

THE COVENANTER.

MARCH, 1848.

(For the Covenanter.)

THE DOMINION OF CHRIST.

The author of the following article is a minister of the Associate Church. In giving this article a place in our pages, we would remark 1st, That it is not our intention to take any part in the question respecting the course of the Repository in refusing to admit it into its pages, and hence we have taken the liberty of striking out of the opening paragraph, some remarks on this point. 2d, The general drift of the article, and the bulk of its reasoning, meets our approbation. It is designed to prove that magistracy is *instituted* in the Scriptures, and that of course, all who have the Bible are bound to go to the Scriptures to ascertain what magistracy is; that to *invent* a system of magistracy out of men's own heads,—leaving the Bible out of view—is foolish, unwarrantable, infidel. In connexion with this—for they are inseparable—the writer maintains the accountability of the magistrate to God in Christ. 3. We would have preferred the use in some instances, of other phraseology. Some of the expressions employed respecting the origin of magistracy, are liable to be abused—they may be even misunderstood.

With these general remarks, we lay the article before our readers, asking for it a careful perusal, especially that part which treats of the relation between religion and magistracy.

The writer promises another article on the subject.—(Ed. Cov.)

MR. EDITOR:—As the Repository has replied to my article published in the Covenanter, and utterly refuses to publish for me, I have concluded to ask of you another favour. I am perfectly willing to let the reader decide whether it is brotherly, honest, or honourable, to reply to my article without either publishing it, or allowing me to reply in his pages, to his misrepresentations of it. If he had published it, his readers could have done both him and me justice; but as it is, they can do neither of us justice.

The Repository makes a great noise about “confounding propositions,” “*divines* asserting that ecclesiastical government did not originate in the Mediator,” that I teach that “magistracy has its origin in grace” &c. But every intelligent reader who has read my article will at once see that this is all nothing but noise and sound, for it was no part of my plan to meddle with these distinctions, or with his proposition. I first give a qualified assent to his proposition, and then distinctly state, “What I principally design, however, is to examine the orthodoxy of your inference, *particularly* that part which says *and are not bound to discharge the duties of their office in his name.*” Then what I proposed to prove was this,—*that civil rulers are bound to discharge the duties of their office in the name of Christ, and that the contrary doctrine is false.* It is true I did not state the design of my remarks

in a formal proposition, but it was sufficiently plain. Now, when I had plainly stated the design of my remarks, why did not the good brother undertake to show that the arguments which I adduce to prove this informal proposition are false? But no, instead of this, he labours to draw off the attention of his readers entirely from the point at issue, and direct it to matters concerning which I only made a passing remark; as though this was the great matter under consideration.

It must also be kept in mind that my assent to his proposition is qualified, I admit the truth of it, not in the light in which he understands it, but "*abstractly considered.*" The reason why I used this qualifying phrase in giving assent to his proposition, was because I was well aware that we did not both understand it in the same way. I knew that when the question concerning the origin of magistracy would come under consideration, that a question would arise out of it; this question I waived at the time, because the proving of what I had under consideration would decide that question which our good brother supposes to be a previous one. He thinks that because I reason from the effect to the cause, that it is no reasoning at all. My method was not to prove that the magistrate is the deputy of Christ, and then show from that, that he is bound to perform the duties of his office in the name of Christ; but to demonstrate that the word of God requires him to perform his duties in the name of Christ, and that therefore he must be the deputy of the Mediator. If the Repository had possessed all that sagacity which he seems inclined to monopolise, he could have discovered this as easily as he "corrected the mistakes" of his good brother "in relation to the fundamental principles of the question."

Again, he represents me as teaching the doctrine "that magistracy originates in God as the God of grace," against which "*even the Reformed Presbyterians testify.*" Now, I believe as well as he does, that magistracy, abstractly considered, does not have its origin in God as the God of grace: neither do I believe that *religion does* (natural religion); Rom. i. 19-21. But we do not say that because natural religion has its origin in God essentially considered, therefore the ministers of supernatural religion are not the deputies of the Mediator. No: this would be no better than some of our good brother's inferences. To say that because natural magistracy, or that which has its origin in natural principles, entirely independent of supernatural revelation, has its origin in God essentially considered, therefore Christian magistracy is not administered by the God of grace, would be equally false reasoning. By natural magistracy, I mean such as exists among the holy angels, such as would have existed among men in a state of innocence, or such as exists in a miserably corrupt state among fallen and unregenerate men, and fallen angels; (for Satan is a prince.) The magistracy that exists among fallen men and angels, is just as corrupt as they are. But as heathen magistracy is the only visible form in which natural magistracy exists in this world, my remarks will be confined to it.

Now, it is manifest that heathen magistracy has its origin in God essentially considered, because it exists where God is not known as the God of grace, or as a God in Christ: where there is no revelation of mercy, or dispensation of the Spirit. It is God essentially considered, who has revealed this ordinance to the heathen by the light of nature; Rom. i. 19, 20, "because that which may be known of God is mani-

fested in them, (or to them,) for God hath *shewed* it to them, &c." And it is equally certain that God essentially considered, revealed to them the moral natural law as their *only* rule of magistracy; for God in this character reveals to the heathen no positive precepts. Magistracy, then, among the heathen, of necessity has its origin in God essentially considered: but we do not say that because *heathen* magistracy has this origin, therefore *Christian* magistracy has also. The rule of the heathen magistrate's obedience is, of necessity, confined to "natural principles:" but we do not say, that because this is the only rule of the heathen magistrate, therefore it is of the Christian magistrate also. This would confound heathen and Christian magistracy.

Again, it is certain that natural religion has its origin in God essentially considered, because it exists among the heathen in a corrupt form, where God is not known as a God in Christ. God has taught them by the light of nature, and his general providences, that he is the Creator, Preserver, Law-giver, and Judge. He has thus revealed to them his natural attributes, "even his eternal power and Godhead" Rom. i. 19, 32; Acts xvii. 28. He has also, in the same character and manner, made known to them that it is their duty to worship him and be thankful, Rom. i. 21. He has also, in the same character and manner, revealed to them the moral natural law as the only rule for their direction, in performing the duties of natural religion. Thus we see that heathen magistracy and natural religion have a common origin. And now, if there is any such a thing as Christian magistracy, it bears the same relation to the Christian religion, that heathen magistracy does to natural religion, both in its origin and administration. I will not pretend to say whether our good brother believes in the existence of such a thing as Christian magistracy or not, but for my part I do, and will lay down two propositions for consideration. 1, Heathen magistracy has its origin in God essentially considered.* 2, Christian magistracy has its origin in God as the God of grace.

I will take it for granted that the good brother will admit the truth of the first proposition; the truth of the second, I will endeavour to prove.

That Christian magistracy has its origin in God as the God of grace, is manifest. 1, *Because it is impossible that there ever could have been any other than heathen magistracy, had not the God of grace given us a revelation of his will;* and certainly none but the infidel will deny that the scriptures were given by God as the God of grace. Divine revelation is absolutely essential to the very existence of Christian magistracy: where divine revelation does not exist, Christian magistracy cannot. It could no more exist without it, than the effect could without a cause. It is impossible that there could be any proposition more glaringly absurd, or grossly erroneous, than the proposition that Christian magistracy originated in God essentially considered, without Christ, without grace. And not only so, the very existence of Christian magistracy would be impossible without a Mediator—without the execution of his offices, the influences of his Spirit, and the bestowment of divine grace. Divine grace bears the same relation to Christian magistracy in its origin, continuance, and administration, that the cause

* I do not mean that any of the corruptions of heathen magistracy have their origin in God essentially considered.

does to the effect. We have no account in all the annals of history, of one heathen government being converted into a Christian government, or one heathen magistrate into a Christian magistrate, until divine grace did the work, or gave *origin* or *existence* to it. To expect so great a change to take place in any other way than by the power of Christ, and the bestowment of divine grace, would be to expect an effect to be produced without a cause. Before Christian magistracy can be *set up*, heathen magistracy must be put down. Now, who puts down the one and sets up the other? Does God essentially considered? Who "subdues his people to himself, rules and governs them, and conquers and restrains all his and our enemies?" Does God *out of Christ* do all this? Who takes away those things that hinder the very existence of Christian magistracy, and brings about that state of affairs, out of which it necessarily arises? Let this *defensor fidei* answer. Again, what Almighty, all subduing, all *constraining* principle does the author of this change bring into action to produce it? Is it the love of God *out of Christ*? No such thing: No power in the heavens above, in the earth beneath, nor in the waters under the earth, but the power of Christ. No constraining influence but the love of God in Christ, as manifested in the everlasting gospel, the everlasting Covenants can produce this change. And yet the divine Mediator, and divine grace, have nothing to do in giving origin or existence to Christian magistracy! Nothing to do in its administration or continuance! A doctrine worthy of this defender of the faith. I care not how many bibles and missionaries you send to a heathen government, for the purpose of converting it into a Christian government, nor how long, nor how faithfully these missionaries labour, to set up, or give existence to Christian magistracy, there will be absolutely nothing done until the power of Christ does it; but when He begins to work, who "calls things that are not as though they were," then will it spring into existence.

But perhaps the good brother would be so good as to show us some other way in which *Christian* magistracy could have an origin. If he cannot, he must allow us to call his "true issue" a false one. And certainly one who could so successfully "correct the mistakes" of his good brother McAuley, would not commit so egregious a blunder as that of confounding heathen and Christian magistracy; for they are not the same thing, they differ too widely to have a common origin. Would he have patience with us while we endeavour to point out some of their distinguishing characteristics? 1, Heathen magistracy is characterized by hatred of both God and man; there is not an attribute of Jehovah but what the heathen magistrate hates with an inveterate and incurable hatred. It is characterized by a hatred of religion, both natural and supernatural, Rom. i. 28: by a hatred of the divine law, whether written or unwritten, Rom. viii. 7. But Christian magistracy is characterized by love both to God and man;—to the divine law and religion. 2, Heathen magistracy is characterized by selfishness, pride, haughtiness, ambition, revenge, ingratitude, and impenitence, or as the Apostle to the Romans expresses it Chap. i. 18, "ungodliness and unrighteousness," or the same Apostle to the Galatians, v. 19, "the works of the flesh:" but Christian magistracy is characterized by benevolence, humility, meekness, forbearance and penitence, by Godliness and righteousness, by the fruits of the Spirit. Now the question is *first*, is it God essentially considered, who makes the Christian magis-

trate to differ so widely from the Heathen magistrate? If not, then Christian magistracy does not have its origin in God in this character, but it is all the work of the Mediator, who is the minister of the God of grace, sent into the world for the purpose of effecting this change. *Secondly*, did these characteristics of the Christian magistrate, have their origin in God essentially considered, or in the God of grace? They could not originate in God essentially considered, therefore they must in the God of grace, and are the work of the Mediator. Take these characteristics from the magistrate, and it leaves him a heathen, but give them to him and they constitute him a Christian, magistrate. Then first, Christian magistracy had a *decretive* origin in the divine purpose, or counsel of peace. *Secondly*, an *actual* existence in the application of redemption, and the exercise of the divine power of Christ as a king.

2. *Christian magistracy has its origin in the God of grace; because the scriptures were given by Him in that character, and because they are obligatory on the Christian magistrate.* The scriptures express and enforce the authority of the God of grace, but not that of God essentially considered. 1, The scriptures *alone* oblige the conscience of the Christian magistrate; and it is false doctrine—legalism, to assert that the law as written on the heart of man at his creation is obligatory on the Christian Magistrate. The brother in replying to the charge of “virtually denying that the moral law or the law of the ten commandments, is the rule of the civil magistrate’s obedience,” asks “was it (the law of the ten commandments) not written upon man’s heart in his creation? How then do we deny that this law is the rule, because we exclude from this rule those principles which do not enter into the law, viewed as a moral natural law, and as coming from God in His essential character as the moral governor of the universe?” Now I willingly admit that the law of the ten commandments was written on the heart of man, at his creation, by God in his essential character; but I contend that it was there written as a *covenant of works*: and that this same law is now *imperfectly* written on the hearts of all the heathen, and of all unbelievers, *in the same covenant form*; but I utterly deny that the Christian magistrate is obliged by the law in that *form*—“he is, not under the law.” It is not the law that was written on the heart of man by God in his *essential character*, to which the Christian magistrate owes obedience, though the law in this form is the formal and only rule of the Heathen magistrate’s obedience, who is “under sin”—“of the works of the law” and “under the curse:”—but it is the law written by the finger of God on tables of stone,—put into the ark of the Covenant—*under the MERCY SEAT*; or the law that the *God of grace* writes on the heart, as Heb. VIII, 10: “I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their heart, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people,” (also, Jer. xxxi. 33,) that binds the conscience of the Christian magistrate, and is the formal and only rule of his obedience. I know that the law written on the heart by God in his essential character, and that written on tables of stone, or on the heart of the believer, by God as the God of grace, are the same as to their *letter*;—but they are essentially different as to their *form*. All who are under the law in the first form, are under the curse, if we are under the law in this form as citizens, we are in our civil relations under the curse, and if we are under the curse in any sense, we are in

every sense. But all who are under the law in the second form, ("under the law to Christ,") are under grace; and cannot be under the curse in any sense, because they are not under the law in the first form, in any sense. All who obey it in the first form, are dishonouring God, because they are going about to establish their own righteousness, but all who obey it in the second form, are glorifying God, because they are submitting themselves to the righteousness of God.

Now, I am perfectly willing to leave it to the reader, if the good brother does not place men in their civil relations, under the law in the first form, consequently under the covenant of works, for he places them under the law "as coming from God in his *essential character*." We hope he will see and acknowledge his mistake, for it is a fundamental one. All his philosophy can never free him from the charge of legalism, until he retracts what he has written,—until he acknowledges that his "true issue" is a false one: for he expressly says, "we exclude from this rule (the rule of the civil magistrate's obedience) those principles which do not enter into the law, *viewed as a moral natural law*, and as coming from *God in his essential character*," that is, he excludes every thing that relates to the covenant of grace, or the God of grace, and of course, all that is left after the good brother's expurgation, relates to the covenant of works, and a God out of Christ.

Again, those who are under the law in the first form, cannot be under it in the second:—cannot be "married to another, to him who is raised from the dead," Rom. vii. 4. Again, it is clear that the law given by God as the God of grace, was intended entirely to supersede the law given by God in his essential character, just as the covenant of grace was intended to supersede the covenant of works, Rom. vii. 6: therefore, the law given by God as the God of grace, is the Christian magistrate's only rule of obedience. God authoritatively enjoins obedience to it in this form, and prohibits it in the other. Those that are under it in the latter form, can be profited nothing by Christ, Gal. v. 4: also, Rom. iv. 14.

3. Christian magistracy has its origin in God as the God of grace, because it is an *integral part—a very important part of revealed, or supernatural religion*; and as such is under the control of the God of grace; consequently under the dominion of the Mediator.

1. The *duties* of Christian magistrates are component parts of the Christian religion, because they are enjoined and enforced by the Scriptures given by the God of grace,—enforced by the sanction of the new covenant, and not by that of the old covenant. Would the good brother tell us what is the sanction by which the moral natural law, given by God in his essential character, is enforced? It cannot be that obedience to the law in this form is enforced by "those principles which *do not enter into the law* viewed as a moral natural law, and as coming from God in his essential character," therefore it must be enforced by "those principles which *do enter* into the law viewed as a moral natural law." Now what are those principles which *do not*, and what those that *do enter* into this law? First, what are those principles which *do not enter* into this law? They are all those "*excluded*" principles, belonging to the covenant of grace. Secondly, but what are those that do enter into it? They are those principles which relate to the covenant of works—the *forfeited* benefits, and the *curse*. These are all the sanction the law in that form has, for we cannot admit that utilitarian principles, or self-love enter into the law in any form.

Now God has given his law to man in two forms, and these two forms relate to two covenants. The form given to man, before the fall, by God in his essential character, relates to the covenant of works; the other given to man, after the fall, by the God of grace, to the covenant of grace. Again, God has, in the Scriptures, given two kind of ministers—civil, and ecclesiastical, and according to our good brother's philosophy, civil magistrates are under the first form, consequently under the covenant of works. Then according to this philosophy, we have a *dispensation* of the covenant of works, dispensed by the "ministers of God" *essentially considered*. To dispense what? The benefits of the covenant of works? Then we, as Christian citizens, were all this time under the covenant of works, and did not know it, for our good brother tells us that the "moral natural law" under which we are as citizens and magistrates, "of course does not include in it those principles that have a *relation* to the covenant of grace," that is, this law has no connection whatever with any of the promises, or benefits of the covenant of grace;—the good brother has "*excluded*" all such things from that law under which we are as magistrates and people. How then is the civil magistrate to enforce on his subjects those duties which he enjoins? It can't be by any of those *excluded principles*, such as mercy, forgiveness, redemption, salvation or eternal life,—it can't be by the love of God in Christ:—it can't be by the incarnation, death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession of Jesus Christ, or his coming to judge the world at the last day, for these are the very principles which *do relate* to the covenant of grace, and as such are all excluded, lest we, as Christian citizens, and magistrates, *should all be brought under the dominion of Him* who has bought us with a price!

2. Christian magistracy is a constituent part of the Christian religion; because all the *promises* in the Scriptures, that are given to magistrates and people, are promises of the gospel, and as such relate to the covenant of grace; for the moral natural law given by God essentially considered, has not one promise connected with it, its promises and benefits were all forfeited in the original apostacy of man, and the law in this form pours out nothing but curses on all those who are under it. And certainly no one deserving the name of Christian will contend that we are under the law in the first form, *as citizens*, and under it in the second form, as Christians, for if we are, in any sense, under the law in the first form, we are under the curse, and if under the curse in any sense, we are under it in every sense, for whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law, Rom. iii. 19. Then if our good brother's philosophy be true, we, as citizens, are under the curse of the law in the form in which it was given by God in his essential character; but as Christians we are under the blessings connected with it in the form in which it is given by the God of grace! "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth?" "Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" It is certain there is an exercise of dominion in giving promises, and in bestowing grace to receive the grace offered and conveyed in them. Then it follows that men, in their civil relations, are under the dominion of Christ, for if those promises which are given to men in their civil relations, are not received by them *in those relations*, they cannot be received at all. It is as true that Christ enjoins duties on, and gives promises to kings, as it is that he does to fathers, and it is as true

that the performing of these duties, and the receiving and resting on these promises, in the one case, are parts of the Christian religion, as it is in the other:—what is commanded *to* the King must be done *by* the King,—what is promised *to* the King must be received *by* the King; in the same way, that what is commanded to the father, must be done by the father, and what is promised to the father, must be received by the father.

3. Christian magistracy, is a part of the Christian religion, because all the *mercies* which God bestows on Christian magistrates, and nations, are bestowed on them by Him, as the God of grace, and these mercies all flow to them through the Mediator, for God essentially considered, bestows no mercies on either magistrates or nations. But perhaps the good brother would contend that magistrates and citizens, as such, do not stand in need of *any mercy*, inasmuch as they, as such, have no sin,—do not transgress the law, and inasmuch as they have no guilt, *as such*; for he says that “Christ in the covenant of grace is not to be regarded as the representative of magistrates and citizens *as such*.” Why? Certainly because, as such, they are neither sinners, nor guilty, for if they were they would need a representative, they would need mercy. But the good brother’s allegation has no truth in it. Christ did represent magistrates and citizens, for he, in his estate of humiliation, was both a king and a citizen, he was a king on his holy hill of Zion, he performed the duties of a citizen—paid tribute.* And now I cannot here forbear giving my good brother a piece of advice, which I am sure would be for his good, that is, lay aside his crude notions about philosophy, and take a few lessons on Theology, from his good neighbor, the author of *Divine and Human Rights*, for whose periodical he will have it that I am an agent.†

4. Christian magistracy is a component part of the Christian religion, because the duties of it are enumerated with other duties acknowledged to be Christian, 1 Pet. ii. 17. Here, love to the brotherhood, the fear of God, and honoring the king, are all placed in a catalogue, as a summary of all our duties, in every relation—social, religious, and civil; and these duties are all given and enforced by God in the same character,—as the God of grace, for these duties were all delivered by the Apostle, not as a messenger or minister of God essentially considered, but in the character of an “*Apostle of Jesus Christ*,” 1 Pet. i. 1. And, certainly, the divine law is administered by God, in the same character in which it is given and enforced, for to give and enforce law is to administer it. But Jesus Christ gives and enforces law about civil duties, therefore he exercises dominion over men in their civil relations. And it is not a dominion that is divided between Jesus Christ, and God essentially considered, Matt. xxviii. 18. “*All power* is given to me in heaven and earth.” I deny that God essentially considered, ever delivered one jot or iota of the Bible; I deny that he ever sent in this character a minister to fallen

* Lest he should offend them.—Ed. Cov.

† It is proper for me here to state that my name was put on the list of his agents without either my knowledge or consent, and that some time after I received his periodical, I forwarded the pay for the first volume, and ordered its discontinuance. I never acted as a solicitor of subscriptions for that periodical. I did in a solitary instance, when solicited by a friend, not a member of my congregation, act as agent for the Armory, and would do so again, for it, or any orthodox Presbyterian paper.—J. M’A.

man, to reveal his will or execute his law: but God, as the God of grace, did send a messenger from Heaven to reveal his will, and execute his law,—clothed with all power in heaven and earth, even Him by whom “kings reign and princes decree justice,” by whom “princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.” Prov. viii. 15, 16. Solomon here means the Mediator, for it is the same that “was set up from everlasting,” v. 23, by whom kings reign, &c. Again, when the God of grace sent this minister into the world, he commands kings and judges to receive wisdom and instruction from him, Ps. ii. 10, Col. ii. 3. God essentially considered never sent a minister or prophet to make kings and judges wise. He commands them in the same Psalm to “serve” him—Him who was set on the holy hill of Zion,—to “kiss” him, in token of submission to his authority. And it must be kept in mind that God, in his essential character, does not speak in the Scriptures.

5. Christian magistracy is *acknowledged* to be a part of the Christian religion, by all orthodox churches, because *it has a place in their confessions, or systems of religion*. A system of religion, without an article on magistracy would be manifestly defective. So, a civil constitution without an article on religion is equally defective: they are in this aspect perfectly homogeneous bodies.—The author and administrator of both, is the God of grace, the character of each is religious. Hence the duty of the Church to support a *scriptural* civil government, and testify against all corruptions, either in its constitution or administration, for it is a part of the trust committed to the Church to promote and maintain sound doctrine, concerning this matter, both in theory and practice. Hence again, the duty of all civil governments to profess the Christian religion, and as far as it is competent to them to support it, and oppose all false religions, for these are a part of the duties committed to civil rulers. It is manifest that the framers of the Larger Catechism considered magistracy a part of religion, for in pointing out, Ques. 108, 129, the duty of superiors to inferiors, they speak of the duties of all kinds of superiors *together*, and among those duties which belong to all kinds of superiors *alike*, they mention, “providing for them all things necessary for *soul* and *body*.” Thus the duties of the Church and State to acknowledge and support each other, are mutual and reciprocal. But wherever our good brother’s views concerning civil recognitions prevail, civil governments will always deny, instead of acknowledge—oppose instead of support, the Christian religion. It is impossible that it could be otherwise, than that a system of legalism would be an antagonist of religion, and it is because all nations are practising on his system of philosophy that they “give their power to the beast.” The doctrine that men in their civil relations are not under the law of Christ, is the doctrine of devils—a doctrine that an ungodly world has always drunk in with avidity.

6. Christian magistracy is a part of the Christian religion, because Jesus Christ *will judge* all kings and rulers at the last day. He even now “judgeth among the gods.” It is the God of grace, who in the lxxxii. Psalm, is said “to stand in the congregation of the mighty, and judge among the gods,”—who hath “committed all judgment to the Son,” and “who will judge the world in righteousness at the last day *by Him*, even by *that man* whom he hath ordained.” Acts xvii. 31. Here we see that Christ performs the highest act of administration, over all men, in every relation, and one which necessarily supposes the exer-

cise of every other act of administration, for he that judges by the law is the same that gave, and enforces it. Neither is the fact that the heathen have not the law given by the God of grace, and know not Jesus Christ, any reason why they should not be judged by him, for they are all apostates from the covenant of grace, and rebels against the authority of Christ, because they all descended from the family of Noah, who was both a preacher, and an heir of the righteousness of faith. All Noah's family knew Christ and were in covenant with him. Then if Christian magistracy be a part of the religion of Christ, and all heathen magistrates are rebels against Him, it is clear that they are all under his dominion, and that Christian magistracy has its origin in God as the God of grace. And if the heathen are under that kind of magistracy which had its origin in God essentially considered, it is because those of the descendants of Noah, who "did not like to retain God in their knowledge" have fallen from that kind of magistracy which had its origin in God as the God of grace; and have fallen in with the good brother's philosophy, in the same way that those who "are justified by the law, are fallen from grace:" in the same way that those who become offended at God's plan of salvation by grace, naturally fall in love with their own plan of salvation by works. It was their hatred of the covenant of grace that drove the great majority of Noah's family from it to the covenant of works, and provoked the Almighty to give them over to a reprobate mind to do those things which are not convenient, Rom. i. 28. It is just as plain that the philosophy of the Repository is a constituent part of natural religion, as it is that Christian magistracy is a part of the Christian religion. His philosophy concerning magistracy, relates to the same covenant that natural religion does—the covenant of works, natural religion knows no other covenant.

The Repository feels very certain my doctrines on this subject are opposed to a distinctive principle of the Secession Church. I deny the charge. Where is their testimony for the *truth* that the magistrate is not the deputy of Christ, and against the *error* that he is the deputy of Christ? Where is their testimony for the *truth* that the magistracy is bound *not to perform* the duties of his office in the name of Christ, and against the *error* that he is bound, &c? where is their testimony for the *truth* that both heathen and Christian magistracy have their origin in God essentially considered, and against the error that Christian magistracy has its origin in the God of grace? No, the Secession never had any *settled* or *distinctive* views about the subject.—JOHN McAULEY.

THE PSALMS OF DAVID—SCOTTISH VERSION.

(From the Presbyterian's Armory.)

This is sometimes called Rouse's version, and it is represented in the title page as having been "translated and diligently compared with the original text, and former translations, more plain, smooth, and agreeable to the text than any heretofore. Allowed by the authority of the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, and appointed to be sung in congregations and families." This version is still used in all the churches belonging to the establishment in Scotland, in all the congregations belonging to the Free Church, in all the secession churches in Scotland, amounting to nearly six hundred. It is also used in all the Presbyterian churches in every denomination in Ireland, in all the Presbyterian churches in Nova Scotia and the Canadas, and in all the Scottish Presbyterian churches in the United States, not in connection

THE COVENANTER.

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THE DEACON'S PLACE AND FUNCTIONS.

The time has gone by when it was necessary to insist upon the importance of the subject of this article. It is now admitted to have, at least a relative importance: for the harmonious and cordial co-operation of all parts of the Church in advancing the cause of Christ, for example, in sustaining her Theological Seminary and her missionary operations, has been *made* to turn in no inconsiderable degree upon it. That it ought to be discussed, is now admitted. And we cannot but express our regret that this admission was not made, freely and cordially, ten years ago: that instead of meeting, by an affected contempt for the whole subject, by the cry of faction and personality, by attempted gag-law legislation, and even by threats of Church censure, the arguments of those who were for the choice and ordination of deacons according to the Scriptures and our standards in all our congregations, our opponents—we do not use the term in any offensive sense—had best, at once enter into the discussion manfully, and in a proper spirit. Had this been done, we feel free to say, most if not all the unpleasant incidents with which a protracted controversy has, perhaps necessarily been attended, would have had no existence. Still, good has come out of it all. The subject has undergone a more thorough investigation, and has also indirectly operated, we have no doubt, as a stimulus to efforts in other directions, thus contributing, in some measure, to bring about that more active state, so far as regards public enterprises, which certainly marks the Church at this time.

One word as to the origin of this controversy among us. It was occasioned as the remote cause, by the action of the Synod in the year 1834, appointing a committee to report a Form of Government and Book of Discipline. This committee reported in 1836, by its chairman, Rev. David Scott, a Form of Church Government, in which that doctrine respecting the functions of the deacon, and also, his connexion with the other officers of the congregation, in administering the finances which many have been so unwilling of late, to receive, was stated in the most explicit terms. This report was sent down in overture, after being submitted to the revision of a Committee of Synod. When this overture came to be acted upon in Synod, in the year 1838, then, *for the first time* in the *whole* history of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, opposition was manifested to this part of the Church's long acknowledged faith. True, the office of the deacon had been suffered to lapse to a considerable extent, but never before, so far as we have

(For the Covenanter.)

THE DOMINION OF CHRIST.

(BY REV. JOHN M'AULEY.)

I have offered three arguments to prove that *Christian* magistracy originated in the God of grace, viz: that it never could have had an origin, had not the God of grace given a revelation of his will, by the ministry of the Mediator:—that this revelation of Jesus Christ is obligatory on the civil magistrate, because authoritatively enjoined by the Mediator:—and because Christian magistracy is an integral part of the Christian religion, that is, the duties enjoined, and the rewards and punishments with which they are connected, are an integral part of the Christian religion.

Suffer me here to state, that in contending for the mediatorial dominion of Christ over the nations, it is no part of my intention to attempt a defence of my “phraseology” or manner; but a defence of the great doctrine itself: but on the contrary, it is my resolution to endeavour to profit by any hint that may be given by the friends of this doctrine.

4. Christian magistracy has its origin in God as the God of grace, because the magistrate is wholly dependent on the Mediator, for every *gracious, spiritual, and truly moral endowment*, to fit him for performing the duties required, and receiving the promises given to him, by the God of grace, in his word. Without gracious endowments he will receive none of the promises, neither can he without these endowments perform any of the duties in any other way than in the “oldness of the letter.” Before he can “serve in newness of the spirit” he must be “delivered from the law,” as a covenant of works,—must “become dead to the law” and the law dead to him, “that (the law) being dead wherein we were held,” Rom. vii. 4–6: must be “held” no longer, either by the commanding or condemning power of the law,—must be freed from carnality, and be made spiritual, “they that are in the flesh cannot please God,” but all those who do not please God offend him. Now the magistrate can receive these endowments from none but the Mediator, for God essentially considered bestows no gracious endowments on fallen man; and where there are no gracious endowments, there can be no Christian magistrates or governments; but when the Mediator bestows these endowments on magistrates and nations, they become Christian magistrates and governments, and cease to be heathen, that is, Christ by the bestowment of his grace, puts a period to the one, and gives existence or an origin to the other. Then, if the God of grace give to the Christian magistrate, precepts and promises, or law and gospel; and bestow grace to *obey* the first, and *believe* the latter; and claims and exercises the right of inflicting punishment on the disobedient and unbelieving, who but the brother would deny to him dominion over the magistrate? Is not this the very essence of dominion? The brother lays it down as an axiom that “Christ in the covenant of grace is not to be regarded as the representative of magistrates and citizens as such, but simply as sinners,” and from this draws the conclusion that “the principles that flow out of this covenant cannot be regarded as the formal rule of their conduct viewed in that character.” Now, if the converse of his premises be true, so is that of his conclusion. If it be true that Christ represented magistrates &c., in the covenant of grace,

then the principles of that covenant are the rule of his obedience. It is just as certain that Christ represented rulers and people, as it is that he represented the priest, and the whole congregation, see Leviticus iv. chapter throughout, verse 3, when the high priest sinned, he was directed to take a young bullock for a sin offering, the death of this bullock was substituted for that of the high priest, it also was a type of Christ, its substitution of his substitution, and its death of Christ's death. Again, if the whole congregation sin, they are directed to take a young bullock for a sin offering, verse 13. These two cases are intended to represent Christ as the substitute of his people in their ecclesiastical relations, but the two following represents him as their substitute in their civil relations. Verse 22, when a *ruler* sinned, he was directed to take for a sin offering "a kid of the goats, a male without blemish." Then it is certain that the ruler had a typical representative, and that this type pointed to Christ the great antitype, as the ruler's representative. Again, verse 27, "if any one of the *common* people sin &c., he shall bring for his offering a kid of the goats, a female without blemish." This was manifestly intended to prefigure Christ as the citizen's representative. Thus Christ did represent rulers and citizens "*as such,*" and not "simply as sinners." He represented them as sinning rulers and citizens.

Equally absurd and unfounded is another assertion where he says, "the covenant of works does not contemplate man as magistrate and subject, &c." It manifestly contemplated man in every relation,—more philosophy palmed off on his readers for theology. All that the brother has now to do, is to deny that the covenant of works respects men in their ecclesiastical relations, or that Christ is the representative of man in this relation, and he is one in doctrine with Professor Seward and the neologians of Germany. His doctrines are as really neologian or neonomian as theirs; the only difference is, they have taken two steps, he only one. But it is impossible for him to defend, and carry out his present philosophical views without becoming a full blooded neologian.

5. Christian magistracy has its origin in God as the God of grace, because it is as really and truly *instituted by him in this character*, as ecclesiastical government. The God of grace by the ministry of Jesus Christ instituted both civil and ecclesiastical government. Horn in his introduction to the study of Theology, says, "On the departure of the children of Israel from the land of their oppressors, under the *guidance of Moses*, Jehovah was pleased to *institute* a new form of government." Mathew Henry in his comment on Prov. viii. 15, 16, says: "Civil government is a *divine institution*, and those that are intrusted with the administration of it have their *commission from Christ*: it is a branch of his kingly office, that *by him kings reign.*" See Scott on the same passage. Again, Ebenezer Erskine, in his sermon on Psalm ii. 6, puts civil government, in every sense of the word, both in its institution, and administration under the Mediator. He says, "God in the person of the Son, sustains the place of a Mediator, surety, and redeemer," and "that in order to the accomplishment of the Son's undertaking, (as Mediator) 'all power in heaven and earth *is given to him:*' *all government* is COMMITTED to the Son, angels, men and devils, and all creatures are put under his hand that he may make them subservient to the *recovery* of that poor contemptible creature man." Again he says, on

the same page, vol. 2, page 524, "his general mediatory kingdom extends itself over heaven, earth and hell."

But this is not the testimony on which I rely to prove that the God of grace instituted civil government by the ministry of Moses. And it must be kept in mind that Moses, as well as Paul and Peter, acted in all his ministrations as the servant of Jesus Christ, and not as the minister or servant of God essentially considered; for God essentially considered, has no intercourse or converse with fallen man, and God as the God of grace, deals not with fallen man, except through a Mediator. Then all that Moses did, he did as the minister of the Mediator, and not as the minister of God essentially considered. Now that Moses did institute Christian magistracy, or Christian civil government, is plain.

1. Because the Mediator, by the ministry of Moses, gave them a *constitution* and a *judicial law*. The ten commandments was to them both a civil and ecclesiastical constitution, because it is called God's covenant with that people, not only as a religious people, but as a "*kingdom of priests,*" and a "*holy nation,*" Ex. xix. 5: and because this covenant was sworn and ratified not only by ecclesiastics, but by civil rulers, and military men. At the renovation of this covenant, in the land of Moab, "*captains of tribes, elders and officers*" are mentioned among the covenanters, Deut. xxix. 10, 18: See also 2nd Chron. xxxiv. 29-32: and Neh. ix. 38, and 10: where *princes, levites and priests* seal unto the covenant. And our fathers in 1643, in their solemn league and covenant say: "We noblemen, barons, knights, gentlemen, citizens, burgesses, ministers of the gospel, and commons of all sorts, &c.," and in this they were manifestly following the footsteps of the flock, and imitating the example of the covenanters from the days of Moses.

The ten commandments are, from their very nature, both a civil and ecclesiastical constitution, *first*, because they are a summary defence of all kinds of rights, and a compendium of all kinds of duties; *secondly*, because they contain the matter of the covenant between God and man of every condition, and between man and man in every relation. 2. Moses under the direction of the God of grace, *instituted* Christian or moral civil government, because he appointed civil rulers; or rather, made those rulers whom the people had been directed to choose, Deut. i. 13, "*Take ye wise men, and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you.*" Here Jesus Christ, the angel of the covenant that spake with Moses, His servant, in instituting civil government, gave directions for the election and investment of godly or religious civil rulers, see also 2nd Samuel xxiii. 3: Ex. xviii. 21. Here we have specified, not only natural and acquired, but religious qualifications. 3. The angel of the covenant institutes Christian magistracy, because he does not only specify the duties of rulers, but lays restraints upon them, Deut. xvii. 15-20: and bestows on both the obedient, and disobedient, their appropriate rewards. 4. The angel of the covenant, instituted civil government, because he has given full instruction to the *ruled*, with regard to the election of officers, see all the above quoted passages, and with regard to their duties to these rulers.

And now, if giving a civil constitution, and judicial law,—if laying down the character and duties of civil rulers,—if giving directions for their election and investiture with office,—if showing what kind of subjection is due to their lawful authority, is instituting civil government,

then the angel of the covenant has done all this "by the hand of Moses." But now, I utterly deny that God as the 'God of grace, instituted heathen civil government, or that God essentially considered, instituted Christian civil government. And now a query—will the brother answer it? When God commanded Elijah to go and anoint Hazael to be king of Syria, Jehu to be king of Israel, and Elisha to be prophet in his room, did Elijah receive this commission from God essentially considered, or from God as the God of grace? 1st Kings xix. 15.

6. Christian magistracy has its origin in God as the God of grace, because Christ does *actually exercise dominion over princes and kingdoms*, both heathen and Christian. Not indeed in the same manner.

1. His dominion over heathen kings and kingdoms, is exercised in the ordering of his providences,—in turning the king's heart, purposes or motives, like the rivers of water, whithersoever he will, Prov. xxi. 1 : as Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus, causing them to accomplish his purposes, and advance the interests of his kingdom. Thus "he is head over all things to the Church:"—in hindering or restraining their wrath, Psalms lxxvi. 10 : "stilling the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumults of the people,"—and when it is for his glory, and the interests of his spiritual kingdom, by breaking them with a rod of iron, and dashing them in pieces as a potter's vessel, Ps. ii. 9 : by making the potsherds strive with the potsherds of the earth, to their mutual destruction, Isaiah xlv. 9.

2. Christ exercises dominion over Christian princes and nations, by "putting his laws in their mind, and writing them in their hearts," Heb. viii. 10 : by inclining and enabling them to yield a willing subjection to this law,—not simply by compelling them by his overruling providence to promote his glory, but by *inclining* them by his word and spirit to do that which is well pleasing in his sight—inclining them to his law and testimony,—by the exercise of his divine power, the bestowment of divine grace, enabling them to abhor that which is evil, and powerfully determining them to that which is good. That Christ does thus rule Christian princes and nations, is proven from the history, precepts and prophecy of the scriptures. *First*, by the *history* of the scriptures; thus he ruled the kingdoms of Judah and Israel in the days of David and Solomon; thus he ruled the kingdom of Judah in the days of Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah. *Secondly*, the *precepts* of the scriptures prove that Christ exercises a moral dominion over Christian nations; it is true that the precepts are addressed to all princes and nations who read the scriptures, but they become a *ruling power* in the *hearts* of none but Christian princes and nations.

The scriptures tell us that rulers must be men "fearing God," Ex. xviii. 21 : "ruling in his fear," 2nd Sam. xxiii. 3 : serving him with fear and trembling, Ps. ii. 11. Ministers of God for good, a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do good, Rom. xiii. 3, 4 : and many other passages contain precepts given to rulers, either expressed or implied. And now the question arises, who gave these precepts? In whose name did the prophets and apostles deliver these precepts to rulers? In the name of God essentially considered, or in the name of God as the God of grace? We have already proven that God essentially considered does not speak in the scriptures, and that the God of grace does not hold converse with fallen man, except through a Mediator. And Peter says expressly that the *Spirit of Christ signified* to

the *Prophets* those things that were revealed to them, 1st Pet. i. 2. The spirit of Christ, the one, the only lawgiver revealed to them whatsoever they spake. It was the God of Israel—the angel of the covenant, that spake to all the prophets, and it was in the name of *Him* that spake to them, that they spake to the people. Then all the prophets that delivered precepts, threatenings, or promises to rulers, did it in the name of Christ the Mediator, who both spake to them, and in them.

Again, all the Apostles spake, whatsoever they spake, in the name of Christ. They spake only what Christ spake to them in his personal ministry, or what they “received by the revelation of Jesus Christ.” Gal. i. 12. John calls the revelation given to him in the isle of Patmos, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ.” Rev. i. 1. God gave the revelation to Jesus Christ, that is, the God of grace, but Jesus Christ “shewed it unto his servants.” Hence again the whole word of God is called the *testimony of Jesus Christ*, Rev. i. 3. The Apostles, in their epistles, style themselves the *Servants and Apostles of Jesus Christ*. See Rom. i. 1: 1st and 2nd Pet. &c. Then when the Apostle Paul penned the thirteenth Chapter of Romans, he did it as the servant of Jesus Christ, and in his name, and the authority there expressed is the authority of Jesus Christ. 1. This authority was given to Jesus Christ by the God of grace, and not by God essentially considered, Matt. xxviii. 18. 2. It is published by Jesus Christ, as His own authority, in His own name, and by Ambassadors of His own choice, who call themselves Servants, Apostles, and Ambassadors of Christ, therefore those who exercise this authority, must exercise it in the name of Him from whom they received it, for they cannot exercise it in their own name, nor in the name of one from whom they did not receive it. Therefore, seeing that this authority was not derived from God essentially considered, nor promulgated in His name, it cannot be exercised in his name, in that character. I know that this is all directly opposed to George Gillespie, but much as I esteem him, I do not reverence his errors quite so much as to adopt them: What if the scriptures do no where say to civil rulers, in so many words, thou shalt rule in the name of Christ? Seeing that Christ does authoritatively command them, tells them how they shall, and how they shall not rule,—gives them a law saying hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther, and promises rewards to the obedient, and proclaims vengeance against the disobedient, Ps. cx. 2, 5. Are they not bound to reign in his name, seeing that his law sets bounds to their authority, and he will hold them accountable for every transgression of it? And that they can exercise no authority but what they derive from Him? Could it be possible, if the magistrate were under the dominion of God essentially considered, that Christ would meddle with his dominion as he does,—give laws, promise rewards, denounce threatenings, &c.? This cannot be, there is no more interference between the dominion of God essentially considered, and God as the God of grace, than there is between the covenant of works, and that of grace. Has brother Cooper ever read Gillespie on “Associations and Confederacies with Idolaters, Infidels and Heretics?” If he has not, he would do well to read it, and then he will find abundant employment to reconcile Gillespie with Gillespie. *Third*, the prophecies prove that Christ exercises dominion over princes and nations, particularly those prophecies that are yet to be fulfilled, which speak of the millennium, when the kingdom of the stone shall become the kingdom of the mountain. The kingdoms symbolized

by Nebuchadnezzar's image, and that symbolized by the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, are as really and truly antagonist powers, as the seed of the serpent, and the seed of the woman,—as Christ and Belial. They are engaged in a war, in which the latter will exterminate the former, and become universal. "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever," Dan. ii. 44: In Chap. vii. 27, this universal and everlasting kingdom is said to be given to the "people of the saints of the Most High." "It shall not be left to other people"—worldly and ungodly men, who will not obey the prince of the kings of the earth. Now this same kingdom that is here said to be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, is also said to be given to him whom Daniel saw in the night vision, coming in the clouds of heaven,—it was one like to the Son of Man—the Mediator, verse 13. Again this dominion, and glory, and kingdom that "*was given*" to him who came in the clouds of heaven, is said to embrace all people, and nations, and languages,— "that all people, *nations*, and languages should serve him," verse 14. Then, from all these passages taken together, we learn that Christ is the king of this kingdom, symbolized by the stone and mountain, and which includes *all people, nations, and languages*: even as Satan is the king of those kingdoms symbolized by the image, and by the four beasts which Daniel saw come up out of the sea, verse 3.

I will quote only two prophecies more, Ps. xxii. 27–28: and lxxii. 7–11. Henry commenting on Ps. xxii. 28, says: "The kingdom of grace is the Lord Christ's, and he, *as Mediator*, is appointed *governor among the nations*." The lxxii. Psalm no doubt primarily relates to Solomon, but *mainly* to Christ the Mediator. In this passage we are told that "*all kings* shall fall down before him, *all nations* shall serve him," v. 11. Now he that is here spoken of as having dominion over *all kings*, and *all nations* can be none other than the Mediator, for Solomon was not a type of God essentially considered, neither was his kingdom typical of God's essential kingdom. Thus the history, precepts and prophecies prove that Christ exercises mediatorial dominion over the nations.

Then in the foregoing remarks, we have seen that Christian civil government never could have had *existence* without a Mediator,—that it is actually and *necessarily incorporated* into the Christian religion,—that rulers never could have had any of the *endowments or qualifications* that are necessary—yea essential to the exercise of civil rule on truly Christian principles,—that without a Mediator, Christian civil rule, or government never could have been *instituted*, much less exercised, and finally that Christ does exercise mediatorial dominion over the nations, consequently this dominion has its origin in God in the same character in which it is administered. I admit that it would be a very great error to deny that God's essential government had its origin in him in his essential character, but I deny that *Christian* government, either civil or ecclesiastical belongs to God's essential government, and therefore can neither have an origin in, nor be dispensed by God in that character.