

THE COVENANTER.

MARCH, 1850.

THE MONSTROUS GOVERNMENT OF SLAVERY.*

“A tree is known by its fruits.” A government is good, when true religion, moral order, and labour, prosper among the citizens generally. It is well organized and well administered. The prevalence of heresy and idolatry is unequivocal evidence that the government is either badly constituted or badly conducted. The civil constitution of the commonwealth of Israel was perfect; for God was its author. When good men filled the offices of state, the people were religious, prosperous, and happy. It was the reverse, when the wicked bare rule. After the declaration of independence, by the tribes, in the reign of Rehoboam, the administration and the constitution were both bad. They never had one good king from Jeroboam, the first king, to Hoshea, the last. During their whole national existence, irreligion, gross idolatry, and shameful immorality, increased, till God destroyed their existence as a commonwealth. These are scriptural facts, that teach all ages. Let us apply them: and—

I. The fruits of the United States' slaveholding government have been bad. A nation, indeed, may be bad, and its government bad, and yet, like a bad man, it may, for a time, become opulent. The tabernacles of those who “rob God” and man, “prosper for a season.” It has been so in our country. Were human beings, like beasts that perish, made merely to eat and die, the U. S. government might be good for white men. The fruits of the government have been bad for immortal moral agents.

1. Since the organization of the government, under the old Articles of Confederation, a period of seventy-five years, *immorality has been steadily on the increase*. This deplorable result has been mainly owing to negro slavery. The slaveholders, spending their time in idleness, waste it in gaming, horse-racing, drinking, and harlotry. There have been exceptions. But there have been comparatively few southern planters not addicted to one or other of those vices, and many to all of them.

The seat of the general government is in the midst of a slaveholding and slavetrading population. The house of representatives, the senate, the president's cabinet, the bureaus, and the U. S. court, breathe a polluted atmosphere. The District of Columbia swarms with black and white harlots. Harlotry there is not thought dishonourable; gambling has been practised even in the president's house. The Sabbath is openly and-grossly profaned at Washington. Profane swearing is there a com-

* Introductory, by Jas. R. Willson, at the opening of the Sessions of the Theological Seminary, Geneva Hall, 1st Monday of November, 1849.

mon, unrebuked vice. Northern men, reputable for moral deportment at home, when they repair to the capital, as public functionaries, often, perhaps generally, fall victims to the temptations about the court. There are, indeed, happily, illustrious exceptions, such as Benjamin F. Butler, Judge M'Lean, Harmer Denny, the late Governor Findlay, Mr. Frelinghuysen, and others. Streams of moral pollution issue from the seat of the national government, and overflow the nation—north, south, east, and west. The commonwealth now groans under the pressure of its most damning influence.

Every species of immorality prevails. All the efforts of the most enlightened and best people in the land to arrest the progress of intemperance, have failed in a great measure. Every presidential canvass does harm to this good cause, which four years of effort cannot repair. The tide of intemperance rolls back upon us in frightful surges.

Sabbath desecration, after the example of the government in the transportation of Sabbath mails, military parades and music in the army and navy, and the transaction of business by committees of congress, has become a most crying national sin. All efforts to reform this evil have proved unavailing.

Our cities are sinks of adulterous pollution. At a monthly meeting of the Protestant clergy in Cincinnati, on the first Monday of February, 1848, a committee reported that there were, in the city, four thousand known harlots. The population of the city proper was estimated at eighty thousand. Some members of the meeting thought, as the report gave one harlot for every twenty persons, there must be an exaggeration. The Rev. Mr. Bushnell, a very respectable clergyman, who had been ten years the city missionary, said that his duties had furnished him with ample means of information, and he had no doubt that there were six thousand of these degraded women in the city. More money is expended in these houses of infamy, and on the theatres and bar-rooms that feed them, than on all the churches and schools of Cincinnati.

It hardly admits of a doubt, that if a recognisance were made of other commercial cities, they would all be found as bad as the metropolis of Ohio, and probably most of them worse. There are more houses of harlotry in the capitals of Ohio and Pennsylvania than churches. It is so in other state capitals. Washington city, however, in this monstrous debasement, is worse than all.

2. *The growth of Protestant errors.* Socinianism was not known in the United States at the organization of the government. Now, that blasphemous heresy has possession of Harvard University at Boston. In that institution there are thirty-three professors, most of whom, if not all, are either Arian or Socinian, denying the divinity of our Saviour, and of course the whole doctrine of the Trinity of Persons in the God-head. They all reject the truth of Christ's atoning sacrifice for sin.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church excinded, a few years ago, five hundred ministers, whom they charged with semi-Arminian errors. At the formation of the government, all the ministers of that body were believed to be, and, so far as known, were orthodox. Semi-Pelagianism, seventy-five years ago, was hardly known in New England; but it is now the creed of almost all the Congregational churches of the six Northern States. In 1774, there were few Baptists and Methodists. Now they have each ten denominations, and hundreds of thousands of members.

Popery was almost unknown amongst us at the declaration of independence. Now these victims of ignorance, idolatry, and superstition, are estimated at one million five hundred thousand. It is not by numbers alone, or chiefly, that they harm the commonwealth. Their grossly immoral deportment spreads its blighting contagion through the whole mass of our population. Their statuary, their splendid paintings, their music, and the rich costume of their ministering priesthood, attract to their polluted altars, on the Lord's day, thousands of young and thoughtless Protestants. Printers and booksellers, who profess to dislike popish idolatry, fill religious books, otherwise good, with pictures, even of Christ. The Bible itself does not escape this desecration. The doctrinal errors of the Romanists leaven extensively most of the Protestant bodies. All these evils grow in magnitude and power every year, under the protection of the government.

3. *Negro slavery yearly multiplies its victims, and increases its power, in the nation.* Seventy-five years ago it was almost wholly confined to six states, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. Now, it has fifteen states. It has established itself in nine new commonwealths. From less than four hundred thousand, it has grown to three millions; more, by five hundred thousand, than the whole population of the thirteen colonies, when we became an independent republic. But few of all these oppressed people have access to any saving knowledge of the plan of redemption. Hundreds of thousands of them are scarcely elevated above the beasts that perish, except that they have human souls and bodies. All this great and swelling host of slaves are held by one hundred and thirteen thousand white men. These, nearly all, and most of their families, live in idleness—one hundred and thirteen thousand drones in society. One free white man performs as much labour as two slaves. So that there are one million five hundred thousand of the coloured population, who may be set down as mere consumers. We have, then, two million seven hundred and fifty thousand of people who live on the labour of others. The citizens of the free states, compelled to work for the support of these idlers, oppose slavery, and the press labours to unfold the enormity of this evil. The slaveholders are irritated, and there is a rapidly growing alienation between the northern and southern sections of the confederacy. The two elements of liberty and slavery, especially when both are in the extreme, as they are here, cannot live in harmony. The collisions of the factions are violent, engendering the worst passions, uprooting the foundations of religion and morality. The storms of the republic are like "the strivings of the four winds on the great sea." While this tempest rages, thousands of the distressed and down-trodden African race sink, without any relief, into the realms of wo. Poor children of Africa, how hapless is your most wretched fate, under the cruel government of this guilty nation!

Can the tree be good which yields thus an exuberant crop of bitter, poisonous fruits? Happy they who have not planted it, and by whom it is not watered.

II. The government that produces these evil fruits, is badly administered.

1. *Its whole administration favours slavery.* Foreign commerce greatly prospered in the hands of northern merchants soon after the inauguration of the first president, 1788. The French revolution, the

wreck of European despotisms, and especially the war between the continent of Europe and England, were very favourable to our commerce. The supplies requisite for great armies, constantly in the field, opened an extensive market; and made high prices for American produce, requiring more vessels for its exportation. Farmers were furnished with the means of purchasing goods of foreign manufacture. The imports became large. This also gave an additional impulse to the shipping interest. In the mercy of God to our young republic, the kingdoms of the old world were desolated by frightful wars to make us rich.

The jealousy of slaveholders, who administered the government, was awakened by the unexampled prosperity of the northern states. They opposed the building of a navy, that had become necessary for the protection of our commerce, on account of the depredations to which it was exposed by the hostile nations of Europe. The first president, although a slaveholder, and the second, a northern freeman, had commenced the erection of forts on the sea-board, for the protection of the maritime cities. A fortification had been erected on the south end of Manhattan Island, on which New York is built. The third president ordered this to be demolished. He and his cabinet procured from Congress the passage of a law, imposing an embargo, by which our commerce was crippled. Very small gun-boats were built for the harbours of the commercial cities, as a little concession to the north.

These ruinous measures compelled the merchants to withdraw their capital from the ocean, and vest it in manufacturing establishments, which, through the enterprise of northern freemen, grew up with unexampled rapidity. Thus God, who rules the nations, brings good out of evil. The envious policy of slavery was overruled for the accomplishment of all the great profits derived from our factories.

From the first, the nation collected revenues for defraying the expenses of the government, not by direct taxes, but by imposts on commerce collected in custom-houses. This secured protection to our infant factories. Southern politicians would have prostrated the factories, as they saw them prosper; for they have generally had power to do what they would, except as restrained by an overruling providence. For a period of at least twenty-three years, they have contended against the protection of the manufacturing interest by a tariff. On the 30th of June, 1842, our factories were brought to the verge of ruin, and would have been annihilated, had not the wants of the government saved them from utter destruction.

In both these courses of policy—the war on commerce, and that on home manufacture—slavery gave the impulse. Sin is always, in the end, its own punishment. Slavery cannot navigate ships—slaves cannot work to advantage in factories. The disabilities under which the slaveholding interest labours, being deprived, in the retributive justice of God, from the profits of two great sources of wealth, together with their millions of idlers and spendthrifts, reduce them to the estate of comparative decrepitude. Their lands are soon worn out, their houses soon begin to fall into ruin, their debts accumulate without hope of liquidation, their children grow up without education, and their people live without churches. All this they unwisely charge on the north. The government insanely cherishes the viper which poisons the fountains of life in the commonwealth.

Care has been taken, too, as there are two senators from each state,

that for every free state admitted into the Union, there shall be, at the same time, one with slaves. There are now fifteen free states, and fifteen slave, making it impossible, if the slavery senators hold together, to pass any law tending to emancipation.

The majority of the "president's" cabinets have almost always been slaveholders. The present cabinet is composed of *five slaveholders*, and three freemen. Slavery has the army, the navy, the judiciary, the foreign relations, and the president. The free states have the treasury, the post-office, and the home department.

The great majority of the bureaus, the officers of the army and navy, and those on the civil list, the ambassadors to foreign states, and the consuls, have always been and are from the slave states. Slaveholders have occupied the presidential chair almost exclusively. There have been but four northern presidents. One of them, like Menahem in Israel, reigned but "one full month;" and each of the others but four years. There have been eight slaveholding presidents, who have administered the government forty-nine years. Their whole weight, without one exception, has been put into the scale of oppression. No northern president has ever rebuked slavery. The stronghold of this enormous national sin against God, and crime against the rights of man, has been the cabinet of the United States, and a meanly crouching national legislature.

The door was long closed by the house of representatives and the senate against even the reception of petitions adverse to slavery. Thus slavery is truly and emphatically a sin, involving the guilt of the whole nation—of all the voting community.

2. *The administration of the government has had a respect to property only.* Civil magistracy is ordained of God, and put into the hand of the Lord Jesus Christ for the preservation of moral order among men, to promote the intellectual and moral improvement of nations, and to subserve the cultivation of the souls of the citizens for glory and blessedness in another and better country—to do all this as subsidiary to the spiritual and heavenly functions of the church. It is shown above, that even in respect of the right of property, three millions of people are wronged out of their own by wresting from them the whole proceeds of their labour, and bestowing it on idle, immoral, haughty, and cruel lords. It is not then strange that a government perverted to so base ends, should take no care to execute the law of the Lord.

It is true that chaplains are appointed in the army and navy: midshipmen and the cadets in the military school at West Point are taught some science by the U. S. government. But, what then? The character of the chaplains, and the manner of their appointment, render it impossible that they should promote the eternal welfare or present happy culture of sailors or soldiers. While the government, in theory, professes to know no religion, to acknowledge no God, it assumes, in its administration, a function peculiar to the wants of Christ's house, by appointing those who profess to be ministers of religion to their places of labour, and governs them entirely in the discharge of ecclesiastical functions. It is an Erastian usurpation of power over church officers, to which the government has no more right, than it has to bind the chains of bondage on the slave. The kind of men who exercise this usurped power makes it impossible that they could desire to appoint learned, faithful, and godly chaplains. As respects the privilege of

cadets and midshipmen, it is merely to fit them for the protection of property. No more. Indeed, it is ever to be deplored that all our academies, colleges, and most of our common schools, aim at no higher object. This, however, so far from justifying the national government, is to be regarded as a bitter fruit of its corruption.

Read the messages of presidents and governors, the laws, resolutions, and speeches of legislatures, and what are they all?—money, money, nothing but money. A stranger from another planet would not suspect from them all, that Americans have souls to be saved or damned. It is, indeed, well, that there are chaplains appointed by Congress and by some state legislatures, to pray in the halls of legislation, and that there is some show of respect to religion, and attention to education in the army and navy. But it is deeply to be lamented, and we should all be humbled to the dust in sackcloth and ashes, that a republic, a great majority of whose citizens are descended from a Christian and covenanted ancestry, should have nationally divested itself of all but a few fragments, wearing a mere semblance of Christianity. “How has the gold become dim, and the most fine gold changed!” All these evils are the more aggravated, as it is done in a nation where there are twenty thousand churches, and millions of Bibles and other good books, and on which Messiah, the Prince of the kings of the earth, has expended so abundantly his goodness in all temporal good things.

(To be continued.)

[For the Covenanter.]

REVIEW OF AN ARTICLE BY REV. JAMES CHRYSSTIE—
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN, VOL. XIII., p. 313.

This essay has for its professed object the vindication of the very grave theory that the obligation of the Westminster standards is valid and binding in the Reformed Presbyterian Church. A vindication much needed, certainly! It is prefaced by the equally important information that “controversy is *eminently diffusive*.” The whole essay is an indubitable proof of this great truth. And, moreover, it is a living illustration of the equally grave truth that “controversy spreads like fire—hurtful to the sight, and destructive in its progress.”

We are informed, too, that “the Deacon question was very indefinite in its form from the beginning.” Whether the writer means from the apostles’ times, or only since 1838, we cannot say. He says, also: “It has brought up some new issues.” This we very clearly saw before we had read half of his essay. There is certainly a perspicuity and precision in his argument, that leaves the reader inexcusable if he do not perceive at once the meaning of the writer. We are faithfully warned of the danger of these new issues. I presume, he means we should avoid them. He says: “They are calculated to disturb the very foundations of our ecclesiastical order.” We have no doubt of this truth. They may more disturb our order than the apparition “brought up” by the witch of Endor disturbed the king of Israel, and may be equally ominous. It may so disturb many that they may hardly know where they stand, or indeed whether they stand at all. Such a spectre, coming up these times, may turn many a strong head.

The essay gives some historical reminiscences. We now remember, that not long since, there was a dispute of some interest, about the mean-

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3. The government has been and now is administered by men, the greater part of whom do not even pretend to be the friends or followers of our Lord Jesus Christ. Of all the presidents, none but two are known to have made a profession of any religion. One of these took the sacrament in Philadelphia, from the hands of Dr. Priestley, a Socinian blasphemer of the Divinity of Jesus Christ, and of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. The other, his son, was a member of the Arian congregation of Quincy, near Boston. Whether he ever received the Lord's Supper among these heretics, is not known. No president ever worshipped God in his house, or asked a blessing on his meals. Not one of them would ever have been admitted to membership in any well-regulated Presbyterian congregation. All this elevation of ungodly men to office is directly contrary to the declaration of the Holy Spirit: "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." Wicked men cannot administer well the government of the commonwealth, for the Spirit says again: "As a ranging bear and a roaring lion, so is a wicked ruler over the poor people." Again: "When the wicked bear rule, the people mourn." Can any thing be more preposterous than for the professed disciples of Christ to choose the seed of the serpent to reign over them—to elect men to be the executors of the laws of the God of heaven, that do themselves habitually and openly violate the statutes of Jehovah?

Such presidents, as a matter of course, elect men for heads of departments and for other official functions, who are like themselves, who are without God and without Christ in the world. The factions of the commonwealth act on far different principles. Whigs do not elect Democrats, and these, again, do not elect Whigs. Are the questions of finance—for they do not rise higher—which divide these political wranglers, more important to the public weal, than those which respect virtue and vice, moral order and turpitude, religion and impiety?

Nearly all voters act as if it were so. Can they have the fear of God before their eyes? It is not to be thought strange, that when men, not only irreligious, but grossly immoral, as is now commonly done, are honoured by the suffrages of the people, they will succumb to the slave power, and show by the whole of their action as public functionaries, that "the Lord is not in all their thoughts?" The basest of men are allowed the right of suffrage. Demagogues, without principle, court the votes of those who, the Apostle James says, "are natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed." These have as much power at the ballot box as enlightened and virtuous citizens. Yes, more. Ambi-

tious and unholy aspirants to office court especially the lowest dregs of the people. Both the Whigs and Democrats court the suffrages of the ignorant, grossly idolatrous papists, who arrived on our shores but yesterday, and who are utterly unacquainted with the country, and especially with the import of our free, republican institutions. The factions court them with more assiduity than they do the well-known Protestant population who have, under God, made, and who in fact are, the nation.

So nearly are the parties balanced, that these popish foreigners can turn the scale at will. When the Whigs, a few years ago, gained the ascendancy in the state of New York, by a majority of 16,000, the priests thought they foresaw that the same party would prevail in the succeeding election for president, and they instructed their people to vote for General Harrison, the Whig. Except in Ohio, they generally obeyed their spiritual guides, abandoned the Democratic party, with which they had nearly all before that time voted, went over to the Whigs, and Harrison was elected. Without their votes, he would have lost the election. In 1844, they returned to their former party, secured the election of Mr. Polk for President, and of Shunk, the democratic candidate for governor of Pennsylvania. Can the government of a nation be well administered, when the most important governmental functionaries secure their election by pandering to the ignorant and profane, who are easily made the tools of crafty demagogues?

4. The late war with Mexico, waged by the slave power, in the government, for the purpose of enlarging the domain of slavery, and perpetuating its reign, bears fearful testimony to the bad administration of the government. The waste of \$100,000,000, and the sacrifice of at least 30,000 of our citizens, and probably 60,000 people of a young and feeble neighbouring republic, have been the direct results. The public morals have been fearfully desecrated, a thirst for war and conquest has been produced, a gold mania engendered, the slave trade has received a new impulse, and the seeds of discord between the North and South have been sown—"sown to the wind," and we shall "reap the whirlwind" in the dissolution of the Union.

Such have been the bitter fruits of the government of this nation. The tree must be corrupt.

But—III. The constitution is chargeable with many great evils.

1. *The very impious dishonour done to the God of heaven.* It was not the intention of those who framed it to honour the Christian's God. Indeed, it is abundantly evident they intended to do homage to no God. Every nation before it professed to honour some divinity. The commonwealth of the ten tribes of Israel worshipped the calves set up by Jeroboam at Dan and Bethel. The Hindoos have their Juggernaut. But the United States do not, in their constitution, recognise any God. His name is not once mentioned in the fundamental law of the commonwealth, except in the date. That is not to honour him. No other date was used at the time by the people. The era of its adoption could not be otherwise known. It was forced on the convention. An Atheist uses the Christian era in his dates. Does the Deist mean to honour our Lord Jesus Christ, when he uses the common era in dating his letters?

The law of the Lord, as revealed in the light of nature, or in the Holy Scriptures, is not recognised as the rule of duty. On the con-

trary, "we the people," is its declaration, "ordain this constitution" as the supreme law of the land. The will of fallen, corrupt man, as expressed by a majority of the people, is regarded as the ultimate fountain of all national law. The people of Israel, taught of God, as an example to all nations, say: "The Lord is our Lawgiver." The command is—"All nations shall serve him." No man has or can have a right to govern other men, all of whom are God's subjects, unless God gives him the right. "Who art thou that judgest another's servant?"

This is so palpably trampling under foot the rectoral majesty of Jehovah, we are shocked that any professed disciple of Christ attempts to apologize for the iniquity. Were the state of Ohio to frame a constitution without any reference to that of the nation, the Federal government would regard it as an act of secession from the Union, as rebellion, and would not suffer such an infraction of the national compact. The national constitution is a declaration of independence of God's throne.

2. It violates a fundamental principle of lawful government—that the majority shall rule. Either of the little states of Delaware or Rhode Island, has as much weight in the Senate of the United States, and in the election of a president, when it is referred to the House of Representatives, as any of the great states of New York, Pennsylvania, or Ohio. The electoral colleges are not only an expensive and cumbrous part of the governmental machine; they are vicious. More than one president has administered the government, when a majority of the people, in the popular vote, was against him. This provision of the constitution was adopted, in imitation of the electoral college of Germany, in which thirteen hereditary princes elected the emperor. It is a remnant, and a very bad one, of the federal aristocracy of Europe.

The two houses, an upper and lower, is of the same aristocratic origin. It is copied from the Lords and Commons of England. We have no two houses in our presbyteries and synods. In the synod of Jerusalem there was but one house, but one in the Sanhedrim of Israel. The French convention, in their lately framed constitution, provide for but one house. The senate, by the United States' constitution, a minority of the law-making power, can overrule the majority. What is far worse—in the presidential veto, one man can, and often does, thwart the will of the nation. In all these cases, the minority governs, which is of the essence of despotism.

3. *The constitution guaranties negro slavery, by many provisions.* (1.) Five slaves entitle the holder to three votes, added to his own. This reward of oppression sends twenty-five members to Congress. (2.) Permission was granted to import slaves for twenty years, after the adoption of the constitution; and the property so imported, and the posterity of imported slaves, are held to-day by a right derived from the constitution. (3.) The restoration of runaway slaves is secured by the organic law of the commonwealth. (4.) The power of the nation is pledged to prevent the slaves from gaining their liberty by revolution. (5.) Full faith and credit are to be given to the laws of the slaveholding states. (6.) The supreme court has decided that slavery is guarantied by the constitution. (7.) Congress has so decided in the admission of Missouri and other states, with slave constitutions, into the Union. (8.) This has always been the sense of the nation. (9.) Congress and the U. S. government hold to bondage, under the constitution, all the slaves in the District of Columbia. (10.) The stubborn and de-

plorable fact that there are three millions of slaves in the land, and no law to relieve them—no provision for their emancipation—no ray of hope for them shines in the whole firmament of power—all proclaim, trumpet-tongued, that the organic law of the nation is a slaveholding monster.

4. *No religious test shall ever be demanded as a qualification for office.* It never shall be asked whether a U. S. functionary is a friend or an enemy of God or the devil—whether he is a Hindoo brahmin, a Mahometan mufti, or a disciple of Christ Jesus. Thus the sanctuary of God is opened to desecration by the base adulterer and impious blasphemers.

All these are positive, direct, and gross violations of the law of the Lord, and hostile to the nature and ends of his holy and beneficent ordinance of civil government. They all frown on the church of Christ, are adverse to her welfare, and tend to mar the best interests of the human race. They have sealed the damnation of millions of native Americans, because their ancestors were children of Ethiopia, on whom the sun had looked and made them black. "Ah! sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil-doers, children that are corrupters. They have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward."

5. *The greatest evil, in the constitution of the United States, is the entire disregard of "Messiah, the Prince of the kings of the earth."* All kings, or civil rulers, are commanded, under pain of Jehovah's high displeasure, to do homage to him as Mediator. "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss ye the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little." This command is to serve the eternal Son as Mediator, who is "set on the holy hill of Zion." Ps. ii. 10—12, and 6. The command of God the Father is, "that every knee should bow—and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. ii. 10, 11. But the construction, in this land of thousands of Protestant churches and millions of Bibles, does not once call upon his name. "Tell it not in Gath."

In view of all these alarming national sins, what is the duty of those who have consecrated themselves to the Lord, for the work of the holy gospel ministry?

1. To watch against the contaminating influence of those evils which have diffused their poison through the whole mass of our population. We have all lain among the pots, like the Israelites, when enslaved in Egypt. Our "carnal minds are naturally enmity against God, are not subject to his law, neither indeed can be." The filthiness of these national impurities finds an easy admission into our defiled souls. It enters by all the avenues which our external senses open to hold intercourse with the world around us. We breathe an atmosphere laden with a pestilential virus. Satan, the god of this world, the prince of the power of the air, knows well how to use these all in seducing us from our Lord Jesus Christ, and for drawing off our affections from his holy law, and from his church. He knows that our minds are polluted by the whole course of our education in heathen academies and colleges. If we would cultivate holiness in the fear of the Lord, we must occupy the watch-tower, and exercise a ceaseless vigilance

over our inner and outer man, that we be not carried away by diverse lusts, and so be disqualified for the exercise of the holy functions of the gospel ministry. "What I say unto you, I say unto all—Watch!"

2. Be well prepared to warn others against these evils. The spirit of the civil institutions of the land is Laodicean, and seeks compromise between truth and error, virtue and vice, God and the devil. Men, many ministers, baptize this detestable neutrality in the cause of God, by the deceptive names of peace, charity, good-will, forbearance, and brotherly love. Some even among ourselves go so far as to teach that we ought to preach the truth only, and not attack the errors abroad. "Who," they say, "ever heard of a sheep attacking a wolf?" These false teachers are not the followers of the prophets and apostles of the Lamb, who stopped the mouths of lions, who boldly and magnanimously reprov'd all sin, refuted and denounced all error, warned the people after the example of Christ, to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees—false religion—and of the leaven of Herod—corrupt and slavish politics, and who were gloriously rewarded with the crown of martyrdom. Let all Covenanters emulate this noble example.

3. The minister of Christ must warn his people against partaking of this national dishonour done to their Redeeming Head. "Those who receive the mark of the beast in their foreheads," by swearing the oath of allegiance to him, "or in their hands," by the active support of him at the ballot box, "the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever." This tremendous denunciation falls not on those only who incorporate themselves with the old despotisms of Europe, but also on all, who support any throne, that rejects the authority of Prince Messiah. All the churches, except the Reformed Presbyterian Church, incur the penalty denounced by the Spirit in the Apocalypse. If men perish under this fearful malediction, not having been warned by the watchman, their blood shall be in his skirts.

In the present condition of the church, the faithful performance of this great duty exposes the minister of Christ to more obloquy in this republic than in any other nation of Christendom. The people of the old world have been forced for ages to groan under the oppression of despotic thrones, whose yoke they would gladly shake off. The people in our country have made the government, which fairly represents the corrupt masses, by whom it has been created. Few ministers have faith and integrity enough to encounter, for the honour of our Lord and Master, "*the reproach of men.*" But let the sons of the prophets remember, that we have the promise of our God, "That as our day is, so our strength shall be." Let them reflect that the more we expose ourselves for Christ's sake, for the church's interest, and for the reformation of the commonwealth, the more we glorify our king, and the greater our blessed reward, in the day when called to render up an account of our ministry. If we sow in tears, we shall reap a rich harvest of joys immortal and honours eternal in the heavens. Our function is a glorious one, our warfare heavenly, and our victory certain. "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit. I beheld till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed,

and given to the burning flame—and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.” Then, and the time is short, shall shout, “a great multitude, as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, “Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.” “Amen, even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly.”

[For the Covenanter.]

REVIEW OF T. S. AND OTHERS.

In our last, we selected a few of the gross misstatements of T. S. We might have reviewed more. There are some remarkable features in his essays, and in others recently appearing in the Reformed Presbyterian. In these essays, the true issue now in our church is evaded. New questions are raised, of a divisive tendency, never in dispute among us. Arguments of opponents, really bearing upon the question at issue, are unnoticed. Refutations of arguments meet no generous reply or concession. The most solemn disavowal of error charged on us, meets with no corresponding frank withdrawal of charges.

We argued that there are many important truths—reformation-attained truths—truths sworn to in solemn covenants—truths on the subject of church government, by us believed and practised, not in the Westminster Form, or in any *other* Standard, but the Second Book of Discipline; and, consequently, that we have the right of appealing to the Discipline, to settle controversy on all these subjects, and on the subject of the extent of the deacon's power particularly; and the more so, since the Book of Discipline was once law and standard in the church of Scotland, and that law, too, admitted by T. S. to be “*rule*” never repealed. We refuted his argument, that “the tithing was a civil arrangement.” And this has something to do with the question in debate. We furnished the refutation of the naked assertion, that “the doctrine that the Levite was the deacon of the Old Testament church is *new light*.” We gave the proof that it is the doctrine of the Bible, and the *old light* of Westminster times. To nothing of this kind has he ever fairly replied. But instead of meeting vital points, he deserts the field, and raises the battle cry where he knows no Covenanter will ever attack him. Scarcely an argument is found in all his essays, except against what nobody affirms on the deacon question. Truly he is a valiant man, who will plant his standard behind the old rampart of the civil magistrate's right “to provide for the temporal support of the church,” and then boldly challenge Covenanters to make battle! Such a man will never take fright at his own shadow!

The question is often asked by those without, and by many in our own church—what is the question now really in dispute—the question in which our ministers and people really differ, and which threatens to disturb the peace and unity of our ecclesiastical organization? We shall take a little pains in giving an answer. Some among us deny the office of the deacon entirely, as involving a third and distinct and perpetual officer, whose power is confined to temporalities exclusively. These deny the doctrine of the Form, and hold—some of them—that *the seven* referred to in Acts vi. 1, were extraordinary and temporary; others, that they were Evangelists, and preached, as they say, Stephen and Philip did, without any other than the first ordination. These, however, now do little, except swell the number, and give their votes and influence to the party really in the field, in opposition to having deacons in all our congregations. The issue is upon other *ostensible* ground. While they grant the divine institution of the perpetual diaconate, they hold—*first*, that the power of the deacon is limited to the