes us off our feet: and if we be right, we will not join with the courſes of theſe times. Judge ye, they wanted faith to believe that he was able to bring them through this world, and yet he was able to lay down meat before them? Chriſt ſaid unto his diſciples, Luke xxii. 35.—*Lacked ye any thing? and they ſaid, nothing.* The very fear of want made us all go wrong; we wot not, if ever we all ſhall go right again: and then there is his grace; not labouring to get that into our hearts has done us much evil. O labour to get it, if you have never yet had it. Will you ſay, I ſhall never be ſo indifferent as I have been in this? I lived careleſly; but I ſhall never do ſo again. Do not then want the faith of his bearing you through: the want of the faith of this has made many of us go wrong in theſe days we live in.

6. That is another of his works, that we have the goſpel preached unto us. *Ye are all partakers of my grace*, Phil. i. 7, *i. e.* of the goſpel. O indeed, if you were partakers of theſe good things, God has laid theſe things before you; and ſee that ye caſt not at your meat; and when he offers opportunities unto you, have a care that you caſt not at them; let every one of you take care, that ye be made partakers of the goſpel, and that, for theſe three or four reaſons.

1. Becauſe we have many enemies; therefore do not join with them: Ye lie by, and ſay nothing; that is not enough; when there are ſo many ſtated enemies,

up and down the land, we lie by. O see to this: what is all the malice and enmity of all our enemies, malignants, and prelates, and all these papists? Do you not see that the event and upshot of all their acts is, What shall we do to bear down all these pieces of God's work? Many attempts they have made; yet thanks be to God, they have not yet got these broken. Then have a care of these things, because they are in great hazard. A

2. Reason for taking care of these work, is, Because that they are his works: and if so, then the neck of all your difficulties will be broken: if you get the work of reformation and the building of his house set on foot, and have a care of all this, the rest will be easy work: these mountains will become a plain before you.

3. Another reason: as they are his works, therefore they should be taken care of; especially to have the gospel preached and promoted, and to have the house of God builded, and things in his house rectified: these tend much to the glory of God. When all these things go well on, O what advantage will there be in this! and if we do not so, it will be reckoned that we are for his dishonour, and not for his glory.

And then again these things, Sirs, contribute much to the edification of his saints, and the good of souls: to have the gospel preached, and the word hid in your hearts, to have the house of God rebuilt, his work revived, and things brought unto its purity and due order; is there not much good in all this? and where will you get good, if it is not therein? it is no where else. And

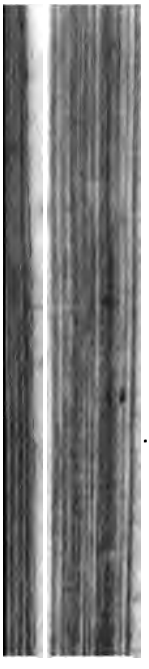
Lastly, They tend to the salvation of souls as well as to their edification; these are the means: It is the grace of God for our salvation that appears in the gospel preached unto us, that we may be made to deny all ungodliness and fleshly lusts. So all this contributes much to the salvation of souls: will you not be careful then for these? Sirs, will you not be careful for your back and belly (as we use to say) and worldly things? it should be so.—But we should bring in the work of God to be the great work. This is your work, and our first work: But we bring it in last. We wonder how you think God should be favourable unto us while we do not think, and make God and his work, our first endeavour and main study above all. O that we are so negligent of his work! O Sirs, wonder at this.

Now

Now for application, Since it is so that this should be the great care of all, to have a care of the work of God, *revive thy work*, &c. May not this doctrine bring home a sad rebuke and challenge to many a conscience? must not this be a sore regret? and we should lament it, and these folk who are regardless of this must have evil consciences, considering how little we and they have done for reformation and rebuilding of his house and the reviving of his work and worship. When we reflect upon that, it is a wonder we are in our right wits: it is a thing that brings on that dreadful sentence from God; wo to them that *are at ease in Zion*, that are not careful about the work of God; and these who lay themselves by, and are useless: and how can they escape this curse, when they might have been useful for the work of God? How can such as lie by think to be from under that woe?

The next use of application is this, is it so? then, to bring it home to you, I offer these three motives; and I shall pass by other things that might be noticed, and come to a close.

1. Will you be careful of these means, because there are few amongst many? I have little hope of them that will not be careful.—There are many that are stated enemies: these never regard the work. This should engage us to be careful about his work.—Are there any careful for the work? will you go in amongst the rest? O that there are so few to follow the Lord, and to be careful for his work! Are not there some that once seemed to be friends, and are now enemies? should not that then press us all to be friends to, and careful about his work? And should it not put us all upon praying, *revive thy work*. He may say unto us, as he said unto his disciples, *Will ye also go away, and leave me?* These that are profane, and have a profession, and no more, let them go away; but you that profess friendship, will ye go away and leave him? will ye do so? It is a sad matter to leave him. There are many works advantageous to you; but you never put your hand to a piece of work more advantageous unto you then this; to lay out yourselves for God. I will tell you amongst other things, the Father likes not that child that comes not to him: Though he be angry at them, he would love them the better, that they come to him. God loves his church, though he be angry at her. That they come unto him,



When the work of God ſhall be reſtored a
they ſhall be comforted; and ye ſhall have a
in with them.

3. There is nothing more evidences your
dren indeed than this, Pſalm cxxxvii. 6.—*I*
cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not J
fore my chiefeſt joy, &c.—All Zion's childr
and they are but Edomites that mind not h
this Pſalm they are called ſo.—And then yo
a worſe turn to your own eſtate inward or ou
to be careleſs of the work of God. *They*
own cieled houſes: but what next? they had ſ
but brought in little: ye eat, but ye have not en
will ſee it, Hag. i. 6. It was God's judgment upo
that are careleſs, you cannot do yourſelves a
The reaſon of this you have in the 9th ve
mine houſe that is waſte, and ye run every man
houſe. Well, Sirs, take heed to this: it is
houſe is lying deſolate, and they are buildin
houſes.—But I ſhall ſay no more.

May the Lord bleſs what has been ſpoken
name be the glory. *Amen.*

N. B. Although this Sermon was neithe
either in method or matter in the m

BODLEIAN
11 JUN 1902
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TWO SERMONS

Preached in the Parish of CATHCART, by Mr. JOHN WELCH.

SERMON IV.

2 CORINTHIANS v. 10.

For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

[FORENOON'S SERMON.]

THERE is a generation of men in the world, that can neither be enticed nor compelled: they can neither be allured nor perſuaded unto their duty. But they and their duty are at ſuch variance and diſtance, that nothing will perſuade them to it: neither promiſes nor threatenings, love nor terror, ſtrokes nor allurements, nothing will perſuade and reconcile them to their duty. Again, there is a number of men and women that nothing will divert, or ſeparate them and their duty.—I ſay, they are of the contrary diſpoſition: Nothing will perſuade the one unto their duty; and on the contrary, nothing can ſeparate the other from their duty. Paul was ſuch a one: It was long ere he fell unto duty; and it was long ere he was reconciled unto it: He got a ſore onſet of the law, and a terrible ſtroke of

humiliations, are he and his duty ever reconciled together.—But from the time that God did him saving good, he was the man that loved by his duty. Now he's come at his duty, and neither threatenings, pains, frowns, nor allurements can separate or set him and his duty at variance again.—But contrary to all impediments, he resolves to go on: no opposition or impediment can hinder or divert him from it. These indeed were many, and coming from divers hands; sometimes from Pagans, and sometimes from the Jewish church, who clave to the Mosaical rites and ceremonies, and sometimes from false brethren: Yet nothing could separate him and his duty in preaching the gospel; but still he pressed forward in spite of every contrary wind of opposition.

Now, in this chapter he gives a reason for his first adherence unto his duty.—I know, says he, *we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.* We must all stand there: I that preach, and you that hear, must stand before this judgment seat; and because I am persuaded what a terrible judge he is, therefore I bend it my work to beseech men to be reconciled to God, to intreat them to forsake their sinful courses: therefore, says he, I will make it always my work to intreat them to turn from them, and live; and if they will not, to tell and persuade them that they shall die. *Therefore knowing the terrors of the Lord we persuade men,* &c.

In the words there are two things considerable.

First, The doctrine which is set down in the verse we read, *for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.*

Secondly, There is the use of the doctrine for improvement, in the beginning of the 11th verse, *Therefore knowing the terrors of the Lord,* &c. Or we may take it thus: there is a doctrine or proposition laid down in the text,—*We must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.*

Then there is the conclusion drawn from it, which is this,—*We persuade men*; as if he had said, Seeing there will be such a day, we cease not, night nor day, *to persuade men.*

But I shall speak a word to the doctrine; and there are these three or four things considerable in it.

1*st*, There must be a day of judgment; for there is a judge, and there are parties to be judged; and there is a reward: therefore it must follow, that there will be a day of judgment. And

2*dly*, There

2*dly*, There is one that is to be judge; and it is Jesus Christ the second Person of the blessed Trinity; who is appointed of the Father to be judge.—Therefore it is called, *the judgment seat of Christ.*

3*dly*, There are those that are to be judged, and these are all men; *we must all appear*: all that are here and else where; all that are dead, and all that are living, and all that ever shall live; all from Adam to the end of the world shall appear on this day. And

4*thly*, There is the business of the day for which it is appointed: it is appointed that every one may receive a reward according to his works: which includes, first, an examination or trial; after that a sentence will be passed;—and then there will be a putting of the sentence into execution. Great will be the business of that day.

We shall draw all that we intend to say unto this one point of doctrine,

DOCT. *That there shall be a day of judgment appointed, wherein every one, man and woman, shall receive a reward or punishment, suitable to the measure of their works or offences.*

In speaking to this point of doctrine, I shall speak a word unto the following particulars.

I. That there will be a general judgment, and what are the reasons for it.

II. I shall speak a word unto what day this will be.

III. Who will be the judge of that day.

IV. I shall speak a word to the sentence, and the execution of that sentence. And

Lastly, A short word of application, or what improvement we are to make of this great doctrine. And

I. There are very good reasons why there will be a day of judgment. And

1. Because there is many a wrong and unjust sentence passed here upon earth. Many times the guilty are acquitted, and the innocent sentenced and condemned: oft-times the godly are cried out against and condemned as malefactors, when the wicked of the world are rewarded, *and set in high places.* Therefore, there must be a day

of judgment, when all evil ſentences, all acts of parliament, all condemnators, all perſons and cauſes whatſoever, ſhall come to a hearing again.—It ſhall be a day wherein the righteous judge of all the earth, will try, whether ye have been right or wrong judged; a day for judging theſe cauſes that were wrong judged on earth. Many times the people of God are here looked upon as heretics and ſeditious perſons; becauſe they follow their duty, and obey God rather than man. Therefore a day muſt be, when ſuch wrong ſentences muſt be judged and heard a-new again. But, you'll ſay, they have laws and acts of parliament for all that they do. It is true, as to the moſt part of all the martyrs that have been burnt, beheaded and hanged, it was ſtill the breaking of a law, or diſowning an authority that was laid to their charge, excepting a few that have been privily murdered. Even our Lord Jeſus himſelf, they pleaded the breaking of the law againſt him. So, I ſay, this is a good reaſon. This day of judgment both muſt and will be, becauſe of ſo many wrong ſentences here paſſed on earth. This made Solomon ſay, *I ſaw the place of judgment, that wickedneſs was there; and the place of righteouſneſs, that iniquity was there; and I ſaid in mine heart that God ſhall judge the righteous and the wicked.* There are many wrongs done, that are never judged nor puniſhed; and there are many that are wrong judged; and therefore, ſays the Lord, there ſhall be a ſolemn day, wherein not only all cauſes, but all perſons ſhall be judged.

I aſſure you, that are followers of Chriſt, it concerns you to be fixed in the faith of this truth; for ſometimes the people of God will be at this, that they know nothing in all the world that they can take comfort or encouragement from, to bear them through, but this; that there is a day coming wherein God *will judge the righteous and the wicked:* that there ſhall be a day wherein it ſhall be known who has been the knave, and who has been the honeſt man; a day wherein the people of God ſhall be comforted, and both parties heard; when the Lord will aſk, Wherefore was all this blood ſhed in the city and in the fields? Wherefore, and upon what account was this? Why, bleſſed Lord, will the people of God ſay; it was for adhering to thee, and abiding ſtedfaſt by our covenant; even for this, that we would not perjure ourſelves, and forſake and diſclaim thee.—Then will the Lord ſay to the wicked and the perſecu-

tor?

tor :—Yea, and was it for this that ye took ſo many lives, and put up ſo many heads and hands ? and was it even for this that ye ſtigmatized, impriſoned and baniſhed ſo many ? and was it for this that ye made ſo many poor widows and orphans ?' Believe, believe it, Sirs, the buſineſs will yet come to a hearing again : many that have been condemned here, will in that day be abſolved ; and thoſe that ſentenced them, ſentenced with an everlaſting irrevocable ſentence, *Depart from me*, &c.—— Therefore, commit your cauſe, caſe and buſineſs, in the way of well-doing, unto the righteous Lord, who will make a glorious account at that day of thoſe who do ſo. Believe it, that ſuch a day will be, that whatever injuſtice ye ſuffer now, yet your cauſe will not go ſo ; but it will come to a hearing again : therefore commit your cauſe unto him in *well-doing, as to a faithful Creator.* A

2. Reaſon is, becauſe there are many things hid and ſecret now, that muſt be made manifeſt in that day. There are many things done in ſecret, of which the manifeſtation and diſcovery depend upon that day : and that is another reaſon why there muſt be a judgment-day, wherein God will bring every work to be tried, whether it be good or evil. It will alſo be a day of recompence : and ſuch a day muſt be to bring many hid things to light : how many murderers have died, and never one knew it ? how many ſecret adulterers, whoremongers, witches and wizards have died, and never man knew it ? And O the works of darkneſs that will be brought to light at that day ! how many hid hypocrites and ſabbath-breakers will that day bring to light ? and for this very reaſon there muſt be a day of judgment, that many ſecret and hidden things may be made manifeſt. A

3. Reaſon is, becauſe there are ſome here, that plead themſelves now to be above the judgment of any here ; or that they are not to give a reaſon for what they do here to any but God ; and therefore there muſt be ſuch a day, wherein not only all cauſes, but all perſons ſhall be heard and judged, be they high or low, be they rich or poor : the judge and the judged ſhall be all heard again. This is another reaſon for this day, becauſe ſome plead exemption from all judgment now, or *to give any account for* what they do ; and therefore a *day of judgment* there ſhall be. A

4. Reaſon

4. Reaſon I ſhall obſerve, is this, Becauſe the people of God are longing for it: they pray and cry for it, and they hope for it; and God has commanded his people to wait for it: it is their deſire: they cry, *Come, Lord Jeſus, come quickly.* And—*how long, O Lord, holy and true, doſt thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?* So the godly wait and pray for it; but the wicked hope and deſire that it may never be: and whether will he hear and anſwer the prayer of the godly, or grant the deſire of the wicked, think ye? or whether will he fruſtrate the hopes of his people, or the hopes of his enemies? And therefore, there muſt be a day of judgment, otherwiſe God will fail to hear his people. And

Laſtly, God has been manifeſting ſome of his properties: he has been manifeſting his mercy: he has glorified and magnified it above all his other works: therefore, there muſt be a day for the manifeſting of his juſtice and holineſs: now this day will be a ſolemn day of the manifeſtation of that property of God upon all the ungodly by judgment. So much for the reaſons to prove that ſuch a day there will and muſt be.

II. A word now to the ſecond thing, and that was what a day this will be. In ſpeaking to which, there are five or ſix things obſervable concerning this day.—And

1. I ſay, it ſhall be the laſt day; *the great and terrible day of the Lord.* After it, there ſhall never be day nor night any more; it is the laſt day: there ſhall be no day after it: no ſun, moon nor ſtars; no heavens, no earth, nor ſea at all: all will be then diſſolved, and *burnt up with a fervent heat.* All ſhall melt, and be gone: you'll ſay, what for a day will this be? I anſwer, it will be the great and laſt day; and as the day will be great, ſo great will the tranſactions of that day be.

2. As it will be a great day, ſo it will be a terrible day: *the great and terrible day of the Lord:* O nothing but terror: terror within and terror without: terrible to the wicked, unto many a man and woman, terrible to the perſecutors and enemies of God and his work.—How terrible to ſee the Son of man coming in flaming fire to take vengeance on all the workers of iniquity! How terrible to ſee the earth ſhaking and quaking, and the elements melting away with fervent heat! not only will the

object be terrible: but men's hearts will be filled with terror; so it will be a terrible day in these four respects:

1. In regard it is the day of accounts and reckoning. It is the day wherein we must reckon for all we have done; yea, for every secret thing, whether good or evil. It is a day wherein we must reckon for every day; for every minute and moment of time we have had; a day wherein the minister must reckon for his flock; the master for his family; the parent for his children; the elder for those of his quarter; and the magistrate for those under his jurisdiction.

2. In respect that it is a day wherein God will throughly correct the wicked and ungodly; a day when they shall be made to acknowledge their guilt, and the facts charged against them; a day wherein God will libel his enemies, and he will lead probation, and prove it against them before angels and his people: he will then lay open the book of every man's conscience, and there will be as much found in every man and woman, as will fully prove and say amen unto the whole charge laid against the sinner. And

3. It will be terrible in respect of the terrible sentence that will be then passed against them.—How terrible will it be to hear that sentence pronounced,—*Depart from me, ye cursed, unto everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!*

4. It will be also terrible in respect of the execution of the sentence; terrible to hear the shrieks and cries of the damned; terrible to hear the cries of kings, princes, earls, lords, lairds, captains, rich and poor, high and low; to hear millions and millions of millions, crying *to hills and mountains to fall on* them, *and cover* them *from the face of the Lamb*; for yonder he is coming whom we despised; and his blood we had in our offer for washing away of sin; but we despised and trampled it under foot. O such a cry will then be: yonder he is coming, that is to be my judge, that I would not have reign over me:—And *who can stand in the day of his wrath?* It will be terrible to hear the cries of damned reprobates, crying to hills and mountains, which cannot hear; yonder he is coming whom I refused and would not hear, when he offered to make peace with me.

3*dly*, As it will be a terrible day to strangers, so it will be *a joyful day* to friends, that is, to the saints; a day

day of joy and ſinging of ſongs, a day of redemption, conſolation and ſalvation, ſomething of this is ſpoken of, Iſa. xxv. 9. *Lo, this is our God: we have waited for him; and he will come and ſave us,* He is coming to receive them to himſelf, and to take vengeance on his enemies, and the troublers of his Iſrael. This will cauſe joy in the hearts of the godly; he is coming; but he is my brother that is coming. Indeed, if our judge were our enemy, as he is to the wicked, we might fear it; or if the devil and wicked men were to be our judges: but it is he who loves our ſouls, and whom our ſouls love, who is to be our judge: it is Jeſus Chriſt who ſhed his blood for us, that died for us that we might live: and will he now condemn us? And what a joyful meeting muſt this be.

4thly, As it will be a joyful day, ſo it will be a wonderful day. Every thing in it will have a more wonderful and aſtoniſhing aſpect than another. It will be a day wherein there ſhall be nothing but wonders of wonders; ſo that we have need of faith. It will be wonderful to ſee all perſons that ever lived, live, or ſhall live in the world, gathered unto one place, and appear before Chriſt: it will be wonderful to ſee him that was mocked, buffeted and ſpit upon, judged and condemned before Pontius Pilate; to ſee him arraign and panuel them before his judgment ſeat.

5thly, As it will be a great, a terrible, a joyful and a wonderful day; ſo it will be an uncertain day. It will give you no warning of its coming: *it will come as a thief in the night.* It will come unexpected and unlooked for, both by ſaint and ſinner. Some will be reading, praying, meditating and preaching: others will be ſwearing, lying, ſtealing, whoring, and drinking. It is true, there will be ſigns before it, ſuch as, the ſun will be darkned, the moon turned into blood, *&c.* There are alſo ſome general tokens, that it will not be as yet, becauſe the ſcripture is not yet fulfilled: there are certain things promiſed ſpoken of in ſcripture to be before it, to be yet accompliſhed. I ſay it is a day moſt uncertain; therefore *watch and pray, for ye know not the day nor the hour, when the ſon of man cometh.* But

Laſtly, It will not only be an uncertain; but it will be a day of gathering together, and a parting day, a day of ſeparation; even ſuch a day as never was or ſhall be the

like

like again: the ſheep ſhall be ſeparated from the goats; and the wicked ſhall ſtand in the aſſembly of traitors.—It will part many a king and his ſubjects; miniſter and his flock, maſter and ſervant, parent and child; it ſhall be ſuch a parting day, that *two men ſhall be lying in one bed: the one ſhall be taken, and the other left;* the one ſaved, and the other condemned. Many an old acquaintance and relation ſhall be ſeparated; even the huſband and the wife, the one ſhall be ſet on the right hand and the other on the left: it will ſet the king and his ſubject, the one on the right hand, and the other on the left; it will ſet the father on the right hand, and the ſon on the left. As it will be a day of meeting, ſo it will be a day of parting, even of near and dear relations never to meet again. It will be an everlaſting ſeparation. Thoſe on the right hand ſhall immediately paſs into glory, and ſo be *for ever with the Lord:* ſo the other ſhall depart to be for ever with the devil and his angels in everlaſting torment, The

III. Thing I propoſed to ſpeak to, was, who ſhall be the Judge? A day of judgment there will be; but who will be the judge in that day? It is called in the text, the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt; Jeſus Chriſt the ſecond perſon of the bleſſed Trinity is appointed judge; and that for theſe reaſons:

1. The Father has given it unto the Son as a reward for undertaking the work of man's redemption, and for all his ſufferings in the accompliſhing of that work; and has put this honour upon him to be the judge, *becauſe he is the Son of man.*

2. Chriſt is appointed judge for the comfort of his own people, that they may come the more boldly unto him: and will it not be comfortable and encouraging for them to come unto him, who is their elder brother, friend and huſband; and not only ſo, but who ſpared no pains in coming down from heaven to ſhed his heart's blood for their ſalvation. And

3. That it may be to the greater terror and confuſion of the wicked. What terror will it be to thoſe who judged and perſecuted him in his members on earth; nay, to ſee him they thus rejected and ſlighted to be their judge? If it had been another, the matter would have been the leſs; but it is he that I had in *my offer: it is he* whoſe blood for cleanſing I refuſed and

trampled under foot, and counted an *unholy thing*: it is he whom I perſecuted in his members, &c. that is now to be my judge.

Here it may be enquired, who are the perſons to be judged? I anſwer, it is all.—*For we muſt all appear before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt.* All that are living, have lived, or ever ſhall live; all rich and poor, high and low, old and young, godly and ungodly, fools and wiſe, the complier and the ſufferer, the perſecutor and the perſecuted; he that has been falſe, and he that has been faithful in his covenant; all muſt and ſhall appear there without exception.

IV. I ſhall now ſpeak a word to the ſentence that ſhall be paſſed: and there are two kinds of ſentences to be paſſed: the firſt upon the godly in theſe words,—*Come, ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you*, &c. the other upon the wicked in this manner,—*Depart from me, ye curſed, into everlaſting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.* And then the execution of this ſentence without all remedy and delay will follow: there will be no intermiſſion or interval betwixt the ſentence and its execution. Judges here will paſs a ſentence of death; but defer the execution of that ſentence.—But no ſooner will the judge pronounce that ſentence, *Depart from me*, &c. but the ſinner muſt away without delay.—And again here there ſhall be no pity: though the ſinner ſhould cry out, O judge, give me leave but to ſpeak, and hear me but one word: no, there is no hearing now, but an irrevocable ſentence paſt and put in execution.—Then many a man and woman ſhall cry out, Hear, dear Lord, have mercy upon me: I thought that thou waſt all mercy. But he ſhall anſwer, it was mercy that was offered unto thee many a-day; but thou refuſedſt that. Then, Grace, grace, will the ſinner cry: But the judge ſhall then reply, many a day thou hadſt grace in thy offer; but thou refuſedſt it: Now, the day of mercy and grace is gone.—It will then be in vain to cry, open, open unto us, Lord; and caſt us not into this place of torment; for the judge will not hear: he will have no more pity: but ſay, Devil, *take and bind them hand and foot*, and carry them to priſon, and there will be no reſiſtance, away they muſt. Now, the door of mercy, the door of hope is ſhut: no more hope, no more mercy. Then the poor ſinner is

between

between ſatan and an evil conſcience on the one ſide, on the other ſide his maſter carries him off to everlaſting torment. And O who is able to expreſs the thoughts of the ſinner's heart, when he is adjudged to the company of devils and damned ſpirits, everlaſting fire and everlaſting darkneſs, for ever and ever? That is the concluſion of the ſentence of the wicked. And the concluſion of the ſentence of the godly, is, *Come, enter into the joy of your Lord:—And they ſhall be for ever with the Lord.*

Before I come to the application, I might give you ſome reaſons or motives that cauſed me to pitch upon this text at this time. And

1. That it might imprint or leave ſome ſtrong impreſſion of this day upon your hearts: for, I think it is little believed, and as little thought of by the moſt part. The wicked hope it ſhall never be; and for the godly, they do not firmly believe it. Therefore, I choſe this ſubject, to ſee if it would leave ſome impreſſion on your hearts. I remember, I have heard of ſome who ſaid, they never ſaw a great gathering of people, but it brought this awful day into their remembrance.

2. It may be, ſome of you will be brought before man's judgment-ſeat, and even for this day's work, ere it be long. The Lord has made this trial go through the land; and it has not only come to the lord, laird, and great man; but even to the ſhepherd lad, and the kitchen maid. Theſe have been made the object of the malice of this ungodly generation. Well, Sirs, believe this, that although it ſhould be ſo, the buſineſs will come to a hearing again; your cauſe ſhall yet be heard, and at that day you ſhall have a better advocate for you, than any that ſhall be againſt you. If this were believed, there would be more courage than what is amongſt us. The

Laſt motive is this, that ye may not only be made to lay ſin and duty in the balance; but that ye may be brought to ſay, I durſt not quit Chriſt, nor neglect to hear an offer of ſalvation, when I might have it, for all the hazard that might come upon me: and ye muſt not neglect this, as ye will be anſwerable for it at this great day of judgment.

But I come now to a word of improvement of what has been ſpoken; I ſhall give you theſe uſes of the doctrine.

USE 1. We would desire and intreat you to labour to be fixed in the belief and faith of this so often confirmed a truth, that there shall be a day of judgment. The patriarchs make mention of it: the prophets make mention of it: Christ himself speaks of it: and it is a truth commonly known and confirmed in scripture: and yet little believed. Enoch the seventh from Adam speaks of it: Joel speaks of it: Malachi mentions it, *Behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven*, &c. Paul speaks of this day, Heb. ix. 27. *And it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.* And therefore it must be so, if ye believe Christ or his apostles, if ye will believe patriarchs both before and after the flood; all make mention of it; if ye believe the word of God, ye cannot deny this great truth. The thing I would press upon you from this, is, to labour to believe this well-known and confirmed truth, and make it appear by your practice, that ye believe it; by your hearing, reading, conferring, speaking, praying, &c. yea, by your eating, drinking, and every other action in life, that you believe a day of judgment. But your careless, superficial, trifling way of the performance of duty, and your omission of commanded duty, careless praying, hearing and reading, say, ye want the belief of this truth. The gross commission of forbidden sins, says, ye want the belief of this. The great profanity, inebriety, perjury, covenant-breaking, and all such things, say, that ye believe not this truth. What is the reason the drunkard continues in his drunkenness, the persecutor persecutes still? or what is the reason that some will venture on indignation of God before they venture upon the indignation of men, or that so many have forsaken God and forsworn themselves; but even the want of this great doctrine?—Fix yourselves in the faith of this, that you must appear before the judge of the quick and the dead; and answer for all that ye have ever thought or wrought; and the cause of God shall never be wronged by you. But so long as ye want the faith of this, ye shall never do that which is really good.

USE 2. Labour not only for a rational belief of it; but for a faith or belief that may affect the heart: and to help you to this,

1. Consider how certain it is. It is a truth beyond all controversy: it depends upon the faithfulness of God:

If ye believe God's word, ye muſt believe this alſo.—Shall all other things there ſpoken of come to paſs, and this one thing fail? wilt thou conſider for the bearing down of unbelief, that it depends upon no leſs then the faithfulneſs of God, and therefore is moſt certain.

2. Conſider how near it is. It is now a long time ſince it was ſaid, *The end of all things is at hand*, &c. It is not only certain that it will be, but it is certain that it is not far off. And

3. Conſider, how much of your buſineſs depends upon that day. The buſineſs of the eternal damnation and ſalvation of ſouls; the buſineſs of abſolution or condemnation depends upon the deciſions of that day; and therefore labour to believe that ſuch a day will certainly be.

Uſe 3. A third word of uſe is this to exhort. And

1. To make your acquaintance with your judge. Labour to get him to be your friend: Labour to get him to take your cauſe in hand. Labour to have your iniquities blotted out, and to make peace with him, while ye are on the way: and labour to have him for your Lord, teacher, and interceſſor,

2. Watch and pray. Be always upon your guard: *Be always ready, for ye know not the day, nor the hour, when the Son of man cometh.* Wait all the days of your appointed time. And

3. From the faith of the doctrine I would preſs you to the duty of moderation and ſobriety. This is the very uſe the apoſtle makes of this point,—*for the end of all things is at hand.* Therefore, ſays he, *let your moderation be known to all men:—and watch and be ſober.* O let it be known by your moderate uſe of the world, and the pleaſures thereof, that ye have the firm belief of this truth inſtamped upon your ſouls. And

Laſtly, You ſhould be making ready for this day: be ſtudying to be mortified to the allurements of this life. Where is the ſoul that can ſay, I am ready, *Even ſo come, Lord Jeſus?* Where is the ſoul amongſt you that can truly ſay, I have nothing to do? I have got the world crucified; I have got the upper hand of my corruptions. I am even praying,—waiting,—and longing for that day. Have you ſuch a lothing of the world, Sirs, that ye would be content now to ſee the throne erecting, and the Son of man coming and ſet thereon?

Now, (*for a Concluſion*) I would give you ſome *directions.* And

1ſt, La-

1*ſt*, Labour to make ſure your intereſt in Chriſt. Labour, and be at more pains to be aſſured of that. Labour to be mortified unto all other things; and never think to get ſure gripes of eternal life, till ye come to looſe your gripes of the world and all the pleaſures there of. Labour to ſpeak, pray, hear, confer, and do all other duties, as theſe that believe that great truth, *we muſt all appear before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt*. Walk circumſpectly; and the more becauſe this is an uncircumſpect and ungodly generation. It will not excuſe you, that ye lived in the world in an evil time. And O but it be a doleful time, ſince the goſpel was removed; a dreadful time, ſince Chriſt and his ordinances went from amongſt us.—Neither will it excuſe you, that ye lived under a lifeleſs, and (I may ſay) a godleſs miniſtry: therefore be not conformed unto this preſent world; but walk circumſpectly and wiſely. There is many a ſoul in hell, that might have been in heaven ſince the goſpel was removed (had it been ſo determined). There is many a ſoul drinking in the poiſon of ſin and ſuperſtition, and wallowing therein, that the goſpel might have been a mean of keeping from ſuch a ruining courſe. And will ye tell me who ſhall be the men that will get moſt ſkaith of the Prelates and Epiſcopal government, and have reaſon to curſe them ere all be done? I'll tell you, it ſhall not be the people of God, for all the ſuffering and hardſhips they have put them to: no, it ſhall even be thoſe who have choſen that government, and are joining with them that are perſecuting the people of of God this day, that ſhall have moſt reaſon to curſe them. The Lord's people have reaſon to pity them. The day is faſt coming that they ſhall be made to ſay, woe unto us, that ever we gave you a call; and woe unto you that ever ye embraced our call: for from the time ye came to be our miniſters, we took liberty unto ourſelves to ſin, to drink, whore, ſwear, and foreſwear ourſelves, and commit almoſt all ſorts of wickedneſs; and ye have been the cauſe of it: for we knew, ye would never reprove us for it. They that uphold them now, ſhall only have reaſon to curſe them: and for the godly they have got leaſt ſkaith of them, and they have leaſt reaſon to curſe them: they may well take a part of your gear and moveables: that ye may ſpare.—Well, Sirs, get the faith of this, that this day will be, and none can hinder

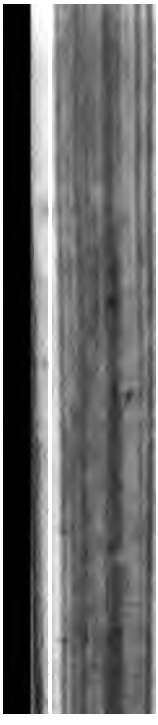
hinder it: all the world cannot hinder it an hour or moment. *He that will come, ſhall come, and will not tarry:* Though they have hindred many a preaching, many conventicles, (as they call them) yet all the kings that ever was ſhall not be able to hinder, or retard this day: it is a day wherein the Lord's people ſhall be admitted into communion with himſelf: he ſhall exalt them above kings and princes: for *they ſhall be kings and prieſts unto God and the Lamb for ever.* The pooreſt man or woman that has an intereſt in Chriſt, however contemptible here, ſhall ſit above kings, queens, princes, dukes, marquiſes, earls and lords of the earth: nay more, they ſhall be aſſeſſors with Jeſus Chriſt in judgment,—*Know ye not that the ſaints ſhall judge the world,* &c.

2*dly*, Try in what ſtate you are: whether in the ſtate and caſe that your mother left you in? whether ye be in a ſtate of nature or grace? whether ye be born again or not? Seek your converſion, and never reſt till ye attain to know, that you ſhall be freed from that heavy ſentence, that ſhall be paſſed upon the ungodly. And

3*dly*, Be much in the exerciſes of making ready for this day: labour to be preparing for it. Make it an every days work, to put ſomething forward in order to preparation for this day. O it is a great matter to come to judgment: ſome think it a great thing to appear before men's judgment ſeat, (as it indeed is). But this is a greater matter to appear before the judge of all the world.—Labour to get an acquaintance with your judge; to have him not only your friend but your advocate; labour to have all your bills of defence, right and in order againſt that day.

4*thly*, Be much in meditation and in the thoughts of your latter end, Deut. xxxii. 29. *O that they were wiſe, that they underſtood this, that they would conſider their latter end.* It is a ſpecial piece of wiſdom to be preparing for death: it will make you be much in preparing for judgment. Improve time; for there is much of it ſpent and away: *Gray hairs appear* (amongſt you) *here and there:* there is much of your work undone, and upon the improvement of time ſtands the buſineſs of life and death, heaven and hell. Therefore redeem the time: be doubling your diligence. Improve the time that yet remains: redeem it; take a part of it from your work, from your ſleep, your meat. Reſtrain your humour in

all



SERMON

2 CORINTHIANS v. 11.

Therefore, knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.

[AFTERNOON'S SERMON.]

CHRIST's flock in the world is but little as they are, there are but few being in it. Every man is God's by creation right as a creature unto their Creator. But more a right by becoming God's by election, and redemption of blessed Christ, or is it this respect them others, then that man shall perfection and opposition in the way of his profile Paul was such an one: he met with many ties and much opposition in his work; but all these things; nay, he rather found an encouragement than a hindrance in them. And, Sirs, that I defy that man that sets a right dark

Therefore knowing the terror of the Lord, we perſuade men. We have already ſpoken to the propoſition or doctrine: We come now to ſpeak of the concluſion drawn therefrom: And it may be taken up in theſe two things.

1ſt, What Paul reſolves to make his work, viz. *to perſuade men.*

2*dly*, What it was that moved him to make this his work. His work is to perſuade men; the motive that moved him to do ſo, that is the conſideration and knowledge of *the terror of the Lord.* By terror is ſignified either the power and terror of his perſon, or elſe the terror of this great judgment day. *Therefore knowing the terror of the Lord we perſuade men.*—The doctrine is this:

DOCT. *It is the duty of miniſters to perſuade men.*

But becauſe this is an imperfect propoſition of itſelf, I ſhall ſpeak a word to theſe few things following.

I. What it is that miniſters are to perſwade men of.

II. What are the grounds upon which they are to be perſuaded. And

III. Give ſome reaſons why it is ſuch a difficult work to perſuade men of theſe goſpel truths. And

Lastly, A word of application.

I return to the firſt of theſe particulars.

I. What it is that miniſters are to perſuade men of. The particulars are not ſet down in the text; for that would have run to a great length; and therefore he ſpeaks only in general. But I find theſe twelve things mentioned in ſcripture, that we have in commiſſion to perſuade you of.

1. We are to perſuade men to be convinced of ſin, and converted unto Jeſus Chriſt. We are to perſuade the ungodly and profane to turn and live; and if they will not turn, they muſt burn for ever. *Turn ye, and live: why will ye die, O houſe of Iſrael?* That is one thing we are to perſuade you of, to tell you that Chriſt is ſtanding at the door and knocking; and he will take it ill, if you refuſe to open unto him. It is a great thing *to perſuade you of the* neceſſity of converſion work or *the new-birth*; and that except ye be holy, ye ſhall never

ver be happy; and we find this work to be the work of both prophets and apoſtles. Jeremiah cries, *Return, ye backſliding children, and I will heal your backſlidings.* Jer. iii. 22. Ezekiel ſays the ſame, chap. xxxiii. 11. *Turn ye, turn ye and live, for why will ye die, O houſe of Iſrael?* Solomon makes this alſo his work, Prov. i. 20. 23. *Wiſdom crieth without, ſhe uttereth her voice in the ſtreets;— turn ye at my reproof.* Jeſus Chriſt himſelf makes this his work: ſays he, *Except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.* And ſo did his apoſtles after him. We are to tell and perſuade you to ſet about the work of faith and repentance; ſee Iſa. i. 2. Joel ii. 12. We have to perſuade you to turn unto God; and to tell your danger, if ye do not. This preſuppoſes, that every man, and every woman have their back upon God. And we come to you, Sirs, that are yet ſtrangers unto God, and to his Son Jeſus Chriſt, and that are ſtrangers to the Holy Spirit and the grace of repentance: We come to you that are ſtrangers to God: and it is ſuppoſed, ſome of you may be thinking, what brought you here this day? the Lord knows it was with no view to worldly gain or outward advantage; but to perſuade you to turn unto God, and be converted, and to let you know your hazard and danger while in an unconverted ſtate. And therefore it is your duty to be perſuaded: I ſhall give you theſe three perſwaſions in order thereunto.

(1.) If ye will not turn, ye ſhall die without grace, without faith, repentance, *&c.* The whole world and much more cannot ſave you. Therefore turn and ye ſhall live; but if not, *ye ſhall ſurely die in your iniquities.*

(2.) Turn unto him, and we aſſure you in his name, it ſhall be well with you. We tell you he has a fatted calf for you; robes to put on you: We tell you he has all that can make you happy. Sirs, you ſhall have a life of it here, and eternal life hereafter. And in the

(3.) Place, We perſuade you, that Chriſt is in good earneſt with you. You'll wrong yourſelves, if ye accept not of the offer. Nay, ye will periſh eternally, if you do not. Therefore, O be perſuaded unto this. A

2. Thing we are to perſuade men to do, is to tell men to turn, and to turn to purpoſe: for it is not every ſort of turning that will do your turn. We find it in ſcripture, that every kind of turning has not the everlaſting advantage with it. Therefore the Lord enjoins his ſervants to tell you to make the thing ſure, that you do not

beguile yourselves as to your turning. Tell them, and tell them, that it is not every sort of turning that will do the turn; but ye must turn, and turn with all your heart and soul: this is it, to turn to purpose: and there are four motives I would give you to persuade you to set about a thorough repentance. And

1. For a motive, Consider that it is a want of a thorough turning to God, that undoes many souls. Thus many think they are persuaded that they repent and turn to God; but they are but almost persuaded, and therefore stick there.

2. Consider that if ye repent not thoroughly, if ye turn and turn not with your whole heart, ye but lose all your pains: you never (so to speak) get so much as thanks for your work. And

3. Consider, that ye not only lose your pains, but ye make the thing worse. Many a man by his formal conversion, has a shew of something of the work of God, that makes his case more desperate, than that of the worst Atheist in the world: for many a man's conversion that has lived under the gospel, becomes more desperate and hopeless, then the conversion of heathens: for bid him turn and be converted, it never alters the matter with him; and why? he thinks he has already done it. And

Lastly, Consider but this, who they are that Satan prevails most with to cause them despair: he tempts men to delay, and to halve their repentance, and to be hypocritical therein; and then when he has done that, he will easily prevail to make them despair. Ye did this, and ye did that; ye went this length, and ye went that length, says the enemy; and ye never made your point good; and think ye, that a little more will do your turn now? no, ye need never think, that when ye have provoked God with your formality, a little more will do your turn. Now, these and the like arguments Satan may use to make such despair. Upon these considertions I would have you to make thorough work of repentance; and I pray you consider them. A

3. Thing that ministers have to persuade folk to do, is, to embrace Jesus Christ as he is offered unto them in the gospel. We are to persuade you to close with him, as he has offered himself unto you. This was the work of Isaiah the prophet, Paul the apostle, yea of Christ

himself after his ascension. Says he to the church of the Laodiceans,—*I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him.* That is, take him for a king, prophet and priest, as he is offered unto you: and to persuade you to this, take the following considerations:

(1.) Consider what ye will do, if ye do it not. Do ye not think the day will come, that ye will wish ye had done it? The day will surely come that ye will wish ye had taken him on his offer, and that upon the worst of it. And

(2.) Consider that the terms are easy, and so easy, that it is,—*Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye unto the waters: and he that hath no money, come, buy and eat, without money and without price.* Drink and drink fully. Would ye have larger terms than these:—*He that is athirst, let him come: and whosoever will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely.* And

(3.) Consider that there is nothing so acceptable and well-pleasing unto God as this: and you'll make many a sad heart by refusing of him. And if ye receive him, it will be well-pleasing to many: it will be the most acceptable thing ever ye did, for ye will thereby please God, angels and saints.—Ye will only displease satan and wicked men. Put these two in the balance: if ye do the one, ye will please God, angels and the saints; if the other, ye only displease the devil and wicked men; and I know not, if ye owe them any thing else. And

(4.) Consider the disadvantages the refusing of him will bring unto you, and the advantages you will have by receiving of him. For

1. Ye may come forward with confidence; and that even before others, and when hardest set on, as ye see a good example, or way-mark to walk by, in that vii. of the Acts. What made Stephen have such confidence, courage and boldness? He had two things to support him in this: he knew he was suffering for Jesus Christ, and he knew what was the sufferer's reward. And

2. Ye may by this attain to an assurance of an interest in Christ. Stephen had received Christ: he had an interest in him, and that yields him confidence. And I'll tell you, every one will have much ado to get matters right at death: but some will have more to do than others. Sirs, I'll tell you who will have least to do at death, even these who have been most forward in giving, &c.

a teſtimony for the cauſe of Jeſus Chriſt. They have an open door in heaven to ſee Jeſus Chriſt, as Stephen in his ſufferings had.

3. Will you conſider, that your ſin and guilt is great; and ſo your puniſhment ſhall alſo be great: and the more, becauſe you have ſinned againſt the remedy provided, and againſt mercy. And think ye that they ſhall be thought worthy, who have done ſo? Nay, *of how much ſorer puniſhment, ſuppoſe ye, ſhall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing.* He that deſpiſed Moſes's law, you know, died without mercy; and ſhall ye eſcape? Here I would not be in your place who refuſe Chriſt for ten thouſand worlds. But a

4. Thing miniſters have to perſuade people of, is, to acquaint themſelves with God: this is a part of our duty to preſs you to make up your acquaintance with Jeſus Chriſt: You will find, Job xxii. 21. that Eliphaz is ſent as a meſſenger to Job: and what is his errand that he has in commiſſion? Is it not this, *Acquaint now thyſelf with God, and be at peace, thereby good ſhall come to thee?* Acquaint yourſelves with his mind in his word, and receive the law from his mouth: lay it up in your hearts: labour for wiſdom, and with all your getting *get underſtanding.* Ignorance and unbelief are the deſtruction of ſouls: therefore it is miniſters work to preſs them to be acquainted with God. It was Iſaiah's work, Iſa. xxvii. 5. *Or let him take hold of my ſtrength, that he may make peace with me.* If ye knew the neceſſity of being acquainted with God, there would be no need of preſſing or perſuading of you: for when ye muſt meet with him after death, the buſineſs will depend upon this. When they ſhall come and ſay, Lord, Lord, and pretend kindneſs to him; then will he profeſs, *I never knew you.* May not this perſuade you to make this to be your ſtudy now in time? A

5. Thing that we are to perſuade people to, is this, to devote and give up themſelves wholly by a covenant-relation without reſervation. This is what Paul profeſſes in the 15. verſe of this ſame chapter, (wherein our text lies.) That they which live, ſhould not henceforth *live unto themſelves; but unto him* &c. The thing we are to perſuade you of, is, to make a real reſignation of yourſelves, and all ye have, unto him; ſo that he may have *the command of* you, your relations, and all that ye have,

yea

yea, and your life alſo, when he calls for them; that ye may ſay, I am not mine own; my children, my means, *&c.* yea my very life, if he calls for it, is not my own. Make a full, free and abſolute reſignation of all unto God: and there are theſe two things to perſuade you to this:

1*ſt*, Ye ſtand engaged unto it: there is a tie upon you, as ye are creatures.

2*dly*, There is the tie of redemption (or redeeming love) and that is the ſtrongeſt tie of all: ſo there is a double obligation by creation and redemption lying upon you to do this. A

6. Thing we are to perſuade you of; and you have it Acts xxvi. 26. 27. Paul was there perſuading Agrippa to be a Chriſtian; and he ſays *almoſt thou perſuadeſt me to be a Chriſtian.* So the great thing we have to do is to perſuade you not only almoſt, but altogether to be chriſtians. The

7. Thing we have in commiſſion to perſuade you of, and that is, obedience unto all God's commands; and this ſums up the whole duty God requires of man: Becauſe God requires univerſal obedience unto his revealed will as ye have it Pſal. cxix. 6. *Then ſhall I not be aſhamed, when I have reſpect unto all thy commandments.* The

8. Thing we have in our commiſſion is to perſuade men to be faithful to Jeſus Chriſt; faithful to his word, his covenant, his cauſe, intereſt, and deſpiſed truths. The

9. Thing we are to perſuade you to, is, to be cheerful under the croſs of Chriſt: and the ground of that is this; *ye ſhall alſo reign with him*, they have a fair allowance for ſuffering, and this we have to tell you of. The

10. Thing we have to perſuade you to, is, not only to do duty upon neceſſity or conſtraint, but make it your delight to ſerve God, his commands are ſo far from being grievous, that they ſhould be our delight: and yet do not truſt in duty. The

11. Thing we are to perſuade you unto, is holineſs *in all manner of life and converſation:* be holy in your eating, and drinking, your diſcourſe, your buying, ſelling, and in all your converſation. The

12. And laſt thing we are to perſuade men and women to, is to be reſolved about the cauſe of Chriſt, and religion, and not to halt between two opinions. This was what

what Elijah perſuaded the people of Iſrael of, when he ſays, 1 Kings xviii. 21.—*If the Lord be God, follow him; and if Baal, then follow him.*—That is another thing miniſters ſhould do, to preſs them to be poſitive and reſolved about, the cauſe of Chriſt. Chriſt himſelf, when he ſaw a great multitude following, turned about and ſaid unto them,—*whoſoever will come after me, let him deny himſelf and take up his croſs and follow me.* Chriſt would have folk to be reſolved what they are doing; and in this reſpect, miniſters muſt tell them to beware of loving the world too much. They muſt rather hate it, and count it unprofitable: and there is a good ground for it; becauſe it is an enemy to religion: it many times mars communion with God, and his coming to them, and makes many a plea betwixt him and his people. Now theſe are ſome of the things miniſters muſt perſuade people to.

II. The ſecond thing to be ſpoken unto, is the grounds or reaſons upon which they are to be perſuaded or preſſed. I ſhall only mention theſe four following.

1*ſt*. The doing of theſe things is of abſolute neceſſity. It is neceſſary that ye be converted and ſaved,—that ye turn, and turn to purpoſe,—that ye embrace Jeſus Chriſt as he is offered in the goſpel, *&c.* and ſo be ſaved, or elſe lie in your ſins and be eternally damned, and ſo adjudged unto everlaſting torment. Is not the damnation of immortal ſouls a thing of weight and moment? and therefore is it any wonder that miniſters uſe all arguments to perſuade you to do all theſe things? ſeeing they are ſo abſolutely neceſſary that without the doing of them, all the world cannot ſave you from hell and eternal ruin.

2*dly*, They are not only abſolutely neceſſary, but of preſent neceſſity. They muſt be done without delay, now or never, no repentance after death; and the longer they are delayed, they become the more difficult to be done: and therefore theſe things are of preſent neceſſity as well as abſolutely neceſſary.

3*dly* Great are the advantages that attend; and this ſays, it is a duty to ſet about ſuch a work. O the advantage of gaining but one ſoul to Chriſt! O the advantage of confirming and eſtabliſhing one ſoul in the hour of tentation! It is worth all the pains a miniſter can be at, tho' he ſhould labour all his days, and O the

advanta-

advantages that come to the ſoul, and that accrue unto God's glory!

4thly, A fourth ground or reaſon may be taken from the advantages that follow this ſo abſolute a duty of perſuading men to believe, repent, and be ſaved; and to let them know that if they do not, they ſhall periſh for ever: which brings them to the

III. Thing to be ſpoken to; and that is notwithſtanding ſo many arguments to perſuade miniſters to make this their work; yet we find it a work that thrives but very badly in their hands. Now, I ſhall give you ſome reaſons for this: and firſt from miniſters that have this for their work: Secondly from people themſelves: and laſtly from the providence of God. And

1ſt, From miniſters who have this for their work: as,

1. They are either ſuch, that although by their words they perſuade to ſuch things, and preſs ſuch things upon others, their own practice ſays the contrary.—They preach up God and holineſs in words; but in deeds they *deny them*. This is the kind of preaching that will never profit nor perſuade folk; and it is a kind of preaching that there is enough of in theſe days we live in. They bid us believe, repent and be holy; but then look and ſee what their own life and practice bids you do. A

2. Reaſon is, that there are many miniſters whoſe lives and converſations may be neither ſcandalous nor profane; yet they are not ſo ſerious as the matter requires: they do not preſs nor perſuade folk with that ardency and ſeriouſneſs that matters of ſuch an abſolute neceſſity and concern do require. Can we think that when it comes thro' our lips ſo cool and drooping, that it is like to freeze in our mouths, that it will do good or profit others; being delivered with ſuch a ſlow ſpirit of indifferency, as it were a thing that might be either done or not done at pleaſure. A

3. Reaſon is, that though ſometimes miniſters may be ſomewhat ſerious and fervent in it; yet they never lay cloſe ſiege to the heart; but treat matters with a general indifferency. They will tell you, that you ſhould repent; but they never tell you what ye are to repent of, nor the neceſſity of it: and it will be long ere that kind

of preaching take effect upon the heart, where ſin is not particularly reproved, nor duty warmly preſſed and recommended as a thing of abſolute neceſſity.

2*dly*, A ſecond reaſon is from people themſelves: and there are two things that greatly occaſion this:

1. The great ignorance and unbelief of the hearers. They know not the things that we perſuade them of. Nor do they really believe what is preached unto them. When we tell them of communion with God, heaven, eternal life, &c. they know nothing about any of theſe things.—When we tell them of the neceſſity of converſion; that they muſt either be converted, or they will be condemned; they do not believe that.—If we tell them that hell is opening its mouth to receive them, that wrath is abiding them, and that there is no eſcaping of theſe, but by turning unto God in and thro' Jeſus Chriſt; that cannot be believed neither. So this is one great reaſon why men and women will not be perſuaded, their ignorance and unbelief. The

2. Obſtruction is, that theſe things we ſpeak and perſuade you of, are far out of ſight. Heaven that we bid them ſeek after, is out of view. The hell we bid them beware of, is far out of ſight. The

3. Reaſon comes from the providence of God; it is, That this work comes ſo bad ſpeed in our hands. He has taken away the bleſſing; he has withdrawn his gracious and comfortable preſence. The time was, when the arm of the Almighty went along with the preaching of the word; but now the bleſſing, power and efficacy of the goſpel is taken away*.

Now, I come to a ſhort word of application; and therein I ſhall divide all hearing me into theſe four or five claſſes following. And

1. The firſt ſort is ſuch as are altogether ſtrangers to God; *without God, without Chriſt, being aliens to the commonwealth of Iſrael, and ſtrangers from the covenants of promiſe.* And I conceive, that there are not a few of that denomination here, that are yet ſtrangers to God, and living in darkneſs. There are numbers of you that

I have

* How applicable is this unto our time and circumſtances, wherein the efficacious power of the Spirit attending the word is comparatively gone, ſo that on us is accompliſhed that word, Heb. iv. 2.—*But the word did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that hear it.*

have lived under the drop of the goſpel, that are yet in a natural eſtate. Ye were ignorant Atheiſts before; and ye are ſo yet. The thing I would ſay unto you is, that what we came this day unto you for is this; that you would now look about you, and conſider your ways, as ye have it, Hag. i. 3. *Thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts, conſider your ways.* This thing the Lord would have you do. O conſider what you are, and what you are doing.—Conſider in what eſtate you are in by nature, and whither you will go, if you continue in that eſtate. Conſider your ways, and turn unto the Lord, and live; ſeek that the Lord would turn you unto himſelf. But if you turn not, make ready for hell, that meeting place of all torment and woe, and even a hotter hell than the hell of Sodom. O make you for torment, and that an intolerable torment worſe than the torment of Sodom and Gomorrah. My exhortation unto you, is, live not a moment longer in that condition, which is ſo dangerous. Death, hell and damnation will be upon you: and all the world, nay all the angels in heaven, cannot ſave you from it, while living in that condition.—Therefore without delay flee out of it into Jeſus Chriſt: reſt not a moment longer; for if ye die in that condition, all the world cannot ſave you from hell and deſtruction. A

2. Sort of folk here, as I ſuppoſe, are, they that have had ſome reſolutions, and have been half perſuaded to reform their ways: they have been almoſt perſuaded to be Chriſtians, but never altogether perſuaded. Ye have never made your point good; but are juſt where ye were. Well, the thing I would ſay unto you, is, either make thorough work; be thorough in the buſineſs, and be perſuaded; otherwiſe perſuade yourſelves, and I, in the name of the Lord, perſuade you, that it ſhall make your caſe worſe, and leſs hopeful than the caſe of Pagans. A

3. Sort of folk that I would ſpeak to, is, to theſe who were once zealous and forward in religion; but now they are turned cold, and fallen from their firſt love. A word to you that once appeared hot and zealous for God, and are now turned key cold. Conſider your ways before it be too late; for if ye give way unto ſuch backſliding courſes, your caſe may at length become deſperate on your hand.—Therefore, what I would ſay unto you,

is,

is, *Remember from whence thou art fallen, repent, and do thy first works.* A

4. Sort is, a company of poor murmuring people. They are ſtill entertaining hard thoughts of God. What I have to ſay them, is, have better thoughts of God; or aſſure yourſelves he will make ſomething fall in your way, that will make you have better or worſe thoughts of him. And

Laſtly, I ſhall ſay this one word to thoſe that are really godly: fight it out, Sirs,—Run the Chriſtian race ſet before you: run, and run with patience: ye will come to the end of it ſhortly. Be *faithful unto him that hath called you.* Let not the world, nor your own corrupt hearts make you ſlinch from it. And I ſhall give you ſome motives to preſs you to ſtedfaſtneſs and conſtancy in your Chriſtian courſe. And

1*ſt*, Hold on, for it has four properties that no other way has in it. And

1. It is a pleaſant way. All *wiſdom's ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths are peace.* And

2. This of all other ways is the only ſure and ſafe way.

3. Hold on; for it is an honourable way; and much credit and dignity will follow on it. It is the moſt creditable way that ever ye went in, and ſo you ſhall find it. And

Laſtly, It is a bleſſed way. It has the bleſſing appended to it. It has the promiſe both of this life, and of that which is to come; and happy is the man that walks in it. Says the Pſalmiſt, *Bleſſed is every one that fears the Lord, and walketh in his way.*

2*dly*, Hold on your way, believers: faint not, for it is the way that all the worthies have gone in, that have gone before you. The whole ſufferers and cloud of witneſſes for Chriſt that are now triumphing in heaven have gone in that way before you; and they are all landed ſafe on the confines of Immanuel's land, and ſo freed from all their difficulties; for it is a ſafe way.—Indeed, it is like, ye will alſo meet with oppoſition and croſſes in that way; but bleſſed is the man that wreſtles and runs it out. And bleſſed is he that *endures unto the end, the ſame ſhall be ſaved.*——Now the Lord himſelf perſuade you unto this. *So let us pray.*

BODLEIAN 11 10 1902

TWO

SERMONS

Preached in the Pariſh of KILBRIDE, by Mr. JOHN BLACKADDER, *Sept.* 5, 1675.

SERMON VI.

ISAIAH liii. 11.

He ſhall ſee of the travel of his ſoul, and ſhall be ſatisfied.

[FORENOON'S SERMON.]

NOW, Sirs, have ye faith amongſt you to believe the faithful and true ſaying of God? I'll tell you good news, Sirs, that I am ſure ſhall make your hearts glad, if ye believe: but if ye believe not the promiſes, we promiſe you no good. I'll tell you good news; the ancient decrees of the Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt, ſhall take effect to all the intents and purpoſes he has purpoſed in himſelf, according to his manifold wiſdom, from all eternity; and particularly that great deſign of God that he has purpoſed in himſelf for the redemption of loſt ſinners, ſhall be accompliſhed.—Never a ſoul that he hath undertaken for to the Father, but ſhall be brought in to believe; never a privilege that he has purchaſed for them, but they ſhall obtain the poſſeſſion of it.—I know there are ſome of you that concern yourſelves about the way of God: and its likely ye have your own fears this day. I would ye had more fears than you have; fear for ſinning, fear for the ah-

ger of God. If ye had these two fears, I would let you keep them: but I am apprehensive, ye have some fears in your hearts that have some honesty in them; fears for the enemies of this generation, their wiles and malicious devices that they constantly practise against the gospel, and the preaching of it: ye are afraid, that they mar Christ's success therein. Truly if ye had no more but what is visible, I would fear your fear in that too. But, blessed be the Lord, we have an unmovable foundation to ground us against these fears. Whatever ye fear, ye need not fear this; that our blessed Lord Jesus will be obstructed in any part of success he has designed unto himself: But in spite of all that hell or men on earth can devise, (and that is no small despite) ye may say, that he shall carry on his work of the gospel, until he has accomplished all that his soul has travelled for.—Therefore, for renewing of the impressions of our Lord's sufferings in Scotland, both in that and this place, which I fear may be forgotten by believers long since; to renew the impression of which, and to establish your hearts that are trembling for this gospel, lest it be marred, and our Lord Jesus be retarded in his success, I have read these words; in which we have an assurance from God that our blessed Lord *shall see the travel of his soul, and be satisfied:* and though all his enemies set their feet to it, they shall not be able to hinder it.

In the beginning of this chapter to the 10th verse, we have our Lord's sufferings pointed forth, both what his sufferings were, what was the cause, and who was the party he had to do with, which was God the Father; and *upon him were laid the iniquities of us all.*—Here Isaiah points out his sufferings, as if he had seen them. Some divines call him the evangelical prophet, propheſying of Christ's sufferings as if they had been done already. Unto the 10th verse, and from that to the end, we have the success, fruit or product of his sufferings, and the victory and conquest he obtained thereby. It is said in the end of the 10th verse,—*he shall see his seed: he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.* Whatever opposition he shall meet with in discharging the pleasure of his Father; it shall all prosper in his hand.

And here in the words, we have, in the first clause of the verse, an assurance that our Lord Jesus shall have

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an accompliſhment of all his fruit and travel; *for he ſhall ſee of the travel of his ſoul, and be ſatisfied.*

Secondly, Ye have the manner how this accompliſhment ſhall be brought about as to particular believers that ſhall be juſtified; and that is by the faith of Jeſus Chriſt. This is one promiſe;—*by his knowledge ſhall my righteous ſervant juſtify many.*—They ſhall be juſtified: *by his knowledge*, or the acknowledging of him by faith, *ſhall he juſtify many*; not all, but many, *i. e.* all that acknowledge him to be the Saviour, and their Saviour, and cloſe with him by faith; and the confirmation of all is given in the cloſe of the verſe, *for he ſhall bear their iniquities.*—Now, we ſhall take up that part of the verſe we have read in theſe three things following.

1. A ſhort repetition of all the ſufferings that our Lord ſuffered before mentioned that he was to ſuffer, —*he ſhall ſee the travel of his ſoul*; which ſays his ſoul did travel. And

(1.) It is called ſoul-travel, not excluding bodily ſufferings, but including them: but it is called ſoul-travel by a figure, wherein the more excellent or noble part is put for the whole: the travel of the ſoul including the body: and ſo it is called the travel of the ſoul.

(2.) It is called ſo, in reſpect that the ſoul of Chriſt did ſuffer more, and more grievouſly, being more capable of ſuffering the wrath of God than the body was: his greateſt ſufferings were in his ſoul, as the words here ſignify.

2. The ſecond thing we have in the words, is, the aſſurance that our Lord ſhall obtain the fruit of his ſoul's travel: it is here called the travel of his ſoul by another figure, wherein the procuring cauſe is put for the effect, *he ſhall ſee the travel of his ſoul* and the fruit of his pain; he ſhall ſee all he fulfilled and accompliſhed, that he travelled and laboured, or was at pains for; and therefore he ſhall ſee the travel of it. A

3. Thing ye have in the words, is, the reſult of the accompliſhment of his ſoul's travel: the fruit of it ſhall be to his ſoul's ſatisfaction, *he ſhall be ſatisfied.* He ſhall ſee it accompliſhed ſo fully, exactly and ſufficiently, that he ſhall want nothing he travelled for. He ſhall have full ſatisfaction, and thanks be to God, that it is according to his meaſure, and not according to our narrow ſatisfaction that we might have had. We would have

been satisfied with less; but it will be accomplished according to our Lord's souls desire; and he shall be well-pleased with it, he shall have great complacency in it; and it shall be the joy of his soul, and the rejoicing of his heart. When he shall see all the different pieces of the fruit that his soul travelled for, and bought so dear, he shall have great pleasure and delight in them.

But I shall not stop longer on the words, nor in deducing doctrines from them: what we shall notice from the text itself, shall be in these doctrines following.

Doct. 1. It *is a truth, that our Lord Jesus Christ did endure a sore soul's travel for the sins of his people.*

And hence notice, that if this is the way, Our Lord Jesus Christ had a soul. A certain kind of heretics denied, that he had a soul, maintaining that he had the deity joined——unto his body, whereby they made him a mock man only *. But if he had not a complete person, soul and body, joined to the Godhead, he would be less than half a man. But the scripture shews he was perfectly man, and perfectly God, in two distinct natures, but one person, having both soul and body: *Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren.* &c.

And further notice, that his sufferings behoved to be in his soul, as well as in his body. And thanks be to God for it: and good reason that his soul suffered, since he condescended to become the surety or cautioner for our souls. The soul is the chief sinner; all the sins our bodies act, are from the corruptions of our filthy souls. Therefore our Lord's sufferings behoved to be in his soul; because the soul is the fountain from whence all corruptions come: sin springs from within the heart. It is that which proceeds from within the man, says our Lord, that defiles the man. All the actions of the body are by nature filthy and unclean, but all uncleanness arises from

† Perhaps he means the ancient heretics who maintained Christ only assumed man's body, but not his soul; or the Apollinarists who, though they granted that he assumed man's body and a sensitive soul; yet he had not the reasonable or intellective soul of man: or that branch of the Arian heresy which held that Christ's divinity supplied the place of his human soul. See these errors in Socrates' and Rose's history of all religions, Prosp, &c.

from the ſoul or heart. Well, our Lord ſuffered in his ſoul, for that we ſinned in our ſouls. But I ſpeak of the travel of Chriſt's ſoul; and it is long ſince ye heard of this; but it is longer ſince he underwent this ſore travel of ſoul; and I am afraid leſt it be forgotten. But it ſhall not be forgotten; for there ſhall be a remembrance of his death untill he come again unto judgment, and appear in the ſight of all. Alas, I fear, the impreſſion of it be much worn off your ſpirits this day. The day has been that the ſoul ſufferings of Chriſt would have been a doctrine that would have been heard with pleaſure; when exerciſes of conſcience was among believers about ſin, and the wrath of God for ſin. We cannot tell what is in this; but we ſhall ſpeak a word to it now, when the devil and his emiſſaries are doing all they can to caſt down the ſoul ſufferings of Chriſt *, and to add more ſuffering unto him in his myſtical members. But firſt, let me premiſe before I ſay any more on the ſubject, that Chriſt's ſufferings were ſuch as never man ſuffered the like of, nor is ever mere man poſſibly able to ſuffer the like again, yea, the ſoul ſufferings of Chriſt are beyond all that preachers can expreſs. The evangeliſt gives a hint of it. But in its fulneſs, it cannot be deſcribed at all, unleſs ye could tell us, what is the weight of the infinite juſtice of God. But I ſhall point out ſomewhat of it in a few particulars.

1. He ſuffered in his ſoul; as the travel of his ſoul had a conjunction and union with his body, ſo it became a partaker of all his bodily ſufferings by ſympathy. And

(1.) In reſpect that his ſoul travelled by being confined within a mortal body of clay. Well, ſays the apoſtle, when ſpeaking of the ſoul,—*for we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened*, &c. And far more reaſon had Chriſt to ſay ſo, dwelling in a tabernacle of clay. But

(2.) His ſoul ſuffered in all his ſinleſs human infirmities by reaſon of the union, and ſympathy ariſing therefrom. His ſoul travelled in all theſe pieces of human frailty:

* How applicable is this to the Arminian and Socinian teachers in this day, who, though they have not the confidence to aſſert Chriſt a meer man only; yet do ſo explain away the merit and efficacious virtue of his blood and ſufferings, as to leave him no more preeminence than an inferior deity, a very good man, or an illuſtrious martyr now glorified.

frailty: he had communication with us in weakneſs of body, hunger, thirſt, wearineſs, &c. All theſe affected his ſoul; his ſoul travelled by ſympathy in all theſe outward miſeries; he himſelf bare our infirmities:—for *we have not an high prieſt that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without ſin*, Heb. iv. 15. And

(3.) His ſoul ſuffered alſo in all the perſecutions he met with upon his body; inflicted upon his body by divine appointment in all his huntings and chaſſings from place to place, buffeting, and reproaches that were caſt upon him.—His ſoul ſuffered alſo in all the torture and pains inflicted upon him by tormenting his naked body with a crown of thorns and nails on the croſs; beſides ſmiting with rods, plucking off the hair, ſpitting on his bleſſed face, piercing his ſide, hands and feet, till blood and water came out, in all theſe his ſoul ſuffered in ſympathy with his body: and we may alſo obſerve, that they were more immediately the ſufferings of the ſoul, wherewith the body had a ſympathy and did ſuffer, and was affected with oftimes (when no outward inſolence was offered) by being under a time of abſence from his Father's houſe, and diſtant from the immediate fruition of his Father and his God in glory; that is a ſoul travel even in a believer, 2 Cor. v. 6. *While we are at home in the body, we are abſent from the Lord.* As to that immediate enjoyment of him in his ſoul in glory, this was a ſoul travel to Chriſt to be ſo long away from his Father's houſe.

2. His ſoul travelled by many aſſaults and ſoul temptations from the devil. This was a travel of ſoul to Chriſt, and one of his laſt ſteps of humiliation, that he ſtooped ſo low as to be buffeted and aſſaulted by the foul ſpirit; and that by horrid temptations. Though there was nothing in him the enemy had to work upon that was capable of aſſenting or conſenting to any temptation; yet it was a ſore ſoul-travel unto him to be aſſaulted ſo with theſe, as is clear from Mat. iv. and Luke iv.—*Fall down* (ſays the devil) *and worſhip me.* I defy one to be tempted with a more ugly temptation than this and this was not at one time only: it is hinted, Luke iv. 13. *That when the devil had ended all theſe temptations, he departed from him for a ſeaſon*, implying he met with new aſſaults, and like enough, as he had a holy ſinleſs reluctancy in his fleſh;—his nature had an abhorrence of

theſe: and likely enough, the devil's tempting him was to make him relinquiſh the work he had to do. A

3. Thing his ſoul had to travel with, was the weight of all the ſins and abominable tranſgreſſions of the elect upon him, with all their aggravations. In the former words of the chapter, it is ſaid,—*The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*—Our Lord took upon him this heavy load to preſs down his ſoul. He charges himſelf with all their ſins; and it was but righteous with God to charge him with all. He ſtood under the guilt of your ſin and mine before and after converſion, with all their aggravations againſt light, love, and convictions. O the heavy weight and ſoul travel he was under!——God abhors nothing but ſin: he has a love to all his creatures, but his ſoul hates the monſter ſin: for the holy God to bear ſuch a weight of that which alone is loathſome to him, that was a ſore ſoul travel indeed. He laid *upon him the iniquities of us all.* However, it was well upon his back, to what it would have been upon ours: for when all is done, he had that weight upon him, that would have ſunk down all the elect (yea the whole race of Adam) unto the bottomleſs pit for ever and for ever more. A

4. Thing his ſoul travelled with, was, the curſe of God's law; the ſatisfaction of a broken covenant of works lying upon the elect for all their tranſgreſſions of God's holy law; a curſe for every ſin with its aggravations: as many ſins as many curſes: our ſins are gone up above our heads more than we can number; ſo as many curſes lay upon the head of our Lord Jeſus. Every one of the elects ſins lay upon him, and his ſoul travelled under them all, Gal. iii. 10. *Whoſoever is under the works of the law, is under the curſe; for it is written, curſed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law, to do them.*—The law lays abundance of duties upon thee; and then the curſe is upon thee, if thou do them not perfectly, conſtantly, and without halt, all the days of thy life: He had all theſe curſes to lie under. So we have it in that 13. verſe,—*Jeſus Chriſt hath redeemed us from the curſe of the law:* and how was that? Was it by a word of interceſſion with the Father? No it was by taking the curſe on himſelf; *by being made a curſe for us.* O good news, that the bleſſing of Abraham might come on them that believe! a brave exchange! he takes all your curſes upon

him,

him, and gives us all the bleſſings that he purchaſed for us. A

5. Thing that our Lord travelled under, was the tormenting pains of the fiery ſcorching wrath of an offended God. What pains do you imagine the infinite and ſpotleſs holy law, and the juſtice of God exact and require of a law condemned ſinner? even as much torture and extremity of ſorrow and pain as infinite juſtice can deviſe. It is ſaid,—*ear hath not heard, nor eye ſeen, what is laid up for them that love him.* So the like pains are reſerved for the ungodly in hell: all theſe pains he endured in his ſoul. Ye know not, ye know not what ſoul torment is: many would flee from it, if they could get rid of it; but they cannot. But he had all this to endure, that made the poor frail body cry out with tears, Who knows *the power of his wrath?* Aſk all the angels in heaven, they cannot tell you: aſk all the devils in hell that have had ſome proof of it theſe more than five thouſand years, they cannot tell you: but aſk our Lord, he knows the power of the Father's wrath: it was ſuch a power of torment, that if all the angels in heaven, and all the men upon earth had been in his one body, they would all have ſuccumbed, periſhed, and quitted the work with ſhame.—But he, and he alone, ſtood under the wrath of God the Father; becauſe the perſon ſuffering was God: God was with, and in him: he was in his perſon *reconciling the world unto himſelf.* Without his own ſoul ſuffering, all had been loſt and gone together. A

6. Soul's travel he endured, was, the *contradiction of ſinners againſt himſelf*, Heb. xii. 3. It was not only his body, but even his ſoul ſuffered under the contradiction of ſinners; and that in different reſpects.

(1.) Under their unbelief. They would not believe him when he had been preaching all the day unto them: that was a contradiction. *He was grieved for the hardneſs of their hearts*, that they would not believe the goſpel: and ſo his ſoul ſuffered upon this account.

(2.) He met with contradictions by their frequent eſſays to diſpute him out of the great doctrines of the goſpel and man's ſalvation. When he had preached theſe up all day, they offered to preach them all down again: this was a contradiction of ſinners. And

(3.) His ſoul ſuffered in all their reproaches caſt upon him, *calling* him a glutton, a drunkard, a wine-bibber, a friend

a friend of publicans and ſinners: nay, a devil and the worſt of devils: this was a ſore ſoul-travel and grief unto him. It is ſaid of him; Pſal. lxix. 20. *Reproach hath broken my heart.* He that was holy, harmleſs and undefiled, to be called a vile ſinner; and a companion of notorious ſinners. He ſuffered the taunting, the mocking, pointing with the finger, wagging of the head, clapping of the hands: he was thus the object of all their ridicule; and this affected his ſoul alſo.

(4.) He ſuffered by their blaſphemous mouths, even in the greateſt agonies of his ſuffering, when hanging on the croſs. They then ſaid, *If he be the Son of God, let him come down from the croſs now, and we will believe on him.—He ſaid, he truſted in God: let him deliver him now.* All this he likewiſe ſuffered.

(5.) He ſuffered contradictions even from his own friends and diſciples, by their unbelief. They could not caſt the devil out of the poor child.—*How long ſhall I ſuffer you? bring him unto me.* This alſo appeared in his many expoſtulations with them: *O ye of little faith:* and it alſo ſometimes made him ſigh and groan in ſpirit, when he ſaw their unbelief. When he came to raiſe Lazarus, he heard them ſaying, Could not he that opened the eyes of the blind, have hindered this man to have died? they gave all over for hopeleſs; while he is advancing and going on to the work, they are ſtill quarreling with him: and he gets another grief from Martha, who ſaid,—*Lord, by this time he ſtinketh.* This was a new grief: but he got above all this: *Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldſt believe, thou ſhouldſt ſee the glory of God?* A

7. Soul-travel he was under, was, the deſertion and deprivation of the light of God's countenance and favour. Never a ſoul travelled under ſuch a meaſure of this: the want of the light of his Father's countenance, was indeed a ſore ſoul-travel unto him.—All the deſertions believers meet with, are but partial eclipſes; but this was a total eclipſe: no ſpark of light, not a blink of his Father's favour here, when he had moſt need of it, and moſt ado with it; not the leaſt blink of his Father's countenance for his conſolation; nothing but a conflict with pure juſtice, exact and ſore juſtice; ſo that he cries out, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* And it was no matter of moon-ſhine that made

him cry out before so many witnesses. I warrant some would have stumbled at this: But stumble as they will, he would have it made manifest for our eternal consolation; and to let us all know that there was not one penny of any believer's debt unpaid: nay, until he had paid the utmost farthing, no favour could he have; so that he cried, O my Father, *why hast thou forsaken me?* Yet thou art my God: I hold thee by faith, although I am made to grapple with strict, pure and severe justice. And

Lastly, Our Lord travelled under extreme sorrow and grief: sometimes he was so racked with holy sorrow, that he was scarcely able to subsist or hold out a moment longer.—*My soul*, says he, *is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.* O sorrowful sorrow! *He was a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief*, Isa. liii. 3. Sometimes he was put to an extremity of horror: *the sorrows of death and hell compassed me about*; and many times these his holy fears proved, as it were, distracting; so that many times he was put to prayer and supplication with strong cries and tears for fear of the awful wrath of an offended God; and sometimes his affections have been so exercised and commoved without any outward disturbance, that they brought on him, as it were, a holy damp of soul: so that while speaking unto his disciples, he is seized with such terror and amazement, that he is made to say, John xii. 27, *Now is my soul troubled: and what shall I say?* So that you and I need not be ashamed to be put to a non-plus, when it fared so with him. It is true, he was not long at that with it; for he immediately cries out, *Father, glorify thy name.*

Now, Sirs, wherefore was all this? Sure it was not for his own sake: and the Lord never inflicted any punishment upon any creature but for some certain cause; now, what was the reason or cause his soul was at all this travel? It was

1. Because the elect had transgressed God's law; and so were at variance with him, and he with them. They had lost themselves by sin and transgression: so necessity laid that on Christ, because he was become their surety; and so it behoved him to pay this debt for them: and here was the necessity of his soul-travel.—*He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and by his stripes we are healed.* And so being our surety or cau-

tioner

tioner, it behoved him to take all our debt upon him. And

2. He had this ſoul's travel, that he might make amends to offended juſtice, and reconcile God and ſinners, and bring them into peace with him. *God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf:* a ſtrange word indeed! what meant all this ſoul-travel? Why, it was juſt God making amends, ſo to ſpeak, or ſatisfying himſelf.—*The chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him, and by his ſtripes we are healed.*

3. This behoved to be the way, or elſe no other way could make it: angels and men could not find it; yea, God himſelf, conſiſtently with his honour, could not find out another way. All that he deviſed in his ordinance of typical ſacrifices, purged ſin, but not properly, Heb. x. 4, 5. *For it is not poſſible that the blood of bulls and goats ſhould take away ſin.—Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he ſaith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldſt not.* And what then? *Then ſaid he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.* There is no other way of reconciliation. Our head was on the block: juſtice had drawn the ſword: then he ſteps in, and ſays, *Lo, I come.* O there is a ſeaſonable Saviour, who in due time ſays, *Lo I come!* But woe worth us for the bad requital we have made him for all this.

4. Another neceſſity laid upon him, was, ſovereign love: and to give vent to this, ſinners muſt be made clean, and the enmity muſt be done away. Love muſt be at them; and therefore love travelled a ſoul's travel, to have the beloved ſaved: *For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son.* Who can expreſs this love! *He loved us, and waſhed us in his own blood.* What made him ſtoop ſo low as to take his own blood? Becauſe he loved us, therefore he waſhed us in his own blood. Says the apoſtle, Gal. ii. 20.—*The life which I now live in the fleſh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himſelf for me.* All this proceeded from love: love made our Lord do this, when no other bond could bind him, either from God or the creature, nothing but the love that God bare to ſinners.

Now, I come unto a ſhort word of *application.*

USE 1. What ſay ye unto it, when we are ſpeaking of Chriſt's ſoul's travel? (which, alas! we can give but a poor narrow hint of). Will ye make it your ſtudy

more and more to ſearch, and know more of the ſoul's ſufferings of our Lord Jeſus? what ſay ye unto the ſufferings of our Lord, that he ſuffered in his ſoul? and what think ye of them? all the angels in heaven are looking into this myſtery, *God manifeſted in the fleſh*; God-man ſuffering in our nature to reconcile ſinners unto himſelf: they look and wonder; and they can never come at the bottom of it. Strange myſtery! a world's wonder! O Sirs, what think ye of it, that the ſoul of him that was God, was thus put to travel for your ſins? what think ye of it, O weſt country, and pariſh of Kilbride, before whom Chriſt crucified has been evidently ſet forth, many a-day, before you in the goſpel, and inculcated upon you? what ſay ye to it, that have this day heard a ſhort repetition of Chriſt's ſoul's travel, and ſome of the fruits of it? what think ye of it? But, alas, woes me, I am afraid that all is wrong with many of you: I fear, we may ſay to many in Scotland, and to many of you, what the apoſtle ſaid unto the unbelieving Jews at Antioch, Acts xiii. who, when he had been ſetting forth the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the fruits of them, offering Chriſt unto them, and through him the forgivenneſs of ſin, he comes in the 40th verſe, to give them this caveat.—*Beware therefore, leſt that come upon you, that is ſpoken of in the prophets, Behold, ye deſpiſers, and wonder, and periſh.* The Lord forbid, that we ſhould have this to apply unto you.—Behold a crucified Chriſt, a ſoul-travelling Redeemer: behold him bleeding in his love-wounds, and ſcorched before the fire of divine juſtice: behold him bleeding on the croſs: behold him dead and buried: behold him in all his ſoul's travel; and wonder and periſh. Why?

1*ſt*, Becauſe they are deſpiſers of all his ſufferings. I charge many in Scotland, and ſome of you that are here this day, for being deſpiſers of this precious ſoul-doctrine. Who are deſpiſers of the ſoul-ſufferings of Chriſt? even unbelievers. O deſpiſers of the ſoul-ſufferings of Chriſt, Behold, I work a work of wonder, *and a thing marvellous in your eyes, which tho' a man tell you, ye will not believe.—Behold ye, wonder and periſh*: ye ſhall ſee and hear Chriſt crucified, and make a wonder of it; and ye ſhall periſh, if ye believe not. And

2*dly*, They that believe the doctrine of it, that ſuch a thing was true, but never ſat down ſeriouſly to lend a *look unto all* the ſoul-ſufferings of Chriſt. Think ye

that

that the ſoul's ſufferings of Chriſt are of no value, that ye never ſat down ſeriouſly to take a look of all the pains he has been at, and all he has done and ſuffered?

3*dly*, They are deſpiſers and wonderers that make a mock or jeſt of ſin. There are ſome that think it a ſport to do evil. How many ſuch ſports are there now a-days? Many when they have ſinned, while they are able, by idle jeſting, blaſpheming God's name, piercing and cutting his work, they will juſt make a gaff of laughter of it. Do ye make a ſport of ſin, which coſt our Lord ſo much ſoul-travel? So ye deſpiſe, *wonder and periſh*. Theſe ranters that make a ſport of ſin, are deſpiſers indeed.

4*thly*, They are deſpiſers thas never felt the grievouſneſs of ſin before God; that were never under ſoul's wants by ſin, convictions or challenges of conſciences. Theſe folk who never have found the weight of ſin, are deſpiſers of our Lord's ſufferings; for they think them all needleſs. The man that has a ſilent conſcience, that weights him not becauſe of ſin; that man is a deſpiſer; for he thinks that all which Chriſt endured was needleſs, becauſe he has a light burden of it. And

5*thly*, They are deſpiſers, that from the weight of ſin were never urged to flee in unto the blood of Jeſus Chriſt for waſhing and cleanſing: they are all deſpiſers that were never thus urged to come and cloſe with Chriſt. Thou ſayeſt all this was in vain that he ſuffered, becauſe thou wilt not make uſe of it all: theſe ſoul-ſufferings of Chriſt are not of thy ſoul's concernment, while in this condition. And

6*thly*, A ſixth ſort of deſpiſers in this generation, are the perſecutors of Chriſt, of his goſpel and ordinances; to whom we may ſay, *Behold, ye deſpiſers, wonder and periſh*. We fear, that come on them: for perſecutors are deſpiſers of the ſufferings of Chriſt in theſe two reſpects following:

1. They interdict and forbid the miniſters of Chriſt to publiſh the doctrine of his ſoul's ſufferings: they are not diſcharged to preach againſt Popery and Prelacy only; but ſimply diſcharged to preach at all, that is to ſay, ye ſhall make no mention of Chriſt, or his ſoul's ſufferings either.—That is a great diſcharge of our Lord's ſoul-travel; yet they will not ſo much as hear of it.—And

2. They

2. They are deſpiſers by obſtructing, what in them lies, the gathering in of the fruit of our Lord's ſoul-travel up and down the land at this day.—What is our Lord doing by his goſpel? We have our record in heaven this day, that this is our great errand amongſt you, to gather in the travel of his ſoul; to ſee where there is any of the loſt ſheep of the houſe of Iſrael, and to get a gripe of them; to get poor bankrupt ſinners who are bound captives to ſin and Satan, and have nothing to pay their debt, brought in to the Saviour, and ſet free: and it is the enemies deſign this day to obſtruct this. But it is above their hand to hinder it, though they are deſpiſers. So they add more to what they have already done; they are adding more ſoul-ſufferings to Chriſt; for he has a ſympathy with his myſtical body the church: *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me?* O deſpiſers, wonder and periſh, ye that ſlight all that Chriſt's ſoul hath endured already; and not only ſo, but they muſt add afflictions to the afflicted, and perſecute him in his members, whoſe ſoul ſuffered before: and they will bear him down in the extent of his merit alſo. O deſpiſers, we are afraid ye be men that *behold, wonder and periſh.*

USE 2. And it is a word to you, believers in Chriſt, that have already cloſed with him, and accepted of his ſoul's ſufferings. And

1. Have ſtill this great love of God manifeſted in the ſoul's ſufferings of Chriſt in view, and wonder and admire at it. Here is a wonder! *Behold, what manner of love the Father hath beſtowed upon us, that we ſhould be called the ſons of God!* and has laid all this ſuffering on his own ſon for your ſake, and he was content to undergo all this ſoul-travel for you, believers, that have fled into him. The poor, baſe, ſelf-judged and ſelf-condemned ſinner, that had nothing to bring to him; but was only living; and if he had thruſt thee away, thou muſt be yet upon him. Though he had endured all this ſoul's travel; take a new look of the myſteries of the love of God in all theſe pieces of ſoul-travel drawn in ſuch great characters that he *that runs may read it.* Behold what manner of love is this, that the ſoul of his beloved Son ſhould be ſo preſſed under your ſins, O believers! And

2. O believers, it is your duty to hate ſin, and all ſin. *Hate ill, all ye that love the Lord:* hate your own ſins more than *any ſins.* Your ſin is moſt hateful unto the

juſtice of God, and even beyond the ſins of reprobates: for it has this to aggravate it, that reprobates ſins have wronged the juſtice or law of God; but thou haſt wronged the innocent and harmleſs Lamb of God. O how lothſome ſhould your ſins be, that have burthened him thus. It was thy ſins, O believer, that made him ſuffer all this in thy ſoul's ſtead: it was your ſins that brought all the temptations, all the heavy curſes of God's holy law, and cauſed him to be made as it were an excration by his dear Father; and that not for his own, but for your own ſins. It was thy ſins, O believer, that made him endure that intolerable pain and wrath of God, which made him cry out, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* I ſay, and charge it home upon thee, that it was thy ſins that made him ſuffer all this ſore ſoul's travel.—It was thy ſins that made the Son of God to travel under all this ſoul's ſorrow, and all the terrors that firſt made thee to flee in to him. Thus ſhould you mourn; for goſpel-mourning is to look upon the face of your ſins, and be grieved.

3. If any of you has a ſore fit of ſoul-exerciſe, (alas! that there is ſo little ſoul-exerciſe amongſt you) think not much of that. You have but ſparks in your way: there is a vaſt difference betwixt your ſoul-exerciſe and the ſoul-travel of Chriſt. His was for ſatisfaction; but yours at the worſt is but a fatherly rebuke to the child of God; but his was a ſevere rebuke of the wrath of God, until he fulfilled the utmoſt mite unto ſtrict juſtice.—Therefore, take it in good part, you who have ſuch exerciſe; for his ſoul travelled to ſatisfy for all theſe. A

4. Word to believers, is, let all this ſoul-travel draw out your love unto him. Is there one ſpark of love within you? or is it dead and cold for all that has been ſaid of this ſoul-travel of his? Let this draw out the love of your hearts, and not of your words only unto him: give away your hearts unto him. Away with theſe harlot-lovers: he has loved us with ſuch love as made him endure all this ſoul-travel. Let this curſe all your idols to the door with an oath of abjuration.—*What have I to do any more with idols?* Take a look of Chriſt's ſoul's travel, and let him have his room.—Love him not in words only, but in your hearts and practice. There are many profeſs they love our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: they love his cauſe, his word. They love the bible and a good preaching;

preaching: they profeſs much love to him with their mouths; but their practice and deeds ſet forth the hatred of their hearts.—It is love in the heart that makes one ſuffer for him; and the conſideration of his ſoul's ſuffering for you ſhould draw forth your love to ſuffer for him, and to difference your ſufferings and his ſoul-travel.

(1.) He ſuffered for you before ye had a capacity to ſuffer for him: and all that ye ſuffer is but in gratitude to him for what he ſuffered. Do then what ye can in cleaving to truth, to ſuffer for him.

(2.) His ſoul's travel was his humiliation and abaſement; but your ſuffering for him is your exaltation and advancement.—His ſoul's ſuffering was for thy ſoul's filthineſs ſake; but thy ſufferings for him is for his excellency's ſake.—His ſuffering was his abaſement; but thy ſuffering for him is thy honour. O that this generation cannot be brought to ſuffer for him who endured ſuch ſoul ſuffering for ſin.

USE 3. Let this doctrine encourage miniſters to preach up the ſoul-ſufferings of Chriſt; and for the people that hear this doctrine, let it encourage you to hear upon all hazards. There is great hazard indeed, now to publiſh the ſoul-ſufferings of Chriſt; but this ſhould animate us to go over the belly of all oppoſition: he endured ſoul-travel in the greateſt of perils: but we do it upon the hazard of the wrath of man only.

The laſt caſe (and I have done) is unto thoſe that are yet living in their ſins. A word unto you, ſinners, that are out of Chriſt, and yet ſlaves unto your luſts. It is a day of Chriſt's good-will to Scotland: good news to you, poor ſtrangers, ſinners,—the beſt news that ever ye heard, that Jeſus Chriſt was put to ſuch ſore ſoul-travel for reconciling ſinners unto God.—But you'll ſay, Alas, miniſter, what of that: I know and have heard of that: but that is for the ſaints, friends and followers of God, or godly folk.—But, graceleſs perſon, who art yet lying in enmity againſt God, what wilt thou ſay, if thou ſhalt find it in ſcripture, that all this his ſoul's travel was for enemies, and them that are ungodly: and wilt thou add a column to it? and we ſhall prove that thou muſt do ſo, if thou wert the moſt debauched ſinner in all Scotland, (and there are as debauched ſinners in it, as in all the world). What wouldſt thou ſay, if thou ſhalt find thy name engraven upon the ſoul-ſuffer-

ings of Chriſt? read Rom. v. 6. *For when we were without ſtrength, Chriſt died for the ungodly.* He died not for ſaints or friends; but for ungodly perſons like unto thee, and even for enemies, as in the 10th verſe:—*when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.* Now enemy and ſinner, what ſayeſt thou to that? Canſt thou lay any claim to it? or haſt thou any uſe for the ſoul-ſufferings of Chriſt? for it was for ſuch ſinners as thou art.—But I tell thee better news yet, if better news can be told thee: there is authority given from the great maſter, whoſe ſoul travelled all this travel, unto his lawful and ſent ſervants, to treat with ungodly ſinners upon the ſatisfaction of his ſoul's travel: *to us is committed the word of reconciliation*;—and ſays the ſame apoſtle, 2 Cor. i. 20. *We pray you in Chriſt's ſtead, be ye reconciled unto God.* And we have a warrant and unqueſtionable foundation of aſſurance that backs our requeſt, that it ſhall be made out, *For he ſhall ſee the travel of his ſoul, and be ſatisfied; for he hath made him ſin for us, who knew no ſin, that we might become the righteouſneſs of God in him*, 2 Cor. v. 21. And what ſayeſt thou to that? Come then, graceleſs and godleſs ſinner, and once more be invited to come to Chriſt, before ye hear that dreadful ſound,—*Depart from me, ye curſed, into everlaſting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.*—Come then, and partake of the ſoul-ſufferings of Chriſt: And we obteſt and charge you, before the great Judge of the quick and the dead, and by all the torments of hell, and all the joys of heaven and earth, and by that precious immortal ſoul of yours, that, be what ye will, ye come in now, and have a ſhare of the ſoul-travel of Chriſt. Is thy name, ſin? then he was made ſin. Is it abominable, deſtitute of righteouſneſs, yea ſin, and all ſin? then he was made ſin in the abſtract for us, *that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.*—Come then, and confeſs your ſins: *only acknowledge thine iniquities*, and that thou haſt walked contrary to him. Humble yourſelves: take with your libel, even all the curſes and condemnation of the law, and bring your bill, and put it into Chriſt's hand, and tell him ye are not able to pay it, and ſee what ye can make of it by the travel of his ſoul. He can cancel all in the ſight of God his Father; only confeſs your faults; take with the charge, and break off your ſins by repentance.—Ga

down your weapons of ſin, and let them be no more; let him that is filthy, be filthy no more: lay down your weapons, if ye would ſhare of the ſoul-travel of Chriſt. Come away, ſays the Spirit of God, *fury is not in me; let him make peace with me, and he ſhall have peace with me.* The Lord himſelf make a bargain of it. AMEN.

SERMON VII.

ISAIAH liii. 11.

He ſhall ſee of the travel of his ſoul, and ſhall be ſatisfied.

[AFTERNOON'S SERMON.]

THERE is two great BE's that we have read unto you, and they are peremptory truths ſpoken by him who only can ſay, *ſhall be*, the ſovereign God, who works, and who can hinder? He has ſaid, *He ſhall ſee of the travel of his ſoul, und he ſhall be ſatisfied.* We told you in the forenoon, that Chriſt travelled for redeeming loſt ſinners: it was not for nought; but it was a great buſineſs in the ſight of God, and it ſhould be a buſineſs of great value in yours alſo. It was a buſineſs of great price in the ſight of God, the ſaving of ſouls. It was for this he travelled.—We told you laſt, that it was for ungodly ſinners, debauched ſinners, and the chief of ſinners: we aſked again and again, if ye had any uſe or need of this travel; and we ſhall aſk it as long as there is any ungodly ſinner out of hell, when the everlaſting goſpel is preached. But we know not how long our time and yours ſhall be together. We ſpake alſo of what improvement ye ſhould make of this ſoul-travel: and O ſtrange! ſtrange! that we ſhould have to put you again in mind, and that the ſenſe of need puts you not in mind of it. In all this it was true, that for wicked and ungodly ſinners he died; for the ungodly to make them godly; and he died for enemies, to make them friends. But it is a certain truth, that he died for them *while they were* enemies. Abraham, Iſaac, Jacob, David,

David, &c. yea, all the chief of the ſaints that are now in heaven, what were they once but ungodly men?—Chriſt died for theſe, while ungodly, even as ungodly ſome of them as you and I am.—He had not another ſort to die for but enemies and ungodly ſinners: and he had no call to have died, had they not been ſo.—Therefore again and again, I tell you theſe good news, even all you ungodly ſinners that are in the land of the living and out of hell; Chriſt's ſoul travelled for enemies and ungodly men ſuch as you and I am: May ye not then come, and get a ſhare of it imputed unto you for righteouſneſs? and you *ſtout-hearted* ſinners, *that are far from righteouſneſs*, what will ye do? will ye protract time, *until the times be changed?* it may be, it will never be put in the mouth of a meſſenger of God, to come ſo near hand with an offer of peace unto you again. What ſhift will ye make in a little? Ye will not have the opportunity every day to come to a moor-ſide to hear the joyful ſound: O then, for a touch of this ſoul-travel of Chriſt to reconcile you unto God. Take it in time, ſo long as ye may have it. I'll tell what many a ſoul, once in Britain and Ireland, now in hell, is crying, "We once heard the fame of the goſpel, and woes "us, that we ſlighted the call and cry of miniſters, pray-"ing us to be *reconciled unto God.*"—Then ſhall anſwer the reflex ſound in the conſcience for all the preaching-days, faſt-days, and great communion-days: all theſe ſhall ſound again in the conſcience; that ſhall be more dreadful than the ſhrieks of devils. "I heard of the fame "of the ſoul-travel of Chriſt; but I cared nothing for "it. Then woes me, that I hated inſtruction, and de-"ſpiſed the voice of my teachers." All this, and more will be your cry then, believe it, if ye hearken not in time.

There is no more ado now, but to lay down your weapons of rebellion, and accept of the free offer of Chriſt, and that without money and without price. Only be ſenſible of want, miſery and unworthineſs; and be willing, O debauched ſinner, thou that haſt been ſo willing to ſin, wilt thou but be heartily willing to be ſaved, and take this ſoul-travel of Chriſt, this day? Here it is offered, and it is like it is for thy ſake that this text of ſcripture is preached this day. Wilt thou not be perſuaded? or is the pleaſure of ſin ſo ſweet, that thou wilt ſit the invitation a quarter of an hour? Ye know

not

not but he may take back his word, and clap a righteous curse of hardness upon your hearts; or the devil shall cast in some impediment or other in your way, in the application of this soul-travel of Christ. We are aiming to have some ungodly sinner made godly, and some enemy reconciled unto God this day; and we wot not what will become of it. O that there might be a bargain of it amongst you this day, when Christ is offered to you.. Well, Sirs, *He shall see of the travel of his soul, and be satisfied.*—Good news as ever ye heard: he travelled to the full, and finished the journey, and brought forth the great birth of salvation to purpose, and that unto every elect sinner unto the end of the world. Peace with God, and pardon of all transgressions are for them wrought out by this soul-travel of Christ.—But we have better news to tell you yet, and that is, Christ shall see the travel of his soul made out unto himself: he shall be a living witness to see all the travel of his soul, recompenced; this lies not on your, or mine, or the church's care. O Sirs, if it did so, we would not take meikle pains of it in gathering in his soul's travel. But he himself shall see it done.—The second doctrinal point is,

Doct. 2. *That all that our Lord Jesus Christ travelled for, he shall see fully made out unto him.*

In speaking unto which, I shall endeavour,

I. To shew what he shall see made out by the travel of his soul. And

II. Give some grounds of assurance, that he shall see this travel of his soul made out unto him.

I. What he shall see made out unto him by the travel of his soul. And

1st, He shall see the fruit of his soul's travel made out with respect unto all and every one of the elect of God; and that in respect of their number unto one single and individual person, even the meanest and most obscure person of them that ever was born, of all nations and languages. Every one in Scotland, England, Ireland, France, Spain, Germany, &c. where the will of God was revealed, shall be made to sing this song, Rev. v. 9. through the ages of eternity;—*Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us by thy blood, and hast* made us kings and priests

prieſts unto God.—It was his Father's will and good pleaſure that he ſhould give his life for them; and he ſhall get an account of them from the greateſt to the leaſt; even of all that he died for, *they ſhall be raiſed up at the laſt day.* Believers of all ſizes in graces, Abraham who was ſtrong in faith, and ſtaggered not at the promiſe, and theſe who are ſo weak in faith, that they have enough ado to hang by a hair, like the poor Publican that ſtood afar off, or like that man who ſaid, *Lord, I believe, help my unbelief.* He ſhall alſo ſee the travel of his ſoul made out upon all ſizes of age, old and young, and middle aged men and women, from thoſe that are called early in the morning, unto thoſe that are called in the laſt hour of the evening.—He ſhall ſee the travel of his ſoul made out from all quarters, and upon all ranks and denominations of men, even ſome of the mighty, noble and wiſe according to the fleſh; and though not many of theſe are called, thanks be to God, that there are ſome of all ranks of men, that he ſhall ſee the travel of his ſoul made out upon; though not many of the nobles, great folk, and heads of wits, are ſaved.—*Ye ſee your calling, brethren, how not many wiſe men after the fleſh, not many mighty, not many noble are called.*—Yet a few of theſe ſhall not be wanting: but Chriſt ſhall ſee the travel of his ſoul made out from the greateſt unto the moſt deſpicable and pooreſt of mankind.

2*dly*, He ſhall ſee the travel of his ſoul made out in reference unto all that he purchaſed for them. The

1. Thing he ſhall ſee made out unto them, is, juſtice ſatisfied, well content, and paid. Poor inſolvent debtor who has nothing to pay, he has travelled and paid thy debt, and ſatisfied for thee. Thou readeſt thy *items*, and thou thinkeſt they ſhall never be paid; but he has a good while ago done it for thee. It is true, there is no juſtified perſon, but he muſt attain unto true ſaving faith and evangelical repentance: but it is long ſince the price was paid; and many an eleſt ſinner wots not of this; and though they are not abſolutely bound to know it, yet it is laid down, and ſhall be made application of in due time. A

2. Thing he ſhall ſee, is, the poor believer getting his diſcharge and acquittance ſubſcribed by his own blood.—*For the blood of Jeſus cleanſeth from all ſin.* It may be thou haſt been long ſeeking an intimation of

that;

that; and it may be thou hast not yet got it; but it is long since thou hast heard him say, *Son, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee.* It may be, some of you never yet heard him so; yet the intimation of it is very comfortable: and say it, or not say it, if thou comest in, and takest him by faith, and believest on his name, that *justifieth the ungodly*, he shall see thy acquittance and discharge made sure, and that is enough.—If thou canst say, out of pinching necessity I have fled in and cast myself down at a Saviour's feet, to be made of what he will: I quit all mine own things, and betake myself to his soul's travel and purchase. Come life or death, though I should never get this word of pardon positively intimated unto me all my days, yet I will lean unto my trusty cautioner, that he will make an intimation of my acquittance in his own time. He shall see the discharge given: therefore it is said, whether thou know it or not, —*there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*; no charge, but all is discharged here. A

3. Thing he shall see his soul's travel for, is, the bringing elect sinners into a covenant of peace with the Father.—*I will make with them a covenant of peace. I will give him for a covenant*, for a reconciler: he shall see that made out in the covenant, *I will make with you an everlasting covenant, even the sure mercies of David*, or the son of David; it was Christ. This was his soul's travel; and he will have it sealed by a covenant in his own blood; and the seals of this covenant ye have them, Baptism and the Supper. So our Lord Jesus Christ shall see his purchase sealed. A

4. Thing he shall see as the travel of his soul, is, the gospel preached wherever he has any elect souls to bring in. He shall see all the means of their edification and salvation brought in the way of those that he has travelled for: and ere he want, he will make a travel over the sea to America or Barbadoes: he will venture a sea voyage to fetch in one soul; he will travel through sea and land; he will send a minister to travel far off, ere he want one elect soul brought in unto himself. He will send his gospel and means of salvation, if men upon earth and all the devils in hell were standing in brigades to oppose it, Mat. xxiv. 19. *And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached unto all the world, for a witness unto all nations.* That was a great part of the travel of his soul, to have the gospel-means of salvation preached,—

 faith

faith cometh by hearing. They must be brought in to believe, and they must have the ordinary way of believing,—*faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* I say, that he shall then see the travel of his soul made out by a preached gospel.

5. He shall also see the success of the gospel, and what way it proves successful, he is the author and finisher of our faith; and as a prince he *gives repentance and remission of sin.* And there is not one elect person, but he shall see these made out unto him. This was insured to our Lord before he actually did suffer, Psal. cx. 3. *The people shall be made willing in a day of thy power:* How came ye to believe? Was it not by virtue of the assurance the Father gave the Son as the purchase of his soul-travel, *thy people shall be made willing?* I shall undertake for that. Away then with that rotten foundation of willingness held by Arminians, of man's free will in Satan's bound prisoner. Here we get our faith, *I will make them willing.* I will make them believe. He shall then see the gospel made effectual in bringing all that the Father hath given the Son to repentance.—*All that the Father hath given me, shall come unto me,* in spite of devils and men's backwardness and unbelief.—And

6. He shall see himself established in his kingdom: wherefore did he travel and witness a good confession before Pontius Pilate? Was it for a kingdom, and that on earth? Where has he a kingdom? it is not in hell, nor in heaven properly yet; but on earth; for he travelled to have a kingdom there. He is a king, and for *this end he was born,* that he might have a kingdom: altho' this be looked on with disdain by the great folk. But it is another kingdom than the kingdoms of this world; for wherever Christ has a church, there is a kingdom: and where there is a kingdom, there must be a king. We say, he has a kingdom: sometimes one of the kingdoms of the world joins itself unto the church; but he claims not one of them as he does the church, in that 2d Psalm we sung, *I have set my king on my holy hill of Zion.* He must reign, and see all this made out in his soul's travel. He is a king; and therefore a kingdom he must have, for he shall *see the travel of his soul, and be satisfied.* And

Lastly, He shall see the redeemed placed, and put in the full possession of all that is promised in the covenant,

that

that he travelled for, and that they have believed they shall be possessed of. Nay, they shall inherit more than their faith could reach or comprehend. So he shall never cease from his mediatory office, till he see every one of his redeemed put in the possession of all that he travelled for. Says he, John xiv. *In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you, I go to prepare a place for you.—I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, ye may be also.*—I travelled for that purpose, that I might have you brought, where I am. And I can assure you, that he will see all this done and performed; for he will make room for you. He spake very peremptorily to the Father, and was made very welcome by him in all this boldness: for he knew he was heard; and it is a righteous thing with God the Father to let him see the travel of his soul made out. And when taking his farewel of the world, and when as it were making his latter will before men, he says, John xvii. 24. *Father, I will, that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me,* &c. I spent myself for this; and my will is, that those that my soul travelled for, *be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world,*

II. Now, would you have any grounds of this assurance that he shall see all this made out unto you? And it is as sure as the word can make it; and all the truths therein are very sure. And, for your further establishment therein, I shall give you some grounds that this assurance goes upon. And

1. We have assurance by his promise. *He shall see the travel of his soul,* says the Spirit of God; and it is he, the Mediator God-man, Christ; that plant of renown, that shall grow before him as a root in a dry place, that has *no form or comeliness, why we should desire him;* and yet the *Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all: he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities:* and he shall see the travel of his soul in all this, and that is a sure word of promise.

2. It is sure from the decrees of election. They were chosen to life in Christ Jesus; there is predestination that is abstracted from all causes in the creature; and proceeds according to his sovereign will and good pleasure; they are and were sinners, and the Lord well knew them

to be ſuch; and therefore election looks unto Chriſt: they were choſen in him before the world began, therefore the travel of his ſoul muſt be made out unto them by the decree of God that is without repentance or change. Election is mutable, as damnable heretics ſay.* But, thanks be to God, *we have not ſo learned Chriſt*, but we know that election is an immutable thing, and that the decrees of God are as unchangeable as himſelf. A

3. Ground of aſſurance, is, from the covenant of redemption made betwixt the Father and the Son. There is a diſcovery of that ſecret: he has revealed that covenant, John vi. 37. He tells them, there was a number given him of the Father, not all. There is a ſure connection: I indent for that number: there is the bargain from all eternity; and by that covenant it ſhall be made ſure, *For all that the Father hath given me, ſhall come unto me.* They are given me of the Father, and by my ſoul-travel, I ſhall redeem them.

2. It is made ſure from the worth, merit and value of the perſon whoſe ſoul travelled. It was not a mere man only, but the ſoul of a perſon who was God-man. So the worth of the perſon makes or enhances the merit of his ſufferings. The perſon that ſuffered is worth heaven and earth, nay, and unſpeakably more. It is the worth of God. Therefore he ſhall ſurely ſee his travel; for it is called the blood of God†. And *the blood of Chriſt cleanſeth from all ſin.* A

5. Ground

* This muſt be applied to the followers of James Arminius, the firſt and laſt articles of whoſe gloomy fabric, is, that election it mutable, and ſometimes conditional, as man by his own free will believes or not: and that believers may finally and totally fall from a ſtate of grace; and conſequently be a ſaint today, and a reprobate to morrow: which is the native conſequence of the preceding: for if all depend upon the improvement of our own free-will, it is but reaſonable to allow, that it may miſ-give us; which is contrary to the whole tenor of ſcripture, particularly this text,—*He ſhall ſee the travel of his ſoul and be ſatisfied.*

† This doctrine reaches a reproof unto both the Arian and Socinian hereſy. The Samoſatenians, Photinians, Arians, &c. held that Chriſt was meerly man, and had no being till his incarnation. The ancient Socinians maintained that Chriſt by his death did not ſatisfy for us, but only obtained power for us to ſatisfy for ourſelves by our faith and obedience; that he died for

5. Ground of assurance, is, that the Father hath put all power in his hand: he hath made subject unto him principalities and powers. And what shall hinder him to see his soul-travel made out? Go, poor despised men, and preach, and baptize every creature under heaven. Alas, Lord, shall we, illiterate men, go and preach? Yes, says he, go and preach; for I will see this travel of my soul made out: and why? Because *all power in heaven and in earth is given unto me*; and that is ground of encouragement, He is his Father's only deputy in the world: *The Father judgeth no man, but has committed all judgment unto the Son*, John v. 22. And the living Father quickens and raises up the dead, even so, *the son quickeneth whom he will*; and he has given him power to make the sufferings of his soul effectual, and to see the fruits of them. A

6. Ground, is, the Father's acceptation of him: I am satisfied: *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased*. And it is all reason, he see this travel made out unto him.

Lastly, He shall see it made out, because he lives for ever, as an advocate or intercessor with the Father, to see every part and particular of his soul's travel made out to believers. He was once dead, but is now alive, and *Behold, he lives for evermore, Amen; and hath the keys of hell and death*. I must tell you one thing from this, and you will find it a truth, and it is this; That as it is a most wicked work, so it is a fruitless work to essay to stop our Lord in the gathering in of the travel of his soul. Such is the work that all the devils in hell and men upon earth, and all the generation of malignants, all erroneous persons, all flagitious, wicked, profane persons, and all that have not believed the report of the gospel: this is the work they are about; they have risen up in a combination against the Lord and his anointed,

for himself, *i. e.* for the mortality and infirmities of human nature, which he assumed which were sinless. Our present sects Arminians and Socinians teach, that he is inferior to God in point of essence and necessary self-existence, and that as the head and author of the Christian religion, he died only to confirm his doctrine, and leave his followers a pattern of heroic virtue, patience, courage and constancy in suffering. See these errors more fully held out in Eusebius' history, Simpson's ecclesiastical history, Rose's view of all religions, and the appendix to the general history of religion published in the year 1764.

ted, to hinder the gathering in of the travel of his ſoul. *Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?* Their great buſineſs is, to hinder Chriſt from reigning, when his ſoul travelled for a kingdom: *yet have I ſet my king upon my holy hill.* Let them conſult and concert what they will; it ſhall be all in vain to the purpoſe of hindering him from the travel of his ſoul. Many days and many ways does the devil take to hinder the gathering in of the travel of his ſoul: for,

Firſt, He detains folk in ignorance; and when he cannot get them kept there, he raiſes ſurmiſes to alienate their hearts from the ſimplicity or ſtrictneſs of the goſpel, or the croſs that ofttimes attends it: and by that means he labours to retard the in-bringing of the travel of Chriſt's ſoul: and if that prevails not, he can transform himſelf into an angel of light.

Again, ere ever ye wot, he will raiſe up ſin, and cauſe the man to deſpair. Says he, Is ſin ſo filthy in its nature? then thou canſt not preſume to come to Chriſt: nay, thou canſt not come unto him without ſomething of thy own to recommend thee, *&c.* But I'll tell you, it is but a wicked vain work; he ſhall not get it hindered.

Again, men take ways to get this work hindered: therefore, they hamper or ſtraiten the publication of this ſoul-travel of Chriſt: as to many who publiſh theſe news, they muſt baniſh ſome of them out of the land, put ſome of them in priſons, and ſome of them out of the land of the living.—And if there be any part of the country that Chriſt is like to get in the travel of his ſoul by bringing poor ſinners to melting of heart and reformation of life, then they ſend a garriſon unto that part of the country to hinder it. But that will alſo prove a vain and wicked work; but if this makes nothing, but ſtill ſome man or other is brought through the new birth, then away and perſecute that man or woman as a fanatic; becauſe it is the fruit of Chriſt's travel. But let them dig as deep as they will, they ſhall neither get their counſel, nor themſelves hid from the Lord. And I have a word or two of good news unto you, and diſappointment to your enemies. And that by way of application: And,

1. Do not think it ſhall be in the power of the world, men or devils either, to fruſtrate our Lord's ſoul-travel; for he ſhall not want one elect perſon, nor ſhall one of them remain in unbelief; nor one preaching of the goſ-

pel ſhall be hindered; for when they get leave to hinder this, he hath little good to do in that place at that time; yea, it may be that the hindering of the preaching of the word, may make ſome clap more cloſe to the goſpel-offer, when it is to be taken away: do not ſay that we are now boaſting; but I ſay it in behalf of my glorious maſter Jeſus Chriſt; he, who is able to work ſalvation with his own arm, and to ſee the travel of his ſoul, and be ſatisfied: do what they can to hinder it; yet all their oppoſition ſhall work for its furtherance: a ſtrange thing! *a ſeed ſhall do ſervice unto him, while ſun and moon endure.* Says the enemy Pharaoh, we ſhall bear you all down; we ſhall make you all ſlaves, and ſo work and weary you, that ye ſhall not multiply or increaſe; but if that will not do, I will take the male children, and drown them as ſoon as born: yet all that tended rather to multiply them: *the more they were oppreſſed, the more they grew.* Strange! that he ſhould multiply them by diminiſhing them; like Paul, when put in priſon for the preaching of the word. Now, there will be no more lively preaching: Paul is in priſon: all is gone: no; the ſucceſs of Chriſt's kingdom is not reſtricted to this or that miniſter, or generation of miniſters: no; himſelf who lives for ever, ſhall ſee the fruits of his ſoul's travel. We, either miniſters or people, ſee little of the fruit of Chriſt's ſoul-travel; but himſelf ſees it all.

Now, I ſay, he ſhall ſee it made out by the way that enemies take to diminiſh it. Says the apoſtle, Phil. i. 13.—*My bonds in Chriſt are made manifeſt in the palace, and in all other places.* It came to the emperor's court, when Paul was a priſoner for the goſpel of Chriſt: which argueth, that the goſpel was thereby gaining ſome of the fruits of Chriſt's ſoul-travel there. What ſays the court? Will the goſpel grow, when miniſters are impriſoned and hanged for it?—But let them ſay what they will, they ſhall not be able to hinder it. Therefore, this is good news this day, Sirs. Indeed, if Chriſt have no more ſoul's travel to gather in in Scotland, then they will carry the day againſt this perſecuted party: but who will deny? yea, he has revealed it; that he has yet a ſeed therein; yea, a ſeed yet unborn, *that ſhall do ſervice unto him.* Well then; he ſhall *ſee of the travel of his ſoul, and be ſatisfied.* A

2. Word of good news to the poor believer in Chriſt, that ſees little fruit of his believing, or of any thing

and

Chriſt has done. Alas, thou art greatly diſcouraged; but be comforted: he ſhall yet *ſee the travel of his ſoul, and be ſatisfied:* and cloſe with him by faith: and then he ſhall ſee the travel of his ſoul to ſatisfaction, and that ſhall ſatisfy thee. A

3. Thing I have to tell you, is, that as long as our Lord Jeſus Chriſt has any poor ſinner to bring in in Britain and Ireland, there ſhall be a preached goſpel to gather in that ſoul's travel: and it will not be got baniſhed away. We give you a pleaſant token for good, whatever be on the back of it, and bleſs his name for it; we hope it will be engraven on the tables of fleſh, and not on ſtone only: we hope that there ſhall be a record on many a conſcience, that not a little fruit has appeared in in theſe perſecuted meetings. Take notice therefore, of the wondrous works of the Lord, and theſe his marvellous doings, even thoſe in the wild places of Northumberland, that was a land that one could ſcarcely ride through, without being ſpoiled by thieves and robbers; now a thieviſh country is become a civil country, and a people of no underſtanding are made a wiſe and prudent people by the goſpel; a people who were without God and Chriſt in the world appear now to have tenderneſs of heart amongſt them. We do not ſay all; but we ſay there are many; and we hope that all the devils in hell and wicked men upon earth, ſhall not be able to blot out this teſtimony, even the converſion of ſinners, wherever theſe meetings came: which is a teſtification that the Lord has done more good by them than by any other meetings in the land. And we beſeech you, think it no commendation to the poor, weak and feckleſs inſtruments.—But take a look of what God the Lord has done by a perſecuted goſpel; and yet I wot well, they that plant are nothing in his hand; for I am ſure, that the church of Scotland had never leſs reaſon to boaſt of a great miniſtry than of the inſtruments of this work.—However, it is a good token that he is not yet gone away, but is amongſt us. O that he might ſee much of the travel of his ſoul amongſt us! would ye have him making another viſit? then let him ſee ſomewhat of the travel of his ſoul amongſt you. Is there any of you that will give him the great errand he came to the world for? that was to ſave poor ſinners. Have none of you a ſoul to ſave? that is the thing he ſeeks. Art thou in bonds under the devil? Art thou a poor needy thing, making

of wants and neceſſities? And haſt thou any thing ado for him? then let him thereby ſee the travel of his ſoul, and be ſatisfied. The

Laſt word, and I have done, *and he ſhall be ſatisfied.* This ſhall be all ſatisfying: the meaneſt and pooreſt believer amongſt you, ſhall be no better ſatisfied than he is, when one of the fruit of his ſoul's travel is brought in. It is long ſince he ſaid, that *his delights were with the ſons of men:* that was his delight to get the travel of his ſoul amongſt them. Luke x. 21. There the diſciples come and tell him good news: ſay they, we have been out preaching; but behold the virtue lay in this; and through thy name, *even the devils are ſubject unto us.*—*And he ſaid, I beheld Satan as lightening fall from heaven.* And it is ſaid, *Behold in that hour, Jeſus rejoiced in ſpirit, and ſaid, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth,* &c. He was well ſatisfied; he got the travel of his ſoul upon theſe poor people accompliſhed: he has ſuch pleaſure in ſeeing the travel of his ſoul brought in, that it made him enter firſt upon that ſoul-travel with great delight. When ſacrifices and burnt-offerings would not do, then he offered himſelf a ſacrifice to be conſumed in the Father's wrath. O ſtrange to think upon that frame that he offers it in! *Lo, I come! in the volume of thy book it is written of me. I delight to do thy will, O my God.* It is ſatisfaction unto me, becauſe I ſee the travel of my ſoul; and what makes it ſo? I'll tell you what it is.

1. He muſt triumph over devils, principalities and powers; and ſo let them ſee that even theſe that made him ſuffer, he ſhall have fruit for his pains.

2. Becauſe it is his will, pleaſure and complacency that poor loſt ſinners be brought in: therefore he rejoices in their ſalvation. The poor creature was a captive of hell and in the priſon of death, under the devil's power. Well, they are now ſet at freedom, and Chriſt is well ſatisfied with that. And

3. Becauſe he was once an enemy; now he is become a friend. He was once an outcaſt of heaven; now he is admitted again unto the houſe of God. He was before outlawed and excommunicated from the preſence of the king; now he is brought into favour again: and why? *As I live, ſaith the Lord, I have no pleaſure in the* wicked's living, and much leſs in their dying ſo. The

4. Ground of his ſatisfaction, is, that there is a manifeſtation of the glorious riches of his grace diſplayed in and by the ſoul-ſufferings of Chriſt. And that there is a vent and way made out for the diſcovering and bringing out all the treaſures of the riches of free grace, ſtored up in God, that the creature never ſaw before: for that intent that his mighty power might be made known. Manifold is the riches of his grace. And

5. He rejoices that by his ſoul's travel, he has ſatisfied juſtice, and made it and mercy meet together, and kiſs each other in the ſalvation and glorification of the ſinner. Juſtice ſays, they muſt die: Then Mercy replies, they muſt not die: Some of them muſt be the objects of my infinite mercy. Juſtice cries out again, they muſt die; becauſe they ſtained my ſpotleſs nature; and as I am God, I cannot ſit with this wrong. And ſo there is, as it were, a conteſt about the object, the elect of God: Juſtice ſays, how ſhall their ſalvation be brought about? Mercy ſays, by the Mediator God-man it ſhall be ſatisfied, and thereby the elect reſtored, redeemed and admitted again into the favour of God and their glorification for ever. And herein juſtice is not wronged in the leaſt, but paid to the utmoſt farthing of its demand.—And then this is made out, Pſal. lxxxv. 10. *Mercy and truth have met together, and righteouſneſs and peace have kiſſed each other. Truth ſprings out of the earth*, or from Jeſus Chriſt that plant of renown, *and righteouſneſs looks down from heaven high.* This ſweet agreement is a part of our Lord's ſatisfaction by his ſoul-travel.

Now, I proceed no further, only for another uſe of the doctrine. If the travel of Chriſt's ſoul, and the obtaining of the fruits of it, be ſatisfying unto him, then let me tell you, and take it with you, that it reproves thoſe who are diſſatisfied that he is doing good to ſinners, whether they be pretended friends or open enemies: for there are many enviers; many have an evil eye, becauſe our God is good.—Now, he is making the pleaſure of the Lord proſper in his hand, or in the hand of thoſe whom he has given commiſſion: and I know there are many now, that are not well-pleaſed the goſpel thrives ſo well: and indeed, there is no reaſon to envy it. Poor perſecuted people have enough to envy them, though they have no envy of their chiefeſt gain.—But the

there are many enviers of the gathering in of the travel of Christ's soul, now a-days. But envy it who will, they are stated enemies to our Lord Jesus Christ; and ye may tell them that we said so in the name of the Lord. And I tell you further, that he is well satisfied to see his soul's travel, and what art thou, O man or woman, that can be dissatisfied with what he is satisfied with? Is it thy eye-sore to see that he sees the travel of his soul? O heavy work! let him employ whom he will to gather it in, but be thou satisfied.—There is a generation of prelates and of their underlings amongst this sort now: but it is dreadful that they are so dissatisfied, that any of his servants should come on purpose to gather in the fruit of his soul's travel about their hand: for that poor people grow better, and some begin to seek more after God and his ways. All the curates in the country cannot get it denied. What say they, they are fanatics and brain-cracked, giddy-headed bodies: they will not let it light that it is the fruits of Christ's soul's travel. Fy, go tell the council and bloody soldiers, that such a sort of folk are started up in the county-side. Fy, go fetch a party to apprehend them; for they cannot get leave to live in peace, while such are in the parish: these are an uneasy generation, not like unto Moses, when he heard of the spirit of prophecy falling upon others. Says he,—*would to God that all the Lord's people were prophets.* So be not dissatisfied that his soul-travel be brought in, seeing it is an evident mark of an enemy unto Jesus Christ to be so.

Another thing from this doctrine, is, seeing Christ's soul's travel is so well-pleasing to him, then thou and I, minister and professor, should do all in our power to gather in the travel of Christ's soul. It is true, he has honoured ministers to be, as it were, co-workers with him in this: and *who is sufficient for these things?* and O who would not work in this work, and encourage themselves to go thro' both fire and water to get any thing brought about to please such a master. Woes me, that men are not satisfied that Christ get fruit of the travel of his soul. We should be well satisfied, if he gets fruit; and be displeased who will, we may care the less.

Lastly, And I shall say no more: I would again ask at you, what answer shall we take back to our Master, that may be a *satisfying* report of you that are here unto him? *Is there any ungodly* sinner, debauched profane swearer, drunk-

drunkard, ranter, &c. or even the back of an old perſecutor, or malignant? Haſt thou any ſatisfactory news for us to take back unto our Maſter? Wilt thou give us theſe news to carry back, "This day I fully renounce all my former kind of life and converſation, and reſolve to ſtand to my word, and from henceforth will not go *back, nor turn from thee at all.*" Or ſhall we take back this word, That now ye are content to take him in all the terms that ever he offered himſelf unto you? Will ye give us theſe good news to return to our Maſter? what will ye give or do to ſatisfy him for the travel of his ſoul? Come away, poor man and woman, that is glad to cloſe the bargain; thou that haſt been, as it were, putting thy hand to the pen, and yet dare not ſeal it; wilt thou come and put thy hand to the covenant that thou haſt entered into long ſince? He loves that thou ſhould ſet thy ſeal to it: ſeal it with thy hearty conſent: ſay with Thomas, if thou can ſay no more, *My Lord and my God.* Tell us, if we ſhall ſay this of you, believers in Chriſt, that dare not, perhaps, well lay claim unto him as your God, that now you can confidently ſay, *My Lord and my God.* Shall we take back this news, that we have thus much of his ſoul's travel? Shall we tell him theſe good news, that here we have found out a willing people that is willing to follow him through the wilderneſs, and to bear his croſs, and witneſs for him; and that ye will adhere unto his truths cloſely, *and follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goeth?* O if there be a willing mind amongſt you; and if ever ye did a pleaſure or ſatisfaction, do it to him that did diſpleaſure unto himſelf to pleaſe you: for the Lord's ſake do ſomething ſatisfactory to him, and it ſhall be your own ſatisfaction for ever.

Now to him who is able to work this in you, be all the glory and praiſe,

A SER-

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SERMON

Preached at LITTLE-GOVAN, by Mr. JOHN DICKSON, *January* —, 1675.

SERMON VIII.

I SAMUEL XXX. 6.

And David was greatly distressed :——But David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.

THE cases of the people of God are various and many; and their exercises and out-gates are as many; and this compleats the life of a Christian. David was here an excellent man: he was a mirror of piety, holiness and excellent experiences in communion and fellowship with God.—He was a man *according to God's own heart.*—He was the flower of the faithful, and portrait of that little world wherein is contained the map of the choicest extracts of the enjoyments of God; and that through many crosses, tribulations, duties, communications, influences of the Spirit, and much grace, he behoved to enter into the kingdom.—Here is one of his cases, and with it one of his exercises; and therein his case is very sad; he was distressed; and that is no new thing to the followers of Christ; *but he encouraged himself in the Lord his God;* that is the prime of his exercises, and the flower and spirit of it.—There are many folk that will venture far upon God's hand in the *external way; but in a peculiar way,* and for the insuring of it

it to the ſoul, to venture ſoul and body, intereſt and advantages, heaven and all that he enjoys, that is a great and weighty buſineſs; however, ſuch venturous exploits are, by the matching of faith.—*Though I walk through the valley of the ſhaddow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me: thy rod and thy ſtaff they comfort me. Thou wilt guide me with thy counſel, and afterwards receive me unto glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I deſire beſides thee.*—There are many things in this work that might captivate the ſons of men; but Chriſt Jeſus is altogether lovely, he extracts the beauty, pleaſure, comfort, honour and advantage of all created perfections, and centers all in himſelf, that may prove the proper object of our choice: and it is Chriſt's teſtimony of Mary, when he ſays, *Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath choſen that good part, that ſhall not be taken away from her.* This ſhall be a durable portion, when the Son of God ſhall ſhew that ſweet countenance at the laſt day, when theſe elements ſhall melt with a fervent heat, the ſtars ſhall drop down like figs fully ripe, the world ſhall be diſſolved, and *the heavens ſhall depart as a ſcroll rolled together.* —*But David encouraged himſelf in the Lord his God.*

David had now loſt his wife and children; his ſubſtance was taken; his houſe was burnt: he had loſt the kindneſs of his men; Saul was his enemy; and he was out of favour with his friends and the court: In a word, he had loſt all that was dear unto him in the world: what can he do? well, *But David encouraged himſelf in the Lord his God;* in communion with a God in Chriſt; and that is better than the world, and all things therein.

Now, I come to ſpeak a few things from the words, and but briefly. And

I. The people of God, notwithſtanding their intereſt, relation and enjoyment of God, of which they may boaſt very much; yet may be tryſted in this world with great diſtreſs. This is very clear in this paſſage; few could parallel David for intereſt in God, intereſt in heaven, intereſt in duty, gifts, graces and communications; and yet for all this, he is greatly diſtreſſed: ſo the people of God, notwithſtanding their intereſt, and all their enjoyments in the world, may ſometimes be in great diſtreſs.

II. The

II. The greateſt diſtreſſes of the people of God are ſometimes immediately preparatory to their greateſt mercies and enjoyments. Even when the poor creature is almoſt ſinking for fear, and ſaying, now all is gone; or with David in another caſe, ſaying, *One day or another, I ſhall fall by the hands of Saul.*—But oftimes it falls out that theſe are the dawnings of the greateſt mercies.—And this is clear in David's caſe: he was greatly diſtreſſed; and what follows? 1. David encourages himſelf in the Lord. 2. He aſſembles his men, purſues and overcomes all his enemies, recovers all his ſpoil, and returns with triumph. So then the diſtreſſes of the people of God, when they amount to the greateſt height, are preparative to the greateſt mercies.

III. Obſerve, that this ſame intereſt, ſecured in God, is the foundation of the greateſt encouragement to the people of God. When a man is brought ſo low, that he knows not what hand to turn to; what ſhall he do, poor ſoul? If he can but caſt up his accounts, and ſee how it ſtands betwixt God and him; and upon this iſſue, God befriends him; then let him venture. So then an intereſt ſecured in God, is the foundation of the greateſt enjoyment and encouragement from God. This is clear in David's caſe, he turns about, and caſts up his accounts; turns over the volume of his former enjoyments and experiences, and runs through the promiſes, and looks to the covenant, and what had formerly paſt betwixt God and his ſoul: I wot well one day, ſays he, I was intereſted in him. *But David encouraged himſelf in the Lord:* and it is that which reſolves every word; a great word in the original. It runs thus, he encouraged himſelf in the Lord of hoſts, who made the world, heaven and earth, *&c.* He gets God on his ſide; and then he ſays, *Though an hoſt ſhould enoamp againſt me; my heart ſhall not fear, and though ten thouſand ſhould come againſt me;* why, *the Lord is upon my ſide:—the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.* Then he *encouraged himſelf in the Lord his God:* that is to ſay, though there were no more people in all the world than myſelf, God who made the univerſe is my God; if there were no more promiſes made, he is my God for all. So let the world do what they will, if ye will ſerve God, it ſhall be the comfort of my heart; but if every one of you ſhould turn your back upon

upon my God, I cannot help that: for *me and my family, we will ſerve the Lord.* That was a choice reſolution: it would perhaps weary you to inſiſt long upon theſe truths: therefore we ſhall only mention or ſpeak a few words upon each of them at preſent. And

I. Although one ſhould be a choice Chriſtian in reſpect of intereſt, relation and enjoyment in God, and may even have that epithet that was once given Titus the Roman emperor, *the delight of mankind:* yet with David here, they may fall into great diſtreſs, that may make them go weeping and mourning with a heavy heart, and even ſometimes be ſo deſpondent, that they can have no comfort at all; and yet at laſt they will go to heaven, ſinging that bleſſed ſong, which is the matter of praiſe and admiration to both angels and men.—In ſpeaking to this truth, I ſhall notice ſome of the principal diſmal-like providences that the people of God may be tryſted with in this life. And

1*ſt*, It may fall out in providence, that a child of God may be rent from the very neareſt of his relations that his affections are moſt ſet upon. Chriſtians, after all that they can plead in this reſpect, may be ſo cruſhed, that they ſhall not have one of theſe friends to vent their love and kindneſs unto, or it may fall out, that the greateſt diſaſter may fall out in his own houſe and family.—I think, ſays the poor believer, I am a world's wonder, that all things go thus wrong with me: for all the friends and relations I have, I cannot find any thing of the favour of God there: and yet this may be previous to the greateſt mercy the poor creature meets with; for if you turn the other ſide of the leaf, you will ſee there is mercy in that providence. I ſhall obſerve two particular inſtances to prove the truth of this.

1. Jacob and Eſau were two brethren, and beſides were two twins which lay in their mother's belly at one time together; and yet a difference falls in between them, when they arrived at manhood. Jacob flies for his life, and Eſau purſues for it. And it falls out, that in flying from his brother, Jacob has nothing but his cloaths on his back, and his ſtaff in his hand: *for with my ſtaff I paſſed over this Jordan.* He was in great diſtreſs; and all this was occaſioned by his elder brother, that ſhould have been his kindeſt friend in the world. So the greateſt diſtreſs of the people of God may ſometimes

times proceed from their neareſt relations; and yet that was preparatory unto the greateſt mercy: for when he is gone into the fields, he falls aſleep, and there he meets with God in another manner than ever before.—The angels aſcending and deſcending on the ladder, and and the Lord ſpeaking from above it in a wonderful way, and he ſays, *This is ſurely none other but the houſe of God.—And he called the name of that place Beth-el.* Jacob became an excellent man upon the back of this: his former diſtreſs led him to this his mercy. It is ſaid, he, or rather Abraham *went out, not knowing whither he went:* for God led him, and freed him from that diſtreſs he was in.—The

2. Inſtance, is, of David: he had many croſſes, and yet he had as many mercies as croſſes. But he had ſome croſſes extraordinary. A ſon was born to him called Abſalom, who was the braveſt man perhaps in the world, and David had the greateſt delight in him. He was a man of the greateſt perfection from the crown of his head unto the ſole of his foot: and yet he, who was the glory of his father, became his greateſt heart-break. Yea, he ſought his father's life: and when David fled from him, he falls a-weeping; and goes up the aſcent of the mount of Olives bare-footed, and the people with him: and the reaſon was, his own beloved ſon had conſpired to take away his life. So ye may ſee, that it may fall out in folks own families, that may occaſion their greateſt diſtreſs. But,

2dly, Theſe diſmal-like providences may flow from ſomething in providence, that ſeems ſo intricate that the people of God are not able to maſter theſe difficulties, and may occaſion ſuch an aſtoniſhing damp upon their ſpirits, that they ſhall not know what hand to turn to. This we may ſee to be the caſe with Iſrael, when they were about to enter the Red Sea:—the ſea was before them, and the rocks on every hand, and they knew not how to eſcape. That was a great diſtreſs; it was an invincible-like difficulty: what do they? They cry unto the Lord, and ſay to Moſes, *Becauſe there were no graves in Egypt, thou haſt taken us away to die in the wilderneſs.* Where was Aaron, Caleb, Joſhua, &c.? Their ſpirits are now drooping, when the people are in ſuch invincible-like diſtreſs and difficulties. But providence orders a great outgate for them here. Though thou mayeſt think that the counſel of men cannot invent an

outgate of this kind in the caſe thou art in, O believer; yet thou mayeſt come through; and the next day ſee all thy enemies drowned. There is a poor man or woman in a great temptation from the eclipſe and overclouding the views of his former intereſt in God, and enjoyments of his preſence; and ſits down and weeps, and cries, alas! its a hell upon earth; and I ſhall never get out of this: And there is none in the world that can comfort me. Nay, had they all the people of God in the world about them, the reſult would *be, miſerable comforters* are *ye all unto me.* No help below the clouds:—former experiences will not do: ſecret duty will not do: and Chriſtian prayer and conference in fellowſhip will not do: nothing but a caſt from his own hand from heaven can do; and that only can cure the diſtempered ſoul. He with his own arm cut the ſea aſunder, and made the people go through both the Red Sea and Jordan on dry ground. The words of Moſes, the ſong of Miriam, or the courage of Joſhua, in themſelves, without this, could not have done it. And

3*dly*, It ſometimes falls out, that the people of God may be tryſted with great eclipſes of God's countenance by deſertion. The child of God may be at that with it, —*Will the Lord caſt off for ever? and will he be favourable no more?* Pſal. lxxvii. 7. Or with Heman, Pſalm lxxxviii. 5. *Free among ſt the dead, like the ſlain whom thou remembereſt no more.* And that alſo ſeemed a diſmal-like caſe with the church, Lam. iii. 8.—*When I cry and ſhout, he ſhutteth out my prayer.* If it were but the ſuſpending of his preſence for a little, it ſeems to be for a long time. So eclipſes of the ſweet countenance of God brings great diſtreſs upon his people, Pſal. xlii. 1. *As the heart panteth after the water brook, ſo doth my ſoul after the living God;* nay, *my tears hath been my meat day and night.* He ſpent ſome time in that courſe, when he ſays, *When ſhall I come and appear before God.* If I knew the time, it would be refreſhing to me: but it it ſo lengthned out, that I doubt if ever I ſhall ſee the days that I have ſeen before. Now this brings great diſtreſs: *My ſoul is caſt down within me, while they ſay continually unto me, Where is thy God?* I am in great deſertion, and there is ſomething that occaſions this.

1. The Lord hides the light of his countenance, and the man walks in darkneſs, as it were, at midnight, under goſpel-diſpenſations: he goes to the preaching of the

the gospel, but he meets not with God there: he cannot go unto that light that formerly shone upon his soul. And,

2. His life is eclipsed, when the power of the grace of God is taken away from him. Many folk hear sermon, yea many sermons; but they are like those poor folk that died by the dyke side not long since, in some of your remembrances: when there was a kind of famine, the poor things died for hunger; though it was not altogether for want of bread, but of the blessing of God upon it: for the more they did eat, they grew like atomies or skeletons, and so they stawed as it were for hunger, never being satisfied. So a number of people under gospel-dispensations have perhaps preaching enough, but nothing of the blessing with it. Perhaps they will tell you a note of the sermon; but look unto them, and you will see them dying, and the word of this bread in their mouth: they are not fat and flourishing, or growing up as calves in the stalls, like Christians, in *old age fat and flourishing*. But they are dying with the bread of the word of God in their mouths, which is a sad symptom of the want of the blessing and light of God's countenance upon it. It is not enough to run after preaching; for many follow that way that have little or no lively frame within them for all that.

3. There is an eclipse of the comfort and consolations of the spirit, which is a sign of deep desertion: you know it was one of the blessings of our God by his promise, when he was taking his farewel of his people and followers in this world, *I will send the Comforter unto you, and he shall teach you all things*. This is the comforter that brings consolation unto the soul of a believer. Now, when one wants that, he wants God's kindness; and there are many who go to preaching; but their hearts are not, as it were, skipping within them: there are many who go to secret duty; but when they come out of their closet, their hearts are not warmed by the comforts of the holy Spirit in duty.

4. There is a palpable eclipse of the peace of conscience that passes all natural understanding.—There are many, who, when they eat their meat are troubled; and when in fellowship with others, they have no peace of conscience. This is a sign of the want of the light of God's countenance; and thus desertion, and the length-

ning out of it, occaſions the diſtreſs of the people God.

4*thly*, The people of God may be tryſted with t diſmal-like providence; that is, ſad diſappointment the back of great experiences. The two diſciples go to Emmaus were choice Chriſtians: Chriſt joins h ſelf unto them, and aſks, *What manner of communi at. are theſe that ye have one with another, as ye walk and ſad?* Maſter, ſay they, it is becauſe we are in diſt Says Chriſt, what ails you? they give him an accoun it, and ſay, *Art thou a ſtranger in Jeruſalem, and not known the things that are come to paſs in thoſe —concerning Jeſus of Nazareth?—We truſted that it been he who ſhould have redeemed Iſrael: and beſides this, to-day is the third day, ſince theſe things were d* —our very hearts are like to break becauſe of this d pointment. So then diſappointments upon the bac great experiences bring the people of God into great treſs: So it is, Iſa. xxvi. 17, &c. Says the chu we have been travelling, and we thought we ſhould brought forth a man child, or ſome great thing; behold, we have *brought forth nothing but wind, we not wrought any deliverance in the earth.* This w great diſappointment, when they were expecting great delivery. I have no doubt but the children o dah, who were carried to Babylon, and were no quainted with the hiſtory of the time of their deli thought, that within four or five years the Lord w break the bonds of their captivity; but when it can twenty, thirty, forty, or ſixty years, then it is ſaid, cxxxvii. that *they went out, and wept by the rivers of Babylon*, and could not ſo much as think upon muſic, o inſtruments of muſic: becauſe their expectation was ken. There are many great promiſes made concer the deliverance and reſtoration of the church; and ny of the people of God fruſtrate their own merc ſpiriting of their hope; and when they are diſappo at this time, many of the people of God begin to becauſe the Lord delays deliverance to his church. they, Shall we all die in this wilderneſs? Is there no of hope? Shall we not enter into our former poſſeſſ and enjoy our wonted privileges again? It may be, every one of this generation may die before the rec of God's work in theſe lands; yet that day when it c ſhall be tranſportingly glorious; ſee Pſal. xxiii.

close; *a seed that shall be born shall do this.*—And let me tell you, that some of you covets in point of Christian fellowship to be very cautious; and why not? But let me tell you another thing, they may have five or six years of hearing, of preaching and sporting themselves about the congregation; and yet perhaps one word dropped touching them on the outside at last may do the turn.—And as to the recovery and revival of the work of God, when ye are all rotting in the graves, solemn assemblies shall be kept and esteemed,—and perhaps those yet unborn, or the poor children that cannot yet discern between their right hand and their left, shall be the persons marching up with the ark of God, and dancing for joy before it.—Remarkable is that instance of six hundred thousand (besides the Levites, women and children) of the children of Israel that came up out of the land of Egypt, there was not a soul of them, save Caleb and Joshua, entered the promised land; but their carcases all rotted in the wilderness: and yet their offspring when they went over Jordan, had brave days; and they fixed their twelve pillars in the midst of the water, as monuments of God's great deliverance; there being no more to do but to pierce their enemies with the sword, and divide their land by lot amongst them. We are very faint with disappointments, when it pleases the Lord to cover his table, and set down upon it the glory of Israel. Then every stranger will say, Now, we expect he comes; yea, he is at the door: and this is the forerunner of the greatest mercy to the church: yet thou must not depend too much to see that, lest thou be frustrated in thy expectation, and so thy spirit be ready to sink within thee for sorrow.

5*thly*, There may be this dismal-like providence, that may occasion great distress by losses, crosses, afflictions and troubles, both upon the inward and outward man. In this case was Job: he was a good man, had many experiences, and much communion with God; yet it fell out, that the Lord takes all from him: yea, that was not all: some strife falls in betwixt him and his wife: after all his substance and children are gone, a difference takes place between him and his natural, but Christian friends. They were the choicest men perhaps then in the world; and yet they mistook his case, calling him an hypocrite, and he could not endure that.—Yet he was not over-much distrest with all this, till he got another

ther caſt in providence, and that was the lengthening out of all theſe his trials, and the hiding of God's countenance therein. If we may ſay, that ſuch a man as Job could be broken; he was a mirror for religion: yet we find him in the third chapter of his book, curſing the day of his birth; and he ſpeaks many ſtrange things unto God. O he was in great diſtreſs; but in chap. xxiii. 3. he comes to expreſs the language of his ſoul. *O that I knew where I might find him!* all his diſtreſs was nothing to that. He was never preſt at the heart, till he finds a great diſtance betwixt God and his ſoul. Afflictions, croſſes, and external miſeries, and theſe all lengthned out in deſertion, occaſions great diſtreſs.—And ye muſt not think much of it, when ye are tryſted with theſe things: many of your neighbours have been ſo dealt with before: it may be thou art poor; well, thanks be to God, there is many poor (at leaſt who were poor) folk in heaven; and many were rich, and became poor, and grew far richer again than before, and yet ventured far. Job was in diſtreſs, but he overcame that, ere he died, and ſo became a victor in point of trial, both reſpecting internal and external difficulties. But

6thly, There is another diſmal like diſpenſation of providence: and it ſeems to be the ſharpeſt of all; and that is when God pleaſes to let the devil and the corruptions of his people looſe upon them, even thoſe latent corruptions, that they thought had been now chained up and hemmed in; ſo that the poor creature that ſeemed one day to be victorious over a body of ſin and death, is now trodden under the feet of theſe enemies; and that cauſes great diſtreſs, and is made to cry, *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?* Rom. vii. 24. There is ſomething here, that diſcovers his miſery. There are ſeveral things diſcovered in this caſe.

1. There are great ſins diſcovered, Pſal. xl. 12. *Innumerable evils compaſs me about; mine iniquities have taken hold upon me: they are more than the hairs of mine head.*

2. There is an awakened conſcience; and that cannot be well covered; the noiſe of it being become ſo terrible. And

3. There is the wrath of an angry God: there is nothing but wrath diſcovered. Alas, ſays the poor ſoul, I thought

I thought God and I ſhould never have been at variance again; but now to my coſt and ſad experience, I find it otherways.

4. There is ſome kind of impenitence: and in this caſe, the poor creature cannot be broken hearted enough for ſin.

5. There is a ſuſpenſion of the intimations of the Lord's favour and wonted loving kindneſſes; ſo that the poor believer cannot attain to the days of old, and years of antient times. Sin prevailing, an angry God frowning, an awakened conſcience tormenting, and a hard heart drooping; O ſad, ſad! And yet a child of God may be ſometimes under ſuch a caſe as this, ſee Pſal. xxxviii. for a proof of this doctrine.

Now, a word of uſe: and ſeeing the Lord has his own children in this world, how comes it to paſs, that they are oftimes in ſo great diſtreſs? I anſwer firſt, he does it for trial of ſome few particulars, which perhaps are in thy caſe.—And

1*ſt*, For the trial of the graces of his own ſpirit: for inſtance, when a man is in great diſtreſs, the Lord is trying him, if he can believe in ſuch a caſe, or hope in ſuch a diſtreſs: for the people of God are called to the lively exerciſes of the graces of the ſpirit of God, eſpecially when their ſouls are in anguiſh and diſtreſs.

2*dly*, He does it to ſee if thou wilt put theſe graces in exerciſe, that when thou art in great diſtreſs, wilt thou take hold of him by prayer: for ſtill the more that God's people were afflicted, they prayed the more.—*But David encouraged himſelf in the Lord his God.*

3*dly*, He does it to try if they will go the whole round of duties, to be as Job was, when he ſaid, O that I might know where I would find him; I would venture to wander all the world over to find my God: It was a noble reſolution in Hannibal. Says he, "I ſhall wan-"der all the world over to find out my enemies." This was *magnanimous* in a Pagan: So when a Chriſtian in the way of duty, is purſuing after God in ordinances, it is a great matter for a man under a reſtraint, to walk after the way of a Chriſtian. I will run the ways of thy commandments,—when thou haſt enlarged me; but what if he enlarge thee not? it is that which by thy diſtreſs he incites thee unto.

In

In the ſecond place, he tries you with diſtreſs, to complete you. The world is not complete by perfection, but it is complete by ſeeming imperfection. If all the creatures in the world had been made of one ſize and proportion as to their perfection, it had not been complete: but it conſiſts of devils and men, good and bad, wiſe and prudent, men and fools: beſides all kind of creatures; nay, all ſorts of venomous beaſts. O ſay ye, the world would have been better for the want of theſe: but by your favour it is his work: ſuch imperfect things complete the work. If thou wert ſtill weeping, thou would not be a complete Chriſtian. Therefore he brings the under failings, and ſuffers temptations to prevail over thee, and makes thy ſpirit to droop; ſo that thou art weeping and ſighing one day: and glorying the next day, and triumphing in the Lord: and that makes thee a compleat Chriſtian, and tends to complete his work upon thy ſoul.——Neither would it be a compleat church, if it were not ſo, that ſome are impriſoned, ſome deprived of their worldly ſubſtances, and ſome even brought to the gibbet for the cauſe of Chriſt, and all to make a complete church. We may ſay, in ſome caſes, Epiſcopacy was a happy trial to the church to render it more compleat: for without ſuch a trial many would have dwined away without life; but the trials, troubles and croſſes of the church alſo render her more compleat. So that thy fainting, doubtings, unbelief, temptations, &c. and thy victory over all theſe makes thee, as it were, compleat! If thou wert going trembling faintly to heaven, thou wert not compleat, and why? that is for theſe rather that are above than theſe below; but this makes thee a man like thyſelf in matter of profeſſion.

Thirdly, He tries thee that the whole of thy preparation may be running in the right channel, that is, for all the advantages he brings thy ſoul to hope for; yet he brings thee under diſtreſs, that thy ſeed may ſpring and his barns may be filled. There is a great difference between a ſpring time and the harveſt. Spring time is a pleaſant time: but ſummer, harveſt and winter make up the glory of the year. The good man keeps the ſeed in his barn, till the ſpring come; and then the weeds ſpring up, and if it were ſtill ſummer, they would overgrow the good grain; but the winter kills them; ſo that they do not overgrow the good ground. So he waters the

the ridges of ſouls by theſe troubles to make them fruitful: and O *happy is the man that goes forth, bearing precious ſeed weeping*, that is, in grief and trouble: and becauſe of a ſpring time, he ſhall *return with his ſheaves rejoicing*: So Iſa. lxvi. 10. *Rejoice ye with Jeruſalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her*, &c. And Ezek. ix. 4.—*Go through the midſt of Jeruſalem, and ſet a mark upon the foreheads of the men that ſigh and cry for all the abominations that are done in the midſt thereof.* Poor folk, they are like to break their hearts; but I am come to make them the ſeed of the church: ſome folk are not content to ſee people mourning, and very angry to ſee them weeping.—But when it falls out on account of their duty, troubles are the ſeed time of the church. There is a number of profeſſed Chriſtians that remain as unconcerned at the afflictions of the church and people of God, as if they were living in the wilds of America: and a number that are living betwixt this and the weſt ſeas, are as unconcerned with the ſufferings of Chriſt in his myſtical members, as if they were living there; and their own conſciences bear them witneſs, if they be bringing forth much fruit to God: but perhaps God will ſend a blaſt that will blow up that undermining thing that tends to the deſtruction of the church:

II. A ſecond obſervation that I ſhould ſpeak a little to, is, That the greateſt diſtreſſes of the people of God are preparatory to their greateſt mercies; and it is very clear, that in many of the people of God, their greateſt diſtreſſes have been previous to their greateſt enjoyments. Then we muſt not caſt at the diſtreſs of the church and poor afflicted people of God: but paſſing this at preſent, to haſten; there is a

III. Thing that I ſhall juſt name, and come to a cloſe, and it is this; That the ſame intereſt in God is the beſt foundation of encouragement for the people of God in time of diſtreſs. *But David encouraged himſelf in th Lord his God.* It was his intereſt in God that occaſioned this. If folk would be rightly fortified againſt diſtreſſes, there is your intereſt, Pſal. xlvi. 1. *God is our refuge and ſtrength; a very preſent help in the time of trouble: we will not fear though the earth be removed.* I will not be afraid, and why? Becauſe the Lord is become the ſure ſhelter of his church and people. Now, there are a few

things that pave the way for a diſtreſt child of God in ſecuring an intereſt in him. And

Here the caſe may be with ſome, If I could get my intereſt ſecured in God, I would not care what became of me, and all that I have this day in the world. So there are ſome things requiſite in order for the better ſecuring this intereſt in God; which may ſerve as an application for the ſhutting up of the ſubject at preſent. And

1. Thou muſt caſt thine eye, O Chriſtian, upon thy former and paſt experiences; either upon the communications of the Lord's kindneſs, the out-lettings of his love, or his power, exerted for thy forth-coming in thy journey heavenward. For inſtance, David encounters his enemies, and his adverſaries grow, namely Goliah, he defies the armies of the living God; and the armies of the living God are like to faint for fear of him. David comes, and ventures on a ſtrange attempt, in order to damp the adverſaries, and raiſe up his own ſpirit; and what does he? Says he, I will venture. O ſays the king of Iſrael, thou art but a ſtripling: what canſt thou do? But ſays David, I will venture, O king; I was feeding my father's flock: and there came a lion and a bear; and I ſlew them both; and the Lord that delivered me out of the paws of the lion, and the mouth of the bear, will alſo deliver me out of the hands of this uncircumciſed Philiſtine. Here was an intimation of the Lord's reſpect unto him by a former experience; and upon that, ſays he, I will venture my blood upon him: and afterwards he entered the liſts with Goliah. He ſaid unto David, Am I a dog, that thou comeſt to me with ſtaves? and he curſed him by his gods: I will give thy fleſh to be meat to the beaſts of the earth, &c. But, ſays David, hear me one word: *thou comeſt unto me with a ſword and a ſpear; but I come to thee in the name of the living God, whoſe armies thou haſt defied*, and that upon an old experience. So, in a diſtreſſed caſe, when the people of God are brought very low; yet they may aſſure themſelves, and adventure on difficulties by recapitulating former experiences.—The day was once when Chriſt tryſted with my ſoul; and once I was obliged to ſay, *The Lord is my God.* Now I will venture my life and all I have this day upon that, if the Lord call me to it. I was at ſuch and ſuch a communion, and there was ſuch an in-break upon my ſoul of his loving-kindneſs,

that

that I cared for nothing. So reflect upon that old experience: look back to him whom thou avouchedst to be thy God in former times; and why may he not be thy God now also?

2. The people of God ought to relieve their spirits in distress by casting their eyes upon him instead of all relations in these days. He is thy father, thy husband, thy elder brother, thy best friend, and sympathizer with his people in all their afflictions; and what a privilege is this to be thus related unto him who is the king of saints, and the glory of the church; and not only so, but thy own God by old experiences? Take him then in all the relations in which he holds out himself unto thy soul, for securing thy interest in him against all distress; and this will occasion great encouragements. How much did David encourage himself in a view of these relations, when he says, Psal. xviii. 2. *The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer: my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler and the horn of my salvation in whom I will trust.* And in this he encourages himself to bless and magnify the Lord. And

3. Take a view of the Lord in his divine attributes; and that may help to hold up thy soul, O believer; for he is mighty to save; and to save thee in all thy distresses and intricate difficulties. He is also infinite in counsel and so can set thy foot on a rock, *and establish thy way before thee.* Thou canst not tell what will become of thy own case, nor the affairs of the church of Christ: wilt thou then cast all these over upon the infinity of God? he sits at the helm of affairs, and steers the rudder; and so points the ship whithersoever she is to go; and though we should be overclouded with never so many discouragements; yet God is the Lord, see the xcvii. and xcix. Psalm. The beginning of both is, *The Lord reigneth, and let the earth rejoice, and the people tremble; his hand is lifted up*: and if ye look on his attributes so, ye will see his mercy therein, Psal. ciii. 13. *Like as a Father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth all that fear him.* And think ye, that he will lay more upon them, than they are able to bear. He may lay troubles upon them and trials: and what the matter? that is his way with the church: but what follows? he relieves his people, and *delivers Jacob out of all his troubles.* O sirs, if we were rightly fortified against the distress of these times,

the

the children of God might have a pleasant life this d
It is God that justifieth, and who may *lay any thing t*
charge of God's elect? Let him their give a taft of
kindness to his people, and secure their interest to the
it is he that justifieth me, may ye say: and O but ye
happy, O believers, that have an interest in suc
powerful and wise God. He is one that guides his
with his everlasting arms around them: as the
are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord encompa
his church; and he that neither slumbers nor sle
watches over her. I'll tell you, that the faintnes
spirits proceeds from your want of faith.—*O ye of*
faith, how long shall I be with you? &c. When the
turion came unto me, says the Saviour about the ca
his servant, I bade him go home, his servant woul
healed: he did so, and found him whole at the set h
But now, ye doubt of my power and abilities: How
will ye be without faith? If ye had faith but as a
of mustard seed, ye might say *unto this mountain, be*
removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and it shall be
This seems to be the worst disaster, that many Chris
meet with; they will not venture their souls case u
him. *O ye of little faith, why do ye doubt?* Some Ch
tians will venture their souls salvation upon him,
have not confidence in him concerning his church
interest in the world, But do ye think, that he
not an equal interest in both? and has he not prom
to build the walls of his Jerusalem, and to put on
top stone thereof with shouting, *saying, grace, grace,*
to it? There is no ground to doubt, but antichrist
all his antichristian crew, shall yet be brought u
the feet of the living God; and all these antichri
doctrines now taught and applauded by men, shall
be trodden under foot. *For he must not reign, un*
have put all enemies under his feet: The last enemy
shall be destroyed, is death, 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26. He
tread under his feet the nations, piercing unto
very heart with the soles of his feet, driving the
pieces, as a potsherd is broken to shivers; and if ye
rightly acquainted with him, ye would have the fai
this: And tho' we be under a cloud for the time by
present discouragements, what the matter of that?
we cannot mistrust the Lord, that has promised he
reign in spite of all his enemies.—There are brave
O Christians, coming, when what concerns hin

ſhall be accompliſhed: The days are coming, that theſe poor deſpiſed people, that are now weeping, ſighing, ſobbing, and deſponding, ſhall be up.

Poor peeviſh ſpirited folk that have no faith in God, think that religion wholly conſiſts in ſighing, and drooping; but no ſuch matter; it is the part of the people of God, to look up unto the captain of their ſalvation, who through *ſuffering was made perfect*. He has promiſed to do all things for you that have an intereſt in him thus ſecured. David encouraged himſelf in the Lord his God: follow this example, and all ſhall be well. But we ſhall ſay no more.—But to his name be the praiſe.

N. B. If the Pages ſpecified could have admitted, I intended to have here, along with this, publiſhed another pretty large but very faithful ſermon by the ſame author, preached in the year 1680, from theſe words Luke ii. 35. *Yea, a ſword ſhall pierce through thy own alſo, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.*

In this diſcourſe, he ſhews the evil of the indulgence, ceſs paying, bonding, *&c.* And when treating on the word ſwords, very elegantly diſcribes theſe four kinds of ſwords ſpoken of in ſcripture: *viz.* The ſword of juſtice, the ſword of judgment, the ſword of reproach, and the ſword of many ſorrows. When deſcribing this ſecond ſword, the ſword of judgment, he has the following very remarkable ſentences; "We have had a "bloody ſword amongſt us already, and who knows "but the next ſword may be the ſword of his judgment? "we hear of ſwords now in ſeveral places of the coun- "try hanging in the air, as clear as glaſs (or chriſtal) "and when ſome put the queſtion, what this can mean? "Some put this commentary on it, that there is yet "more blood to be ſhed; and who knows but this may "be meant by it alſo, that the ſword of the Lord's judg- "ment is bathed in heaven, and made ready to exe- "cute juſtice and judgment upon the generation, who "will not fear, ſerve and obey him. And we declare "unto you this night, that as the Lord lives, if ye live "any number of years, ye ſhall ſee ſtranger days than "ever ye have yet ſeen; for God is coming with great "wrath and indignation againſt this land:—And no won- "der it be ſo, for all the unparalelled wickedneſs that "ever was done in a land, is done in this land. In all "the hiſtory we ever read, divine or human, we never

"read

"read of a worſe generation on the earth than we in "Britain are at this day, *&c.*" Now, how applicable this is to our preſent circumſtances, muſt be left with the reader.

A

SERMON

Preached at *Mill-houſe*, in the Pariſh of KILBRIDE, by GABRIEL SEMPLE, *March* 21. 1679.

SERMON IX.

ISAIAH lv. 6.

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found: call upon him while he is near.

MAN once ſtood in good terms with God, Sirs: O but man, when he was firſt created, was a happy and glorious creature! *He was made but a little lower than the Angels;* for his glory and his holineſs was ſuch, that as the friend of God, he might have ſpoken as familiarly to his Lord and creator, as a man ſpeaks to his friend. But O he ſinned away that priviledge, and the Lord chaſed him away, and excluded him from paradiſe: that was a ſad change on Adam, when the Lord's voice was terrible unto him in the garden;—ſays Adam, I heard thy voice in the garden; and I was afraid: what fears thee, Adam? What ails you at my voice? It uſed not to be a terror unto you: have you ſinned? Adam,

I am

I am ſure ſomething is not right here: what, have ye eaten of the forbidden tree, and ſinned againſt me? no wonder that you are afraid; for I am become your enemy for that: and now begone from my ſight and preſence, (until ye be reconciled unto me in another way and manner;———and that through the blood of my own Son.) There was Adam and all his poſterity baniſhed forth from the preſence of God. Now, what eſtate is man then in? He is in a eſtate that he cannot look God in the face, and God cannot look him in the face, but he is a terror unto him.—Now, till he be reconciled by Jeſus Chriſt, he cries nothing but, hide us from the face of him that *ſits upon the throne*, from the Lamb &c. Hills and mountains, cover us from his glory for we cannot endure his ſpotleſs holineſs; but tho' this be the caſe with all mankind, yet bleſs the Lord, that has found out another way, whereby he reconciles him again unto himſelf; that is, in and through the blood of his own Son, his ſent and well beloved Son, to become man; and in that nature to ſuffer in his merit and mediation for man's ſin and tranſgreſſion: and thereby to be reconciled unto God again. There man has acceſs unto his holineſs; man may come boldly to the throne of his grace, and none to make him afraid. O the Lord is got off the throne of juſtice, and for Chriſt's ſake is ſeated now upon the throne of mercy, love and grace: and what ſays he now? what cries his meſſenger here unto you? but,—*Seek ye the Lord, while he is to be found; call ye upon his name, while he is near.* Chriſt has brought God the Father near;—*for God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf.* And therefore this is the charge given all his meſſengers, that they ſhould tell all the world, that, if ever they would come near him, they muſt do it in Chriſt. O if ye would be acquainted with him, it muſt be in and through his precious Son Jeſus Chriſt: if you would have that enmity taken away, and be made friends with him again, ye *muſt ſeek the Lord while he is to be be found.* In the words ye have.

1. The exhortation to this great duty; and it is; *ſeek the Lord.* There is the duty of all the poſterity of Adam. Men and women, what is your duty and work in the world, or buſineſs here away? It is not to eat, drink, ſleep, live, die and periſh, like the beaſts: no, your great work is to ſeek the Lord upon great buſineſs to call upon the name of the Lord. Seek the favour

and friendſhip of God: ſeek nearneſs, union and communion with him. Seek to glorify God here, and to enjoy him hereafter: this is your great work and buſineſs in the world. And

2. We have the encouragement given, that is, *while he is to be found.* Why, ſay ye, need we ſeek him? he will not be found of us now: we have offended him by breaking the covenant of works. Now he has caſt us out with our forefathers, for their and our ſins and tranſgreſſions. No, ſays the ſpirit of God, for all this, there may be peace made with him yet; for as far as he is gone, he may yet be found, if we take the right way with: ſit he is yet nigh at hand: ſeek him *while he is to be found, call upon him while he is near.* The obſervation from the words, is———

That the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is not ſhut up from poor ſouls; but if any have a mind for him, they may find him. James 1. 5. *If any man lack wiſdom, let him aſk it of God, which giveth liberally to all men, and upbraideth none.*—He is not on the reſerve, he is not ſo ſhut up from ſinners, that he is not to be found.—Indeed, he may ſometimes, as it were, go to his place, that ye may ſeek the more after him: and I ſhall give you the following evidences that the Lord is not ſhut up, or unnacceſſable to the children of men. And

1*ſt*, Becauſe he has commanded all men and women to ſeek him; and this ſays, he is not upon his keeping (ſo to ſpeak) from them, when he has commanded all the children of Adam, all at leaſt within the viſible church *ſeek ye Lord, while he is to be found,* &c. He has given out the royal commandment for it; and indeed ſometimes when this is followed out it paſſes into a law. In Aſa's days, who was a good king and that is a great bleſſing to a land or people; it is ſaid 2 Chron. xv. 12. *And they entered into a covenant to ſeek the Lord God of their fathers with all their hearts,* &c. And that whoſoever *ſought not the Lord, ſhould be put to death, whether man or woman,* &c.—O when ſhall ſuch an act come from the rulers in theſe lands, that ſuch as will not ſeek the Lord ſhall be put to death! Ye ſee the Lord not only commands it, but he threatens judgment for not ſeeking of him, *pour out thy fury on the heathen, and the families that call not on thy name.*

2*dly*, This ſays, that the Lord is content to be ſought unto; and he tells where they may find him. After

Chriſt's

Christ's resurrection, what says the angel to the women, Christ is not here; where is he gone? the world is wide and large: we know not where to seek him: but says the angel, he is *gone before you unto Gallilee, and there shall ye see him*—There he trysted with you before he suffered, and there ye shall find him. Do not think then, that Christ is keeping himself up from you.

3*dly*, Because he has made many promises, and given great encouragements, that if they follow on to seek the Lord, they shall find him. He has made many a sweet and encouraging promise, that they may seek him and follow out this great duty. And

4*thly*, He gives them a blessed welcome, that seek him. He upbraids none, but makes them all welcome. He is easily overcome by them, Song iii. 4.—*I found him, whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go*, &c. says the spouse; and he is well content to be holden of her. I say the great welcome he gave the prodigal son, when he comes to himself: Says he, I will go back again to my fathers house, and confess my sins, and so glorify God: what does the father? he goes out to meet him, and says, is this my Son! He as it were, gives him not leave to speak, but flies into his neck, and kisses him, saying, *This is my Son, that was dead, and is yet alive again, that was lost and is found.* Such a meeting betwixt Christ and the soul is, as was between Jacob and Joseph: *It is enough that my Son Joseph is alive*: And it is said, he wept on his neck; this says, he is content to be sought, and gives great welcome and encouragement; *bring the fatted calf and the best raiment* to put upon him, &c.

Now, Sirs, here is a great witness against you in the day of the Lord; if ye will not come and seek mercy in time through the blood of Jesus, for cleansing from your sins. Forsake your evil ways, and if this were the case, the fatted calf would be killed. If Scotland were on the turning hand, we would get another feast yet, for a new marriage bargain. Yea, it is said, *there is joy in heaven at the conversion of one sinner*: There is much sorrow in the world, when a poor soul turns to God; the devil and the world is saying, we have lost a good comerade.—Ay, but there is joy in heaven for that: it is said, at the conversion or repentance of one sinner, there is joy in heaven. O but that says, that Christ is not upon his hiding (so to speak) from his people.

Uſe, Now, if it is ſo, that the Lord is thus to be found: *ſeek the Lord, while he is to be found; call upon him, while he is near.* The Lord is not ſhut up yet, as to Scotland; their aſſemblies ſays, that Chriſt is yet to be found; that he keeps up a public diſplayed banner in ſpite of all his enemies, both papiſts, prelates, and malignants, and all their laws and arms: Chriſt is covering a goſpel table here and there: and what is he proclaiming by that banner, but *if any man will make peace with me, let him take hold of my ſtrength, and he ſhall make peace with me?* Chriſt is crying this to Scotland: this ſays he is not upon the reſerve with us; then ſeek *him while he is to be found, and call upon him while he is near.* And I ſhall notice ſome of the places, and alſo of the times, wherein ye will moſt likely find him. And

1*ſt*, Ye will find him in ſecret. If ye ſeek him aright, be ſure to ſeek him there. Says Chriſt, when thou *prayeſt, ſhut thy doors*, and *pray to thy father which is in ſecret: and thy Father which ſeeth in ſecret, ſhall reward thee openly.* Alas! I fear, that there be many folk that come to meetings and conventicles, (as they are called) that are not given to ſecret prayer and ſeeking of God. Parents, I exhort you to exhort your children, to ſeek God in ſecret prayer; and maſters, exhort your ſervants to ſeek him this way. There are alſo places, yea, houſes, wherein ye will more readily find him than in other places: ſee Jacob when coming to his Father; Laban behind him, and ſaw before him: he ſent his wives and whole ſubſtance before him: what, will ye ſtay alone here all night? O ſays Jacob, I have a friend to ſpeak with this night: and I have ſet this time apart for it; and I have a ſecret errand; as Ehud ſaid, when he killed Eglon, I have a ſecret *meſſage unto thee O king*: So a ſoul that is right exerciſed has ſtill ſome ſecrets with the Lord, that even the neareſt of its relations muſt not know of. It may be confeſſing or mourning for ſome ſecret ſin, or tranſgreſſion, or ſecret ſuit for the mortification of ſome ſecret ſin or corruption,—or ſome ſecret wreſtling with God that it may have ſome teſtimony of its ſincerity before him. Therefore it is this ſecret duty that is ſo much commended. Jacob wreſtled with the angel of the covenant, and there he got a fair trial, and a bleſſed tryſte, as ye have it Hoſ. xii. 4. *Yea he had power over the angel, and prevailed: He wept, and made ſupplication*

unto

unto him, &c. Where found he him? in Bethel. O Sirs, ſecret ſeeking of God is a great duty. If ye would find him, ye muſt be ſecret ſeekers of God, John i. A Nathaniel indeed:—but, how knoweſt thou that? ſaid Nathaniel to Chriſt, when he called him an *Iſraelite indeed. I ſaw thee under the fig tree.* Very likely, I know the place where thou haſt fellowſhip with me in ſecret. There are ſome folk at this with it, that they know not where they ſay their ſecret prayers;—neither is there a ſet form of prayers that ye muſt confine yourſelves unto; but if thou be a true ſeeker of God, thou wilt neither confine thyſelf to ſet forms, nor ordinary times, but thou wilt ſet ſome times apart for it. And ſo if ye would find the Lord, ye muſt ſeek him in ſecret.

2*dly*, Ye will find him not only in ſecret prayer, in reading of the word, and confeſſing of your ſins, but alſo in Chriſtian fellowſhip, or ſociety meetings. When you cannot find him in ſecret, there is another place to go to, that is, fellowſhip meetings: and to theſe will I go, ſays the believer; ſays the ſpouſe, Cant. iii. 1, 2. *By night, I ſought him whom my ſoul loveth*, &c. it is like in ſecret. *But I found him not*: what next? *I went to the broad ways*, that is, where I knew the people of God were in fellowſhip meetings; and there I ſought him, *whom my ſoul loveth.* And indeed, if you would find him, it would be as readily there as in many other places. Chriſt evidenced this, John xx. 10.—There the diſciples went home, but it is ſaid, Mary ſtood without, weeping her alone. She could not think to leave Chriſt's grave; and what comes of it? ſhe gets a manifeſtation; Chriſt ſpake to her and ſaid, *woman, why weepeſt thou?* She ſuppoſed him to be the gardener until he revealed himſelf unto her: and then ſhe eſſayed to take hold of his feet: here was a manifeſtation in ſecret. Well, the next manifeſtation was in fellowſhip, ver. 19. *When the doors were ſhut, where the diſciples were aſſembled for fear of the Jews, came Jeſus and ſtood in the midſt, and ſaid, peace be unto you.*—They durſt not keep their public aſſemblies: Therefore gather together unto private fellowſhips; for there it is ſaid, Chriſt came and ſtood *in the mids of them*; and it is ſaid elſewhere, that he *breathed upon them*, and ſaid, your ſins are forgiven you.—But I cannot tell (my friends) what is become of the weſt of Scotland now; for he was not counted much worth in religion that did not meet in Chriſtian fellowſhip to ſeek

the Lord.—Men could not have met on the high way but they would have ſpoken of God and religion: but now that is gone both in life and converſation. It is ſaid, that when it was ſaid to a certain man, that he ſhould venture ſomething for religion: "I cannot tell, "(ſaid he) if my religion be ſo ſtrong, as to bear ſuffer-"ing." So that your religion is not that ſtrong, as to bring you together to ſeek God, is a black mark or token of ſome terrible judgment coming on the land: And if any thing will prevent judgment it is ſeeking the Lord. But it is a ſincere ſeeking him with the whole heart; The king of Nineveh could tell you that crying mightily to God did prevent ruin.—But we fear the king of Nineve ſhall ariſe in judgment, and condemn many profeſſors in this generation. It is not the hearing of preaching, nor the hearing of preſbyterian miniſters, (as ye call them,) and that ye will not hear the curates, (alas that there ſhould have been ſo much compliance with them) will do, without ſincere ſeeking of God. ſome in the apoſtle's days, ſaid, they were of Paul, and they of Apollos; but is Chriſt divided? will ye make more of Chriſt, and look leſs to inſtruments. †

3*dly*, Another place where ye will find him, is in the public ordinances. Say the daughters of Jeruſalem, Song vi. 1. *Whither is thy beloved gone that we may ſeek him with thee.* Well, what ſays the ſpouſe? *My beloved is gone down into the garden*, that is, to the church, to gather lillies, that is to gather believers. So ye will find him in his ordinances, and the public aſſemblies of his people. Says the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. lxiii. 2. *To ſee thy power and thy glory, as I have ſeen thee in the ſanctuary.* O to be back at his ſanctuary, ſays the believer; and what would ye ſee there? Why, I ſhould ſee Chriſt, and have a manifeſtation of his power there. Well, ſirs, ſeeing he has told you ſo poſitively where ye will find him; then ye will be inexcuſable in the day of the Lord, if ye ſeek him not. And here we take inſtruments againſt you, that the Lord is yet to be found in Scotland. And for all the force, acts, laws, and baniſhments, Chriſt is yet to be found there. We need not go over to Holland, France or Germany to ſeek Chriſt: He

† *N. B.* A few ſentences of the above two particulars is extracted from the application of another ſermon of the ſame author on the like ſubject from Zeph. xi. 3. *Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth*, to make them more complete.

He is yet in Scotland, and to be ſeen in ſecret, in fellowſhip, and in the mount of goſpel ordinances. Much pains have they taken to chaſe him away, and with ſound of trumpet and tuke of drum commanded him to depart our coaſts; but we bleſs his name, and take it for a token of good, that for all the ways and means they have taken to baniſh him, he will not go away.—And though they would ſend off all his houſhold furniture, that ſo he ſhould not have a miniſter or profeſſor there; yet he has commanded an arreſt that they take not all theſe out of Scotland, which ſhews, that he has no mind yet to quit Scotland. And may not that encourage you to ſeek the Lord? And if ye do not, it will be a great diſadvantage unto you. I will tell you, what will come of it: he will be a witneſs againſt you. Is he ſeeking you? And will ye not ſeek him? Is Chriſt ſeeking thy ſoul's good and welfare, O man and woman? and wilt thou not ſeek him? O that will be a witneſs againſt you. Chriſt is ſeeking a church and people to ſerve and glorifie him; and will ye not ſeek him? This will be a witneſs againſt you in the day of the Lord; whatever you may now think of it.

Secondly, I come, in the next place, to tell you of the times, wherein ye will moſt readily find him. And

1. Ye will find him in the morning of the day, after the reſt and refreſhment of ſleep in the night; and before ye engage your hearts to the world, and the luſts thereof through the day. Engage your heart to ſeek the Lord then. There are ſome folk no ſooner awake, but the world awakes with them: the world crys, up and ſerve me; and the Lord ſays by his word and ſpirit, riſe, man and woman, and ſerve me. Seek my face and favour, and every good thing from me.—Indeed, the world gets many a favourable anſwer, while the Lord gets, ſtand thou by, till the world be ſerved. O this is not right; ſays the Pſalmiſt, *my voice ſhalt thou hear in the morning: O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee*, Pſal. v. 3. As the firſt work, ſays David, I will go to prayer to get the bleſſing of heaven, and the bleſſing of my Father who is there. I'll go, and glorify him in the morning of the day.

2. Time, wherein ye will find him is in the morning of your age. Young folk, ye have the advantage of old people here: and how ſo? they have ſitten their time, ſpent, and ſinned it away; but young folk have the time before

before their hand in the morning of their age. O but ye have a great advantage, that ye have the Lord to ſeek, and your young days to ſacrifice to the Lord and for the Lord. Young Joſiah, when his heart was young and tender, it is ſaid, *Sought the Lord God of his Fathers.* He has that commendation in the eight year of his reign. Wherefore was it that John was called the beloved diſciple, but (as ſome conjecture) becauſe he was the youngeſt, that firſt began to follow Chriſt? So in the morning of thy age, thou ſhouldeſt begin to ſeek him. Ye ſee how the Lord calls upon young Samuel. The Lord appeared again, again, and the third time, and he had a ſecret time to ſeek the Lord; and for that end his parents ſent him there.—There are curſed parents amongſt you, who devote your children to the devil and the world, but train them not up to ſeek and ſerve God. Hannah brought Samuel unto the temple, and there ſhe left him never to depart; but to be a ſeeker of God and a ſerver of him, all the days of his life; and he became ſo; but even when he was very young, the Lord crys, Samuel; and the lad was not acquainted with the Lord. And he tells Eli the buſineſs: I heard a voice ſpeaking, and I wot not what it means. At firſt, Eli is not well inſtructed in the thing neither; but when he calls again, ſays Eli, that muſt be the Lord making acquaintance with you. What ſhall I do? ſays Samuel. Why, ſays Eli, ſay, *Speak, Lord, for thy ſervant heareth:* If he has any ſervice for thee, tell him thou art ſet apart to glorifie him, and ſerve his church and people. Tell him this and ye will get much of his mind.—Parents, breed your children young, and if they ſhould but hold up their hands to heaven, teach them to acknowledge God. The Turks will riſe up in the day of judgment, and condemn many parents; for the firſt thing they teach them, is, 'That there is one God, and Mahomet 'his great prophet.' I ſay, that many parents never teach their children, that there is one God.—However, young folk, ſeek the Lord; for ye have heard tell of young ones that have ſought the Lord, and have found him. The

3. Morning in which you are to ſeek him, is, the morning of the goſpel. We have got a new morning of it now; but there was a black night of it by the Glaſgow act in Scotland. Many places of the land to this day are like the land of Zebulun and Naphtali; eſpecial-

ly many of these places in the north of Scotland that are sitting in darkness. Pray for them. I think the Highland host, that lately came from thence amongst you, might draw prayers from you. What would they say, Pity us; we are your mother's children: we were baptized in the same church: ye minded your own corner; and ye see, we are but a parcel of savages. Ye did not pray for us, as ye should have done; and it is but just with God, that we should be a plague unto you. If ye have the light and the knowledge of Christ yourselves, ye care not for others, and therefore God has sent us to chastise you for this fault amongst others. A man will perhaps pray for those in his own parish; but O prayer should extend to all Scotland, England and Ireland; nay all the habitable world: *Be thou exalted, O Lord, above the heavens, and let the whole earth be filled with thy glory.* Some places have not yet seen the dawning of the gospel-day. O if they would chase the gospel to the north of Scotland.—O for an entrance there; but while ye have the morning of the gospel, improve it; we cannot tell how long it will last: our sun rises not so high as at other times. Therefore, I pray you, while ye have the gospel and gospel-ordinances, make use of them.—Seek the Lord, and close with him in the offers of his grace; and say, Lord, thou offerest thyself unto me for *wisdom, justification, sanctification and complete redemption*; so here I am with all my soul: I accept of this offer. *I will be your God, and ye shall be my people.* I take instruments that thou shalt be my king, priest and prophet. O improve the offers of the gospel. Ye cannot tell how long this morning of it shall be continued with you. Therefore seek the Lord; call on his name. Ye cannot tell how soon he may go, and how far he may go away from you. We shall add no more. The Lord bless what ye have heard, and to his name be the praise.

N. B. There is a number of sermons in manuscript, preached by the same author, which at present could not be got here published.

F I N I S.

This Page happening to fall blank, the Publiſher thought it might not be improper to inſert the following Act.

Act *of the* General Aſſembly *anent the Adminiſtration of the Sacraments.*

THE General Aſſembly conſidering, that the two ſacraments that Chriſt hath appointed under the new Teſtament, *viz.* Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper, are his ſolemn ordinances, and ſeals of the covenant of grace, which is held forth in the preaching of the goſpel; and that in the uſe of them, the parties receiving them are ſolemnly devoted and engaged to God before angels and men, and are ſolemnly received as members of the church, and do entertain communion with her; and that by the authority of this church in her former aſſemblies, the private uſe of them hath been condemned; as alſo, that by allowing the private uſe of the ſame in pretended caſes of neceſſity, the ſuperſtitious opinion is nouriſhed, that they are neceſſary to ſalvation, not only as commanded duties, but as means, without which ſalvation cannot be attained. Therefore the aſſembly here diſcharges the adminiſtration of the Lord's Supper to ſick perſons in their houſes, and all other uſe of the ſame, except in the public aſſemblies of the church.—And alſo do diſcharge the adminiſtration of Baptiſm in private, that is, in any place, or at any time, when the congregation is not orderly called together, to wait on the diſpenſing of the word; and appoints that this be carefully obſerved, when and wherever the Lord giveth his people peace, liberty and opportunity for their public aſſemblies, and ordains this preſent act to be publicly intimated in all the churches.

SUB-

UBSCRIBERS NAMES.

in by John Glen merchant
t Glaſgow.

STIRLING.

HE Revered Mr John M'Mil
lan miniſter of the goſpel
Brown merchant
Gourlie do.
as Gilchriſt do.
ias Galloway do.
t Harvie carpet manufacturer
zar Brown
Henderſon weaver
Wingate do.
Matthie in Abbey
as Dounie farmer
im Mitchel taylor in Airth
m Eſpie diſtiller there

St. NINIANS.

im Gilleſpie farmer
t Paterſon taylor
t Gilleſpie ſhoemaker
Gilleſpie farmer
t Buchanan
im Glen Weſt Plain
Forſal weaver
t Martin ſmith
Jeffrey ſhoemaker
Watſon weaver
Cowan farmer
w Thomſon do.
Watſon weaver
o Johnſton gardner Orchyard
d
/ Reid weaver Clackmanan

in by James Robertſon mer-
nt Thornhill.
. Fergufon wright there
Spittle ſhoe maker there
William Fergufon cooper there
Alexr. M'Laren ſhoemaker there
James Summers weaver there
James Fiſher ſhoe maker there
David Fergufon weaver there
John M'Kinzie do. there
Peter Fergufon do. there
Alexr. M'Arthur do. there
Alexr. Graham do. there

Given in by Alexr Dynnan ſmith
in Daily pariſh.

Arthur Barclay grieve at Kilkeran
Alexander Grant gardner there
Alexander Corrie labourer there
James Grier there
John Corrie there
Gilbert Gibſon there
William Crawford there
James Wilſon coal cutter at Dre-
mellan
Alexander Kilpatrick miner there
John Egleſhome weaver pariſh of
Colminell
Robert Egleſhome there
Robert M'Caw taylor there
John M'Fedus of Kirkoſwald

William Cunningham Termenton
Kirkland of Tergles
James Millar in Drum New Abbey,
1 doz.
John Wallace ſchoolmaſter Tergles
William M'Cauchie taylor there
John Edgar wright in Chafaulees
Troquair
John Fergufon Barncleugh
Thomas Henderſon ſtudent of divi-
nity Cloſburn
James Dawſon weaver Glenkiln

John Campbel in Eaſdale, 12 copies
Archd. Campbel ſhip grieve there, 12 copies
Alexr. Cochran weaver Glaſgow

Given in by Mary Campbel
Walter Ure weaver dykehead of Cardroſs
John Hewate in Drummod pariſh
John Monach there
William Storie wright Walkinſhaw
John Stewart weaver there
James Renfrew in mains of Blackſtown
Andrew Brown Inchinnan
Lewis M'Kewen there
John Algie ſmith there
Matthew Whyte farmer there
John Thom weaver in Calder pariſh
Robert Hardie weaver in Cumbernauld
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Mary Eaton there
William Carmichael miller in New Kilpatrick
William M'Hutcheon miller in mill of Colhoun
Angus M'Donald in Bet Retira
Robert Connel at Mr. Cairns field
Adam Ruſs ſmith Strabungo
William Greenlees there
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John Gourlie taylor Overton Cambuſnethan pariſh
John Finlayſon
William Paterſon Lanerk pariſh
Robert Forreſt maſon there
William Watſon Leſmahago
James Hodge there
James Young ſmith there
William Gold coal cutter Newton of Douglaſs
Peter Gold miner there
Hugh Gold ditto there

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John Hunter taylor
David Anderſon
James Foord
David Wiſhart
John Smitton
Andrew Roxburgh
George Muckarſie
Robert Walker ſtabler
David Goodale bleacher
John Kerr manufacturer
William Zuill company clerk
William Harlie lapper there
Charles Richardſon weaver there
John Smith there
George Donaldſon there
John Martin there
Alexander Crumbie cooper
Alexander Craig taylor
Andrew Ure merchant
John Campbell do.
John Wright gardner
Mungo Coungton taylor
Robert M'Kinzie do.
James Reid dyer
Angus M'Fadyen ſhoemaker
George Biſhop ditto

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William Brown dyer there
Thomas Matthew do. there
William Muſhet weaver there
James Muter farmer in Middle
William Noble merchant Laſw
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ſter of the goſpel, Old Monkland
The Rev. Mr. John Knox, mini
of the goſpel, Stamman

GLA

Murray plaiſterer
rſhall ditto
ove ditto
illan ditto
r Phorſon ditto
/ wright
Mackie ſhoemaker
Miller
mſon potter
Millan workman
lder weaver
onaldſon ditto
ilſon ſtocking maker
M'Illroy ditto
ilton ditto
aham bleacher
Robertſon
iller weaver

ALTON.

th weaver
Gray ditto
y ditto
Laren ſmith
Nair weaver
y ditto

VY Pariſh of Glaſgow.

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ıer Gardbraid
evenſon Stobcroſs
h weaver Parkhouſe
uſſel
lerſon gardner Whithill
nith Dalmarnock

s in Neitherton
couler ſervant Carmun-

ace maſon Kirkintilloch
illos weaver Kilmarnock
:k weaver Neilſton pariſh
yre ditto there

ıus weaver Calder Pariſh
lan weaver there
ıy weaver there
ſay ditto there

George Drew portioner Burnbrae
James Angus weaver Cryſtown
David Strang ditto there
David Wilſon miller Badly miln
John Stark taylor Lecket-hill
Walter Thom weaver Gartfarra
James Craig farmer Badlay
Joſeph Thom ſervant there
John Walker Mallinburn
John Sommervell in Little Hill

Will. Taylor carpenter Long Lone
Robert Scott ſawer there
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James Walker weaver in Shells
James Allan New Monkland
James Thom portioner of Weſter Gleatore
Hugh Neilſon there
John Clelland weaver Weſter Black Tongue
Robert Shaw wright there
William Auld farmer in Cameron
John Thomſon ditto in Shank
James Legat in Colloch Ridge
James Boyd farmer Dinnavock
William M'Lean Portioner South Madrox
Agneſs Paterſon
William Brown in Row
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John Waddel of Brige end
William Lang workman Townhead
Mary Smith of Springwell
William Rankin in Raebog
James Gillespie in Broomlees
John Paul there
John Moderwell of Loanfoot
Andrew Allan weaver Blackhill
George Ruſſel in Blackmuir
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Robert Ronald weaver there
James Walker in Wards
James Thomſon ſhoemaker Tumpinhead

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John M'Lean of North Madrocks

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Alexr. Horn farmer there
James Stirling ditto there
John Paton gardner there
William Bryſon there
Mary Archibald there
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James Pollock taylor there
John Watt farmer there
Robert Braſh taylor there
Janet Finlay there
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John Ruſſel of Garbet Hill there
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