

THE
COVENANTER.

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NATIONAL SUBJECTION TO DIVINE AUTHORITY.*
ITS OBLIGATION DEMONSTRATED.

(By Rev. James Chrystie.)

This is confessedly a subject of considerable interest, and a right understanding of it, an attainment of no small difficulty. The history of the nations in connexion with the church, the conflicting interests involved, the claims of the scriptures, and the very diverse interpretations to which they have been subjected, together with the bearing which the ultimate determination of the question, right or wrong, must have upon the moral and social welfare of man, exhibit it clearly as a matter of the highest moment. And while it may be conceded, that a part of the difficulty connected with its right understanding, may be justly attributed to honest scruples, a very large part must be assigned to the criminal enmity of man to the authority of God, and no small part to the form which the controversy has often assumed. Hair-splitting distinctions, which the intellectual vision can scarcely discern, and the memory still less easily retain; metaphysical technicalities, little understood and of no use in the determination of a question, which, after all, must be eminently popular in its character, have, with other things of a similar kind, so involved the whole subject in perplexity, as to discourage in a great degree any serious attention. In its true nature, it is a question remarkable for its simplicity. It has been, moreover, so long presented to the human mind, in the complicated, tortuous, and corrupt systems of the old world, that history, holding up the records of ages, presents the very name of "church and state," as an object of general abhorrence, and, to a lamentable extent, of deserved execration.

But if we lay aside the unusually and utterly inappropriate matters with which it has been invested, both in the form in which it has often been considered, and in the light in which the history of modern Europe exhibits it, it will appear in a very different aspect. It is capable of being represented as a matter of the deepest interest to man, most calculated to advance his social and moral welfare, most conducive of all that exalts national prosperity and dignity, and most calculated to promote the glory of God on earth, in the moral improvement and happiness of the human race. In some such manner, an humble effort will

* It is due to Mr. Chrystie to say, that it is at our suggestion, and request that he has undertaken to furnish a series of essays for our pages, on this important, but greatly litigated subject.—ED.

now be made, to consider it in a few articles, which it is designed to lay before your readers. Our attention will first be turned to some arguments in proof of its obligation, and hereafter perhaps to some considerations connected with its application.

1. *It is a dictate of nature that God should be honoured by man, not less in his social character and relations, than in his individual state.* Individuals, when combined and formed into a community, constitute in that state a moral person, illustrating in its being, its history, its prosperity, its adversity, its moral obligations and accountability, an exact image and counterpart of each individual in all these respects. It cannot be otherwise. If it be admitted that there is a distinct being, secular history, a series of prosperity and adversity, a certain definite form of moral obligation and accountability, inseparably pertaining to man in each individual: all these properties follow him in even augmented force, although in some respects in diverse forms, in his congregated and social state. And what is especially to be remarked here is, that although there be admitted diversity of form in the being and the accompanying series of events developed in the history of man in his social state, the moral obligation and accountability remain precisely the same, equal and unvarying in their force, except, it may be observed, in their accumulated vigour. A criminal action is aggravated, it is evident, when deliberately and knowingly perpetrated by a multitude, more than when perpetrated by an individual. Infidelity in a nation is more aggravated and daring, than in an individual. The whole obligation of moral law follows the individuals in their associated state, and rests upon the whole community of which the individuals are composed. It cannot be that a community of individuals, each subject to moral obligation, can dispense for itself with one iota of that obligation by which each individual is bound. If the individual is held subject to the whole law, the community abide, equally subject: there can be no dispensation for the whole which the individual could not make for himself.

These principles are self-evident, and defy successful contradiction. It will be found that they not only contribute very largely to the determination of the general question, but moreover meet and determine some very interesting details, which have been often avoided, obscured, or denied, and which may hereafter be considered. It furnishes an irrefragable evidence, that the same conscience which ought to animate and direct every individual, ought to animate and direct the whole community; that the same subjection of conscience, and authority over conscience, pertaining to each individual, pertains with equal power to the whole community.

This principle has been illustrated as an integral property in the moral constitution of man, in the history of nations. How strong the conviction of identity of interest and moral relation in the community, on the part of individuals displayed under the form and name of "patriotism." What sacrifices of self have been made at times, by one, for the good of the whole!—and what a powerful sense of common interest and destiny do such instances discover! Moreover, what a deep conviction of national dependence, of national guilt, and consequently, of national subjection to the Deity, do public expiatory sacrifices, or the solemn processions of even heathen nations afford! Amidst the corruptions and horrible deformity with which this principle was attended, these, and ten thousand similar illustrations, afford indubitable evidence

that man is conscious that he carries into his social state all his moral accountability, obligation, and dependence, and that it invests with equal, and even with accumulated interest, the whole associated state. Brevity forbids that I press the argument farther. Nor is it necessary; for it is evident that the very fountain of moral action in man speaks aloud to the conviction of his soul, if he will but hear its voice. The history of his race publishes, in the most intelligible terms, that if he be bound to honour God in his individual state, he is not less so, but far more imperatively and solemnly, bound to honour the same God in his social and congregated state.

2. *It is an essential principle and property of true Christianity that it pervade the social relation and state of man, as well as influence his individual character.* It is a system which, from its very origin, author, and nature, must obtain an entire supremacy over man in every state and relation in which it finds him. It never enters a community by arresting an individual with its divine and omnipotent influence, but it makes that individual a radiating point to illumine the whole—"Ye are the light of the world." This is a truth of higher and more ample import, of more majestic and expansive authority, than is often considered. As light rests not within itself, but ever attempts its own expansion, seizes every opening passage and pursues its course,—so Christianity, in its own nature, rests not content in individual man. Irrespective and independently, as it were, of his volitions in the matter, it institutes a claim beyond, and unless impeded in its progress by undue and unnatural resistance, must expand and extend its power. In every other individual it finds the same necessities—to each it tenders the same precious and inestimable benefits. In each it finds the same subjection and dependence—over each it claims the same authority and dominion. But it moreover sets up in the heart of each individual a new and controlling principle of action whose power, where it has place, cannot be gainsayed or resisted. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." And thus by its own inherent authority, and its living exemplification in every subject, it claims and prosecutes its expansive and pervading power. Proceeding from God, and bearing on it the impress of divine authority, it demands the homage of the whole man, in every state and relation of life, and that under sanctions the most awful. And when it has succeeded in its own blessed and proper results, what must be the consequence, but that the whole community, leavened with its proper nature, must be subject to its all-pervading influence? Could there be a community of Christians, subsisting without an acknowledgment of the principles which actuated the whole, and without subjection to the laws which held in obedience every individual? The answer is in the conscience of every unprejudiced mind. The argument and the application are plain. And is there a principle in the whole system of divine revelation, or, in other words, in the whole system of Christianity, respecting the aim and course of human life, more prominent than the one involved in such testimonies as these: "Whatsoever ye do, whether in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." If the former be obligatory in the case of an individual, and illustrative of the principles of Christianity in one of its highest forms, how accumulated the obligation and how much more ample the illustration in a nation! If the latter bind an individual, with how much more force, a nation; and if God be glorified by the individual, how accumulated his declarative glory when a nation makes that the object of its social institutions and ad-

ministrations! And this is one great end of divine revelation. This is the tenor of Christ's commission to the Apostles and a ministry to succeed them to the end of time. "Go teach (literally "disciple") *all nations*, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching *them* to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo I am with you always, even to the end of the world." Matt xxviii. 19, 20. Again, Rom. xvi. 25, 26. "Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation which was kept secret since the world began, but is now made manifest, and according to the commandment of the everlasting God made known to all nations for the obedience of faith." And once more, Rom xv. 8—12. "Now I say that Jesus Christ was made a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God to confirm the promises made unto the fathers; and that the Gentiles* (literally "the nations") might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause will I confess to thee among the Gentiles (nations) and sing unto thy name. And again he saith, Rejoice, *ye Gentiles (nations) with his people*. And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles, and laud him, all ye people. And again Esaias saith, There shall be a rod of Jesse, and he that shall *rise to reign over the Gentiles, (the nations)* in him shall the Gentiles trust." How direct the testimony in all these passages of the New Testament to the social influence and authority of Christianity! And the last passage, moreover, indirectly indeed, but very unequivocally, asserts, that revealed religion is to exercise, in however diversified a form, the same elements of power over the nations, that it exercised over the ancient commonwealth of Israel. "Rejoice, ye Gentiles, *with his people*." "A rod of Jesse shall rise to reign over the Gentiles." It is vain to reply, that all this refers only to its individual influence. Let any candid mind picture to itself a nation of which all the individuals are agreed in submitting to the authority of divine revelation, or even where a preponderating majority of such exists, and he must possess a most obtuse and unenviable intellect who cannot see the result. It will be discerned that its claims extend to all the social relations, and in them it will be acknowledged, and God glorified in their professed subjection.

3. In addition to this essential element in Christianity, claiming a supreme authority over man in all his relations, *the Scriptures directly assert that claim and expressly reveal the obligation*. And in this respect the word bears on itself an impress of its own divine authority and origin. Were there an alleged revelation from heaven, professedly a guide to man in all his obligations to his Maker, his Ruler and his Judge, so defective, as to contemplate man in only a part of his moral relations, it would furnish strong suspicions that it was a spurious and groundless pretence and imposture. A revelation from God, the supreme Lord of all, must claim authority over all, and meet man in every station and relation in which he can be found. If it be true, and who but an avowed atheist will dispute it, that, "the light of nature showeth that there is a God, who hath lordship and sovereignty over all"†—it must be as true, that a revelation of his will to man, being perfect as well as infallible, must display that "lordship and sovereignty over all" in the claims which it institutes, and the duties which it prescribes to man in every possible relation, and pre-eminently in that relation which is more exten-

* The word in the original Greek is the same as that which is translated "nations" in the preceding passages of Matt. xxviii. 19 and Rom. xvi. 26, and generally elsewhere.

† Westminster Confession of Faith, chap. XXI.

sively prolific of good or evil, moral and physical, than any other in which he can be placed. If it could be believed that the Scripture, which is so full, perfect, and entire in all its prescriptions of duty to man in his individual character, were silent respecting his obligations in his social and national relations, then it must be inferred that while immense care has been bestowed on the less, an incomprehensible neglect has passed over the greater. For what proportion does the honour and homage yielded by individuals to the sovereignty of God, bear to the congregated honour and homage yielded by nations? What proportion does the neglect, disobedience, or contempt offered to the majesty of Heaven, by an individual, bear to the disregard, slight, and contempt of nations?

The scripture in various instances directly asserts the claims and reveals the obligation in question. "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and *all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee*. For the kingdom is the Lord's; and *he is the Governor among the nations*." Almost innumerable testimonies equivalent to this might be quoted, but it will be more to the purpose to consider and apply a few. And we will examine this: It expressly asserts that God the Lord is "the Governor among the nations," that "the kingdom," that is the rule and the right to rule, "is the Lord's." Now "governor" is predicated of one who has the governed under his authority and law, and he who holds dominion, kingdom, or rule, has under him the ruled. In this case, this is affirmed of *the nations*. And of course where there is legitimate rule and government, there is law, and where legitimate rule, and government, and law are in exercise, there is required acknowledged subjection and obedience. What should be thought of a people under government and law, who furnished no expressed acknowledgment of such government and law? And is Jehovah, the Lord, is he the Ruler, the Governor among the nations, without the exercise of government and without the administration and acknowledgment of law? It is a poor subterfuge to object that he is governor among the nations, and has the right of kingdom, dominion and rule only, as he does by his sovereign providence control and dispose the destiny of nations. It is admitted that he does so. But the very fact that he does so, that he claims and exercises such power, is evidence that subjection should be acknowledged and obedience should be yielded, wherever he has given a revelation of his laws and published a declaration of his dominion and his claims. Shall we so tamper with truth and delude ourselves, as to suppose that we can with impunity, admit indeed that there is an invisible, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient Sovereign, who controls the destiny of nations, exalting and prospering with his favour, and degrading or destroying in his wrath, and yet imagine that we are discharged from all obedience to him or acknowledgment of him, in that very relation, in respect of which he exercises such sovereignty?—in the face too of an express revelation of what he is in such relation, of what he does and of what he claims? Would it not be considered, in an individual, as proof of infatuated reason, and the most stupid inconsistency to argue thus, "I know that there is an invisible, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent Being who controls my destiny, who has revealed to me that he is my governor and declared to me his right to rule; but I will neither expressly acknowledge his authority or trouble myself with obedience to his laws?" And such is precisely the daring and reckless subterfuge, of such apologists for the disregard of that national homage, due to the "Governor among the nations."

But this subterfuge is detected and refuted by the passage itself. It is preceded by a prediction that such rule and authority, with its attendant professed subjection, shall be acknowledged by the nations under the new Testament era to which the prophecy refers. And the reason why the nations, to the remotest end of the world, shall remember and shall turn unto the Lord, and why "the kingdoms," that is, the rulers and people in their national relation, and in the forms of government by which they are respectively organized in that relation, "shall worship before him"—is, because the kingdom is ever is, and has been through all ages, his; and he is, ever is, and has been, through all ages, anterior to their acknowledgment, or their turning to him, or their worship before him, "the Governor among the nations." For ages, insensible and heedless of their high and awful obligation, they are at length brought to remember and consider, and then make the acknowledgment and yield the obedience due to him whose is "the kingdom," who is "*the Governor among the nations.*"

[To be Continued.]

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN PRINCIPLES IN RELATION TO MISSIONS.

For a number of years past, but especially within the last ten or twelve, the various sections of the protestant church have become fully convinced of the obligation which rests upon them, to be vigorously engaged in employing their resources and energies, to advance the interests of the kingdom of Christ. The design of the present article is to show that the peculiar principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, or those principles by which she is distinguished even from the most pure of other churches, give her a decided superiority in promoting the glory of the Redeemer throughout the earth, and speeding forward the triumphs of his cross. No church but the Reformed Presbyterian holds, *in their true and genuine sense and application*, the following sentiments. 1. That the Lord Jesus Christ as Mediator, has universal moral and providential dominion. 2. That public covenanting is a duty in New Testament times, to be observed by both churches and nations, and that such vows, when scripturally entered into, are binding upon the personal covenanters and all whom they represent, to whatever part of the world they are removed, in so far as the duties are not peculiar to the nation where the covenant was entered into. 3. That the word of God is the supreme rule of duty in all things both civil and religious.

That these principles and their faithful profession are favourable to the work of missions we undertake to show, seriatim, and 1. *The Headship of Christ is a principle which lies at the foundation of every scriptural mission.* When the Lord Jesus sent forth his apostles to teach and baptize all nations, he assigns as one ground of this unlimited commission, the fact that "all power was given unto him in heaven and in earth;" that God the Father had invested him with this dominion—had given him to be King of Zion and also King of nations, not only that he might appoint a ministry, ordinances and laws, for "the perfecting of the saints" and "for the edifying of the body of Christ," but that he might also have a right to send his ambassadors into all the kingdoms of the world, to preach repentance and remission of sins in his name, in order that sinners might be brought "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God," and

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(By Rev. James Chrystie.)

The article in our last No., of which this is a continuation, closed with the consideration of the argument, enforcing national subjection to the authority of Messiah, drawn from divine revelation as contained in the Old Testament Scriptures. This resumes the argument, at this point.—Ed.

Passing over the multitude of testimonies similar in their import in the writings of the Old Testament, we address our attention to one from the New, Romans xiii. 1—5; from which we select only the attributes of magistracy proper to our argument. “There is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth *the ordinance of God*.—He is *the minister of God* to thee for good—he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.” While we premise the admission, that there may be inculcated in the whole passage the duty of submission to providential appointment, containing a warning to Jewish believers against the turbulent spirit which actuated their countrymen, and to Gentile believers against taking part in the political agitations of their day, in which their interests, or the interests of humanity and religion had no place—it is perfectly evident that the inspired description of civil government, and civil rulers, and the duties growing out of them, are wholly inapplicable to the government then actually existing. That government was a usurpation of a character the most violent, and which had been reached by revolution, violence, and crime, almost unparalleled—it was sanguinary, tyrannical, and idolatrous, beyond all that had gone before. To such a government, such divine approbation and authority, and such conscientious subjection, as are here proposed, are incapable of being attributed. We admit, and even maintain, that it was the duty of Christians, then (and at all times under similar circumstances) to forbear plunging themselves in rash and reckless schemes of political revolution and reformation, or associating themselves with the political leaders of their day for objects, which, however fair and promising in their moral aspect, have no regard to God or his law. That so at least it was understood, there is

this remarkable evidence, that in all the commotions of that most agitated age, not a single instance can be ascertained in which Christians took a part.

But an accurate interpretation of the passages goes far higher, and plainly teaches that magistracy and magistrates are an ordinance and institution of God. And the argument it furnishes is incontrovertible, that God's glory should be the end, and God's law the rule and standard of its order, character, and administrations. Can a mind, not blinded by prejudice the most inveterate, a heart not hardened by invincible enmity to God himself, behold an ordinance framed and put into execution without regard to the authority, or will of its author, and not see the discrepancy and criminality of the attempt? If civil government be God's ordinance, shall not God be honoured therein? If the civil ruler be God's minister, shall he not acknowledge his name, and render him service by real and professed observance of his will? And if God alone be, as he certainly is, the Lord of the conscience, how can men be required to be "subject for conscience sake," in other words, to yield conscientious obedience to an authority which disregards his name and sets aside the obligation of his laws?

But there is an important collateral consideration of a most decisive character, interwoven in the whole system of divine revelation, in evidence of the same truth. For a period of, at least, fifteen centuries, the whole tenor of divine revelation was inseparably connected with a condition of man in which the civil and political institutions were, and were required to be, in professed subjection to the authority of God, and conformity to his will. Such was clearly the condition of that part of the human family, the Jewish nation, which exclusively enjoyed the inestimable privilege of a revelation from heaven. That revelation, as written, commenced with the establishment of such political order, and it is evident that under every form of civil polity by which they were governed, the homage due to God as the supreme Sovereign, was considered a principle inseparable from their existence. Its disregard, or its violation, was denounced as the most aggravated revolt and rebellion, and punished with the sorest national judgments; its observance was always regarded by the wise and virtuous of the commonwealth, as the bulwark of their national safety and prosperity. Can it be supposed that a principle so plainly moral in its nature, so solemnly instituted, maintained with such sanctions, through so long a period of time; a principle moreover so congenial to the supremacy of God, and to the dependence of man—can it be supposed that such a principle must be abandoned, when God extends his revealed will abroad to all nations, and infinitely augments the obligation to subjection and obedience? Does not divine revelation come to every nation in all the fullness of its authority, with the accumulated experience of ages, saying, Behold the homage I have claimed over the nations, and witness its sanctions—for "by me kings reign, and princes decree justice, by me princes rule and nobles, even all the judges of the earth." Prov. viii. "Be wise now therefore, O ye kings, be instructed, ye judges of the earth: serve God with fear and rejoice with trembling." Psalm ii. It is inconceivable that the providential illustration of this important principle for so many ages, in immediate connexion with divine revelation, should be so carefully recorded, and so solemnly exhibited to the nations, as most intimately connected with the divine glory, and pre-eminently receiving his approbation, without designing to inculcate the truth, that all nations favoured with divine revelation, are bound to

acknowledge and perpetuate the same homage and subjection. The New Testament, we have seen, presents a continuous exhibition of the same principles when it maintains that civil government is still an ordinance of God, and the civil ruler still the minister of God for good to man—and perhaps intentionally presents the glory of the divine majesty going forth from his ancient kingdom in Judea, to pervade the nations and multiply the ascription of homage from the multiplied accession of realms and kingdoms subject to his throne, when he is declared to be the “Blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords.” 1 Tim. vi. 15.

4. *The obligation is inexpressibly enhanced, and the argument for it enforced, when its nature and foundation are presented in the full and perfected light of the New Testament revelation.* The whole divine authority and government is there expressly declared to be transferred to the Son of God in our nature, the Mediator between God and man. It is the unsearchable mystery of the love of God to man that he gave his only-begotten Son to accomplish the redemption of sinners, by his own vicarious offering up of himself as a sacrifice for sin, and to him as the reward of his sufferings to give the possession and administration of all power in heaven and in earth.

To this point the scripture is remarkably full and express. Whilst it was foretold and foreshadowed in various degrees of clearness, under the former dispensation, it is made a cardinal and prominent principle in the New Testament writings. Thus after his resurrection, he announced to his disciples, “All power in heaven and in earth is given unto me; go ye therefore and teach all nations, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” Matt. xxviii. 18, 20. In this summary, but remarkably comprehensive testimony, we are required to observe the authority and dominion which he claims, “all power in heaven and in earth,” the commission he founds on that authority, “go ye therefore and teach,” (literally disciple) the extent of that commission, “all nations,” and the practical illustration of such authority over them and the obedience he requires from them, “teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” Here, at its close, is the interpretation of that “power in heaven and in earth” which he claims, and it shows that the nations are put in subjection to him, are bound by that subjection to receive his word at the testimony of his commissioned and authorized servants, and not only to receive but to “observe” whatever commands they have received from him. It is impossible to escape the conclusion that the “nations” are placed under the authority and power of the Messiah, and as impossible to escape the conviction that they are bound to acknowledge him by receiving and observing his word. The puerilities which even eminent men have indulged, endeavouring, Jonah-like, to escape the peril of announcing to the nations, their high and solemn obligation to submit to Christ as their true and acknowledged Sovereign and Lord, these puerilities vanish before the majesty of truth. We are not unapprized of the specious attempts to limit the power of the Redeemer to his church. But when we know that he has commissioned his ambassadors to the nations, and demands of the nations the observance of his word in their message as his commands, whatever we may believe of the former, we are equally bound to believe the latter, and are assured that it is a characteristic mark of that true apostolic ministry instituted to endure “to the end of the world,” that they call upon “the nations” to receive and observe his word.

It is sometimes objected, that the government of the nations belongs to Christ not as Mediator, but as God. The futility and weakness of the objection is at once exposed by observing that as God, no power can *be given* him; he possesses all power inherent and essentially. But "Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is *given* unto me in heaven and in earth." It is moreover of that wonderful person the Mediator, as then visible before them that he spake, "is given unto *me*." It is moreover objected, that the required obedience is only demanded of the individuals, not of the whole in their national or associated relation. Besides, that the vanity of this subterfuge has been already shown, it remains for the objector to give a reason satisfactory to his own conscience, and to the claims of common sense, why, instead of "every man," or "every individual," "all nations" are so expressly named. We are forced to the conclusion, that as nations are named, nations are meant.

Again, during his ministry on earth, we have from his own lips this farther and confirmative evidence, John v. 22, 23: "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." Whatever power is proper to God the Father, is here expressly asserted to be delegated to the Son. The judicial character of providential dispensations is derived from the authority delegated to the Son. Had that authority not been delegated, these providential dispensations would have borne the impress of the Father's judgment, or judicial proceedings in the moral government of the world. But now being delegated or committed to the Son, they are to be viewed as bearing the impress of his power, authority, and judgment, in the government of mankind. And in every possible relation in which men are bound, by the light of nature or of revelation, to honour God the Father, they are now bound to honour the Son. And as we have seen that the powers or governments of the nations are the ordinance of God, the conclusion is unavoidable that these powers are placed in subjection to the Lord Christ,—are comprehended in and illustrate that universal power which he claims on earth.

These views perfectly harmonize with innumerable express testimonies of the New Testament. All those passages which attribute to Christ his glorious session at "the right hand of God," on "the right hand of the Majesty on high," on "the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens," of such frequent occurrence, can admit of no other interpretation, than that he possesses and exercises all the dominion and the administration of rule belonging to that throne. In like manner, it is asserted, that "God hath set him at his own right hand, in the heavenly places, far above *all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and made him to be head over all things to the church.*" It forces itself as an inconceivable weakness to interpret such language, or rather do violence to it, in order to support an hypothesis that the government of the Mediator is confined to the church. Such language as we have quoted demonstrates, that though his extensive government and dominion is for the welfare of the church, it reaches far beyond her limits, and claims the subjection and homage of "all principality, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named in this world."

But we forbear the prosecution of the evidence. Yet we cannot

close without a reference in conclusion to the perfect symmetry and propriety of such dominion, with the infinitely glorious person of Christ as God-man. Any authority short of this, would be inapposite to him as the Father's equal in divine glory, and He is fully equal to bear it all, as will be manifested when he shall come in the glory of the angels, in his own glory, and the glory of the Father, to judge the world in righteousness, and summon to his bar the kings, the rulers, and all the nations of the world.

“Be wise now therefore, O ye kings, be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.” Psalm ii.

OVERTURE ON COVENANTING, NOW BEFORE THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD IN IRELAND.

We have received, through the kindness of the Rev. Thomas Houston, a copy of this Overture, and, also, of the Confession of Sins, which is intended to accompany the renovation of the covenants. We have concluded to lay both of these documents, in full, before our readers. The bond, it will be seen, accords very clearly, in most of its leading articles, with the one now in overture before the church in this country. It is much abridged, compared with those which have preceded it. The original covenants are omitted. We feel satisfied they should be retained. However, we can perceive, we think, a decided improvement in this overture, and express a hope that these documents will receive that attention which the magnitude of the subject and their own excellence, demand.—Ed.

CONFESSIOŃ OF SINS.

Having carefully considered the condition, circumstances, and relations of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in these kingdoms, and having observed with sorrow the prevalence of infidelity and immorality, and more especially the alarming and gigantic efforts which the Romish Antichrist is putting forth to spread her dangerous and soul-destroying heresies and to increase her political influence, together with the success that has attended her exertions, we are convinced that, as witnesses for the Lord Jesus Christ and adherents to the Covenanted Reformation, we cannot without guilt be inactive at the present momentous crisis;—the state of public affairs in these lands, and the ominous signs of the times, call for decision, firmness, and activity.

Therefore, WE, ALL, AND EACH OF US, are resolved to testify to the world, for the glory of God and the exoneration of our own consciences, our adherence to the whole of our attained reformation, by renewing the National Covenant, and Solemn League and Covenant in a bond adapted to our present condition and circumstances, as a small minority in the nation. And being persuaded, that it is a necessary preparative for so great and so solemn a duty, that we be duly sensible of, and duly humbled for, our own and the nation's sins:—we do, therefore, with that measure of repentance which God in his mercy may be pleased to grant, desire to confess our own and our fathers' sins, as well as the many grievous sins and transgressions with which these lands are chargeable. And while we thus connect confession of sin with the work of covenant renovation, as a suitable preparation for the duty, we are sustained and encouraged by the consideration, that we are following the footsteps of our worthy progenitors, and the example set us by the reformers in these lands during the periods of the first and second Reformation; but especially that we are following the example of the people of God, recorded in the inspired volume and stamped with the approval of the Most High.

And as the performance of this duty, when gone about in a proper manner, has