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NATIONAL REFORM PRESBYTERIANISM.

By A. T. JONES.

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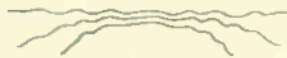
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NATIONAL REFORMED PRESBYTERIANISM.



THE National Reform movement is nothing else than Reformed Presbyterianism in politics. The principles of the so-called National Reform, or Religious Amendment Association, are only the principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. In proof of this we have the following facts:—

First fact. The first step that was ever taken, the first paper that was ever presented, in favor of the National Reform movement, or the organization of that association, was by a Reformed Presbyterian—Mr John Alexander.

Second fact. Until within about the last three years, all the active public workers—the District Secretaries—of the National Reform Association have been Reformed Presbyterians, and all but three of them—Leiper, Weir, and Mills—are now Reformed Presbyterians. Besides these its leading advocates have also been, or are, Reformed Presbyterian preachers, Rev. Jonathan Edwards, D. D., Prof. J. R. W. Sloane, D. D. (now dead), Rev. A. M. Milligan (now

dead), Rev. J. C. K. Milligan, Prof. S. F. Scovel, J. M. Armour, and others. And "District Secretary" Rev. M. A. Gault says he is "proud to belong to a denomination which appropriates \$10,000 of its funds for political agitation each year."

Third fact. Both of the editors of the *Christian Statesman*—Dr. McAllister and T. P. Stevenson—are Reformed Presbyterians. Dr. McAllister was not long since a professor in a Reformed Presbyterian College, and is now pastor of a Reformed Presbyterian Church in Pittsburg; and Mr. Stevenson is pastor of a Reformed Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia.

Fourth fact. Mr. John W. Pritchard, by whom the *Christian Nation* is "conducted," is a Reformed Presbyterian; and for two years or more was the Reform Presbyterian Synod's "Financial Agent for National Reform."

Fifth fact. Both the *Christian Statesman* and the *Christian Nation* are recognized church papers of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, as well as organs of National Reform.

Sixth fact. The *Reformed Presbyterian*, for the month of January, 1870, published to the world an article by Rev. James Wallace, in which are the following statements:—

1. "This important truth of the Lordship of Jesus Christ over the nations, was attained by our reforming and martyred Fathers in Scotland, . . . and has been transmitted down to us sealed with their blood, and is the precious and peculiar inheritance of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and distinguishes her from all

the other evangelical churches in this and other lands. No other church professes to maintain this great principle in its practical applications."

2. "The distinctive principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church are the principles, *and the only principles*, of National Reform."

3. "The proposed amendment of the Federal Constitution is an acknowledgment by the Government that God is the author and source of all authority and power in civil government; that the Lord Jesus Christ is the ruler of nations, and that his revealed will contained in the Bible is the supreme law of nations. Now the association for National Reform proposes to have *these distinctive principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church* adopted into the Constitution of the United States, and *annulling any part of that Constitution* that may be consistent with these principles."

"The adoption of this amendment into the Constitution would be the Government's doing . . . the highest honor to the Lord Jesus Christ, and the greatest benefit *to our church*."

4. "The principles of National Reform are our principles, and its work is our work. *National Reform is simply the practical application of the principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church for the reformation of the nation.*" (The italics are his.)

Seventh fact. These statements are confirmed by Rev. J. R. W. Sloane's account of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, in the "Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia," in which he says:—

"The more special and distinctive principle of this church, the one in which she differs from *all* others, is her practical protest against the *secular* character of the United States Constitution. Holding to the universal headship of Christ, and that civil government is a divine ordinance, and one of the 'all things' put under him as the mediatorial ruler of the universe, and that

to him the allegiance of all nations is due, Reformed Presbyterians refuse close incorporation with any Government which does not in some form recognize these principles, and give them *effective expression in its legislation*. On examination of the United States Constitution, that remarkable document is found to contain no recognition of God as the source of all legitimate civil authority, nor of his law as supreme above all human laws, nor of his Son as governor among the nations. . . . The Constitution does not recognize the Bible, the Christian Sabbath, Christian morality, *Christian qualifications for civil officials*, and gives no legal basis for any Christian feature in the administration of government. . . . They take the deepest interest in that reform movement which has for its object the amendment of the United States Constitution in those particulars in which they consider it defective. Indeed, they feel specially called to aid in its success, at whatever cost or personal sacrifice."

Eighth fact. The Reformed Presbyterian Synod of 1886, in its report on National Reform, said: "It is ours to hold up the ideals of God, *which have originated the National Reform cause*." And the Synod of 1885 said of National Reform, that "this is the tap-root of the Reformed Presbyterian Church."

Therefore the sum of all this matter is—

THE UNDENIABLE FACT that National Reform is nothing under heaven but Reformed Presbyterianism—and that in politics.

The principles of National Reform, then, being "the *distinctive principles* of the Reformed Presbyterian Church," when these "distinctive principles" shall have been adopted into the Constitution of the United States, then what will that be but a union of Church

and State? Can anybody tell? And when they shall have succeeded in "annulling any parts of that Constitution that may be inconsistent with these principles," then what will the United States Constitution be but a Reformed Presbyterian creed? Then how *can* this be anything but a union of Church and State?

In proof of the "non-sectarian character of the National Reform creed" the *Christian Nation* proposes the fact that "the membership of the National Reform Association embraces representatives of almost every evangelical communion. Joseph Cook and Dr. Miner, Dr. Leonard and Bishop Littlejohn, Frances E. Willard and Julia McNair Wright, and thousands of others, . . . find room and welcome on the broad platform of National Reform." But it proves nothing of the kind, because the "broad (?) platform of National Reform" is composed only of the narrow, distinctive principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and when these people of other communions step upon that platform, they in that adopt the distinctive principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and so far make themselves Reformed Presbyterians. And when they of other communions push the National Reform movement to a successful issue, they are only pushing to a successful issue the distinctive principles of Reformed Presbyterianism; they are only fixedly planting in the soil of our national affairs "the tap-root of the Reformed Presbyterian Church."

The logic is perfectly easy. By their own words we have the following syllogism:—

MAJOR: Reformed Presbyterianism "originated the National Reform cause."

MINOR: "The distinctive principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church are the principles, and *the only principles, of National Reform.*"

CONCLUSION: National Reform is *only* Reformed Presbyterianism. And when the National Reform Association asks the nation to recognize National Reform, it asks the nation to recognize Reformed Presbyterianism, and, in their own words, to do "the greatest benefit to *our church.*"

It is, therefore, as clear as a sunbeam that the National Reform movement is an effort to put into the Constitution of the United States, and make practical there, the distinctive principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and that the National Reform party is doing the work of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. And when the United Presbyterian Church, the United Brethren Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Prohibitionists, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, or any other church, party, or union, lends its support to the National Reform party, it is but doing the work of the Reformed Presbyterian Church,—it is simply aiding to make of practical application in the civil affairs of this nation, the distinctive principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church.

In short, to condense the whole subject into a single sentence, the National Reform party is only the cat's paw by which the Reformed Presbyterian—well, the Reformed Presbyterian Church—proposes to draw our national chestnut out of the fire of "political atheism." For be it known that the Reformed Presbyte-

rians refuse to count themselves citizens under our present Constitution. It is a disciplinary offense for a member of that church to vote, or hold office, under our Constitution. So she has created the National Reform party to do the political work, and stir up, or persuade, others to vote for and accomplish the subversion of the Constitution, and then she will take to herself all the glory—and dismal glory it will be. But as she proposes to “gladly join hands” with the Catholic Church to obtain it, she may also allow Rome to share with her the glory. It will well be worthy of both.

And yet, knowing that the principles of National Reform are the peculiar principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church; knowing that the attack upon the secular character of the Constitution is the distinctive principle of that church, “the one in which she differs from *all* others;” knowing that the success of the National Reform movement will be but to make practical, in the affairs of this Government, these principles which are peculiar to the Reformed Presbyterian Church—knowing all this, Dr. McAllister, T. P. Stevenson, W. J. Coleman, M. A. Gault, R. C. Wylie, J. M. Foster, and all their Reformed Presbyterian National Reform associates, in National Convention assembled, will stand before the intelligent people of this nation and “affirm” and “re-affirm” that this movement does not tend, “in the least degree,” toward a union of Church and State! but “will afford the fullest security against a corrupting church establishment.” But suppose the Catholic Church were to openly avow her purpose to have the distinct-

ive principles of the Catholic Church adopted into the Constitution of the United States, annulling any parts of that Constitution that may be inconsistent with these principles, is there anybody in this broad land who would not set that down as a project to unite Church and State in this Government? Not one. But if such a movement on the part of the Catholic Church would threaten a union of Church and State, how is it that this movement of the Reformed Presbyterian Church threatens no such thing? If such a thing by the Catholic Church *would be* a union of Church and State, how is it that the same thing by the Reformed Presbyterian Church would *not* be? To ask these questions is to answer them.

But let us look into this thing a little further. Everybody who is acquainted with the Reformed Presbyterian Church knows that it claims to be the direct and only lineal descendant of the Covenanters, and prides itself upon being the modern representative and the sole conservator of genuine Covenanter principles. In fact, this is plainly shown above in No. 1 of the quotations from Mr. James Wallace and the *Reformed Presbyterian*. Besides this, the title of what was then the *Reformed Presbyterian* is now the *Reformed Presbyterian and Covenanter*. Therefore, by studying the Covenanter principles and their practical application, we may form some idea of what the result would be if the National Reform party should succeed in making "practical application of the principles of the Reformed Presbyterian [Covenanter] Church" in this nation.

The best summary on the subject of these principles that we have seen is an article by "A Presbyterian

Minister" in the New York *Independent* of November 11, 1880, entitled, "Is it Right—a Protest." And the best summary of the application of the principles that perhaps anybody has ever seen is Chapter V of Buckle's "History of Civilization."

The Covenants which embody the principles of the Covenanters, and, perforce, of the National Reformers, are entitled, "The National Covenant or Confession of Faith," and the "Solemn League and Covenant," and are both of Scotch Presbyterian origin. The first of these, "The National Covenant or Confession of Faith," was "first subscribed in 1580; again, by all persons of all ranks in 1581; again, in 1590; again, in the language of its title, 'subscribed by Barons, Nobles, Burgesses, Ministers, and Commons; in 1638, approved by the General Assembly, 1638 and 1639; and subscribed again by persons of all ranks and qualities in the year 1639, by an ordinance of Council upon the supplication of the General Assembly, an act of the General Assembly, certified by an act of Parliament 1640;' and, finally, in compliance with the urgent demands of Scottish Presbyterians, subscribed by Charles II., in 1650 and 1651, as being, along with the 'Solemn League and Covenant,' the one prime and only condition of their restoring him to power."

The following act will show the purpose of the Covenant, and will give some idea of the means by which that purpose was to be accomplished:—

"ASSEMBLY AT EDINBURG, AUG. 30, 1639, SES. 23.

"*Act Ordaining, by Ecclesiastical Authority, the Subscription of the Confession of Faith and Covenant with the Assembly's Declaration.*

“The General Assembly considering the great happiness which may flow from a *full and perfect union of this kirk and kingdom*, by joining of all in one and the same covenant with God, with the king’s Majesty, and amongst ourselves; having by our great oath declared the uprightness and loyalty of our intentions in all our proceedings, and having withal supplicated his Majesty’s High Commissioner, and the lords of his Majesty’s honorable Privy Council, to enjoin, by act of Council, all the lieges in time coming to subscribe the Confession of Faith and Covenant; which, as a testimony of our fidelity to God, and loyalty to our king, we have subscribed: And seeing his Majesty’s High Commissioner, and the lords of his Majesty’s honorable Privy Council, have granted the desire of our supplication, ordaining, by civil authority, all his Majesty’s lieges, in time coming, to subscribe the foresaid Covenant: *that our union may be the more full and perfect*, we, by our act and constitution ecclesiastical, do approve the foresaid Covenant in all the heads and clauses thereof; and ordain of new, under all ecclesiastical censure, That all the masters of universities, colleges, and schools, all scholars at the passing of their degrees, all persons *suspected* of Papistry, *or any other error*; and, finally, all the members of this kirk and kingdom, subscribe the same, with these words prefixed to their subscription, ‘The Article of this Covenant, which was at the first subscription referred to the determination of the General Assembly, being determined; and thereby the five articles of Perth, the government of the kirk by bishops, the civil places and power of kirkmen, upon the reasons and grounds contained in the acts of the General Assembly, declared to be unlawful within this kirk; we subscribe according to the determination foresaid.’ And ordain the Covenant, with this declaration, to be insert in the registers of the Assemblies of this kirk, general, provincial, and presbyterial, *ad perpetuam rei memoriam*. And in all humility supplicate his Majesty’s High Commis-

sioner, and the honorable Estates of Parliament, by their authority, to ratify and enjoin the same, *under all civil pains*; which will tend to the glory of God, preservation of religion, the King's Majesty's honor, and perfect peace of this kirk and kingdom."

What does that act propose?—"A *full and perfect union* of this *kirk* [church] and *kingdom*;" "that our *union* may be *more full and perfect*." The principles of the Covenant and the Covenanters therefore are clearly the principles of a union of Church and State. Now, as the principles of National Reform are the distinctive principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and as the distinctive principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church are the principles of the Covenanters, and as the principles of the Covenanters are the principles of a full and perfect union of Church and State, it stands proved to a demonstration that the National Reform movement aims directly at a union, yes, a full and perfect union, of Church and State. And whenever you read or hear of the National Reform Association, or the National Association for the Religious Amendment of the Constitution of the United States, you may understand that that means the Church and State Association. We could easily continue this indictment through half a dozen different counts, but that is not our object here. This, however, is enough to justify us fully in branding upon the brazen face of this association the inscription—NATIONAL REFORM IS CHURCH AND STATE, AND THAT ALONE.

Among many other like things, that Covenant declares in approval of various acts of the Scottish Parliament, in these words:—

“ . . . do condemn all erroneous books and writs concerning erroneous doctrine against the religion presently professed, or containing superstitious rites and ceremonies papistical, . . . and ordains the home-bringers of them to be punished, . . . and ordains the users of them to be punished for the second fault as idolators.”

The religion “presently professed,” remember, was the Covenanter—the National Reform—religion. And note, all opposition to that religion, in doctrine or in worship, in books or in rites, was to be punished for the second fault as idolatry. What then was the punishment for idolatry? John Knox had already laid down the law on this point, and here it is in his own words and in his own spelling:—

“None provoking the people to idolatrie ought to be exempted from the punishment of death. . . . The whole tribes did in verie dede execute that sharp judgment against the tribe of Benjamin for a lesse offense than for idolatrie. And the same ought to be done wheresoever Christ Jesus and his Evangill [Gospel] is so received in any realme, province or citie that the magistrates and people have solemnly avowed and promised to defend the same, as under King Edward [VI.] of late days was done in England. In such places, I say, it is not only lawful to punish to the death such as labor to subvert the true religion, but the magistrates and people are bound to do so onless they will provoke the wrath of God against themselves.”—*Knox's Works, Laing's Edition, Vol. IV, pp. 500-515; or Lecky's History of Rationalism, Vol. II, pp. 50, 51, note 6.*

For the protection of the religion “presently professed” the covenant further declares of it:—

“Which by manifold acts of Parliament, all within

this realm are bound to profess, to subscribe the articles thereof, to recant all doctrine and errors repugnant to any of the said articles, . . . and all magistrates, sheriffs, etc., . . . are ordained to search, apprehend, and punish all contraveners; . . . that none shall be reputed loyal and faithful subjects to our sovereign Lord or his authority, but be punishable as rebellers and gainstanders of the same, who shall not give their confession and make their profession of the said true religion."

Again the Covenant declares that it is the duty of the magistrates to—

"Maintain the true religion of Jesus Christ." "And that they should be careful to root out of their empire all heretics and enemies to the true worship of God who shall be convicted by the true Kirk of God of the aforesaid crimes."

So much for the "National Covenant or Confession of Faith;" but by this all may understand the meaning of the National Reform declaration that the duty of the nation is "an acknowledgment and exemplification of the duty of national covenanting with" God.

THE SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT.

The "Solemn League and Covenant" is of the same tenor, and came about in this way: In the trouble between the English nation and King Charles I., Presbyterianism arose to power in England, and they called on their Covenanter co-religionists of Scotland to help them out of the trouble. This the Covenanters would do only upon the English complying with the "imperative demand of the Scot's Parliament that the religious system of Scotland should be adopted as that of England." The Cove-

nanters of course proposed the Covenant, but Vane, the chief negotiator for England, "stipulated for a *leagūc*," as well as a covenant, and so was formed the "Solemn League and Covenant."—*Knight's England, chap. 92.* This, as the basis of union and of action, was entered into in 1643, and was to be "the perpetual bond of union" between the kingdoms. In it, it was declared:—

"That we shall, in like manner, endeavor the extirpation of popery, prelacy, superstition, heresy, schism, profaneness, and whatsoever shall be found contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness."

In 1639 there had been passed an "Act Ordaining by Ecclesiastical Authority the Subscription of the Confession of Faith and Covenant with the Assembly's Declaration," in which this is found:—

"And having, withal, supplicated His Majesty's High Commissioner and the lords of His Majesty's honorable Privy Council to *enjoin* by act of Council all the lieges in time coming to subscribe to the Confession of Faith and Covenant."

The way in which it was to be enjoined, was this:—

"And in all humility supplicate His Majesty's High Commissioner and the honorable Estates of Parliament by their authority to ratify and enjoin the same, *under all civil pains.*"

In compliance with these humble supplications the Edinburg Parliament, in June, 1640, passed an act to—

"Ordain and command the said Confession and Covenant to be subscribed by all His Majesty's subjects, of what rank and quality soever, *under all civil pains.*"

"All civil pains" includes everything that a Government can inflict, even to death itself. These were ordinances of the Scotch Parliament, but the English Parliament during the Covenanter *régime* was not one whit behind.

Under the "Solemn League and Covenant," the Presbyterian Parliament of England dealt "the fiercest blow at religious freedom which it had ever received."

"An 'Ordinance for the Suppression of Blasphemies and Heresies,' which Vane and Cromwell had long held at bay, was passed by triumphant majorities. Any man, ran this terrible statute, denying the doctrine of the Trinity or of the Divinity of Christ, or that the books of Scripture are the 'word of God,' or the resurrection of the body, or a future day of Judgment, and refusing on trial to abjure his heresy, 'shall suffer the pain of death.' Any man declaring (among a long list of other errors) 'that man by nature hath free will to turn to God,' that there is a purgatory, that images are lawful, that infant baptism is unlawful; anyone denying the obligation of observing the Lord's day, or asserting 'that the church government by presbytery is antichristian or unlawful,' shall, on refusal to renounce his errors, 'be commanded to prison.'"—*Green's Larger History of England, book VII, chap. 10, par. 11.*

The execution of Charles I. severed the League, and Charles II. was immediately proclaimed in Scotland, with the proviso, however, that "before being admitted to the exercise of his royal power, he shall give satisfaction to this kingdom in the things that concern the security of religion according to the National Covenant and the Solemn League and Covenant." This was made known to Charles in Holland, but he refused to accede to it. The next year, however,

1650, he sailed to Scotland, and before landing he accepted the terms, consented to subscribe to the Covenants, and receive the test. But all the while he was devising schemes for the subversion of the Covenants and the whole Covenanter system, of which the whole history of his reign, as well as of that of his brother, James II., is but a dreadful illustration. When James II. had deprived himself of all allegiance of his subjects, and William and Mary came to the English and Scotch thrones in his stead, Presbyterianism was finally established as the religion of Scotland. But it was Presbyterianism *without the enforcement of the Covenants*, for honest William declared in memorable words that "so long as he reigned there should be no persecution for conscience' sake." Said he:—

"We never could be of that mind that violence was suited to the advancing of true religion, nor do we intend that our authority shall ever be a tool to the irregular passions of any party."—*Green's England, Book VIII, chap. 3, par. 36.*

And when William and Mary were inaugurated as sovereigns of Scotland, when it came to taking the oath of office, William refused to swear to the persecuting part of it.

"A splendid circle of English nobles and statesmen stood round the throne; but the sword of State was committed to a Scotch lord; and the oath of office was administered after the Scotch fashion. Argyle recited the words slowly. The royal pair, holding up their hands towards Heaven, repeated after him till they came to the last clause. There William paused. That clause contained a promise that he would root out all heretics and all enemies of the true worship of

God; and it was notorious that, in the opinion of many Scotchmen, not only all Roman Catholics, but all Protestant Episcopalians, all Independents, Baptists, and Quakers, all Lutherans, nay, all British Presbyterians who did not hold themselves bound by the Solemn League and Covenant, were enemies of the true worship of God. The king had apprised the commissioners that he could not take this part of the oath without a distinct and public explanation; and they had been authorized by the convention to give such an explanation as would satisfy him. 'I will not,' he now said, 'lay myself under any obligation to be a persecutor.' 'Neither the words of this oath,' said one of the commissioners, 'nor the laws of Scotland, lay any such obligation on Your Majesty.' 'In that sense, then, I swear,' said William; 'and I desire you all, my lords and gentlemen, to witness that I do so.'—*Macaulay's England, chap. 13, par. 63.*

As the acts of settlement adopted under William, and the oaths taken by him, not only failed to adopt and enforce the Covenants, but were in express contradiction to the persecuting clauses of them, the Covenanters "regarded this as a compromise with Satan," and "accordingly occupied an attitude of firm and decided protest against the principles avowed by William, and acted on by the church," that is, by the great body of the Scottish Church, which accepted the principles of William and the acts of settlement. "They maintained that there had been a decided departure on the part of both" the church and the sovereign, from the principles and the obligations of the Covenant, and, says Macaulay, many of them "would rather have been fired upon by musketeers, or tied to stakes within low-water mark, than have

uttered a prayer that God would bless William and Mary."—*Id.*, *par.* 64.

The Covenanters then standing as dissenters from the Government that would not adopt the persecuting part of the Covenants, and as the sole defenders of the ultra doctrines of the Covenants, adopted the name of "Reformed Presbyterians." Thus the Covenanters are the Reformed Presbyterians, and Reformed Presbyterianism is National Reform.

As the principles of the Covenants and the Covenanters, which we have here set forth, are the "distinctive principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church," and for the spread of which that church is set; and as "National Reform is simply the practical application" of these principles "for the reformation of the nation," it is important that we understand what the "practical application" of these principles amounts to. It is important that we know how these principles are applied in the "reformation" of a nation. Material for the illustration of this point is abundant. We have space for only a small portion, yet enough to give an idea of what may be expected if the power to apply these principles practically should fall into the hands of the National Reform conservators of them.

Of the rule of the Covenanter—the National Reform—preachers in Scotland, the *Encyclopedia Britannica* says:—

"For the spiritual tyranny which they introduced the reader should refer to Mr. Buckle's famous chapter; or, if he thinks those statements to be partial or exaggerated, to original records, such as those of the Presbyteries of St. Andrews and Cupar. The arro-

gance of the ministers' pretensions and the readiness with which these pretensions were granted, the appalling conceptions of the Deity which were inculcated, and the absence of all contrary expression of opinion, the intrusions on the domain of the magistrate, the vexatious interference in every detail of family and commercial life, and the patience with which it was borne, are to an English reader alike amazing. 'We acknowledge,' said they, 'that according to the latitude of the word of God (which is our theme) we are allowed to treat in an ecclesiastical way of greatest and smallest, from the king's throne that should be established in righteousness, to the merchant's balance that should be used in faithfulness.' The liberality of the interpretation given to this can only be judged of after minute reading."—*Article Presbyterianism*.

Mr. Buckle, to whom we are here referred, has certainly given this subject the "minute reading" which is said to be requisite. And we are certain that no one can justly charge him with partiality or exaggeration, because for every statement that he makes, he gives direct quotations and the clearest references in proof even to hundreds. The edition from which we quote is Appleton's, of 1885. No one who is acquainted with National Reform doctrines and literature can read this and fail to see that the National Reformers are the literal descendants of the Covenanters, or that the principles of the Covenanters of the seventeenth century are the principles that the National Reformers are trying to revive in the nineteenth, and that too in free America.

The following quotations are all from Chapter V of "Buckle's History of Civilization." The references to notes, in brackets, are from Buckle's foot-notes in proof of statements in his texts. We quote:—

"According to the Presbyterian polity, which reached its height in the seventeenth century, the clergyman of the parish selected a certain number of laymen on whom he could depend, and who, under the name of elders, were his councillors, or rather the ministers of his authority. They, when assembled together, formed what was called the Kirk-Session, and this little court, which enforced the decisions uttered in the pulpit, was so supported by the superstitious reverence of the people, that it was far more powerful than any civil tribunal. By its aid, the minister became supreme. For, whoever presumed to disobey him was excommunicated, was deprived of his property, and was believed to have incurred the penalty of eternal perdition."

"The clergy interfered with every man's private concerns, ordered how he should govern his family, and often took upon themselves the personal control of his household. [Clarendon, under the year 1640, emphatically says, "The preacher reprehended the husband, governed the wife, chastised the children, and insulted over the servants, in the houses of the greatest men."—*Note 26.*] Their minions, the elders, were everywhere; for each parish was divided into several quarters, and to each quarter one of these officials was allotted, in order that he might take special notice of what was done in his own district. Besides this, spies were appointed, so that nothing could escape their supervision. Not only the streets, but even private houses, were searched, and ransacked, to see if anyone was absent from church while the minister was preaching. [In 1652, the Kirk-Session of Glasgow "brot boyes and servants before them, for breaking the Sabbath and other faults. They had clandestine censors, and gave money to some for this end." And by the Kirk-Session, Presbytery, and Synod of Aberdeen, it was "thocht expedient that ane baillie with tua of the Session pas throw the towne everie Sabbath-day, and nott [note] sic as they find

absent fra the sermones ather afoir or efter none [either before or after noon]; and for that effect that thoy pas and *sersche sic houss as they think maist meit*, and pas athort the streittis." "Ganging throw the towne on the ordinar preiching days in the weik, als weill as on the Sabbath-day, to cause the people to resort to the sermones." "The Session allous the searchers to go into houses and apprehend absents from the Kirk."—*Notes 28, 29.*]

"To him [the minister], all must listen, and him all must obey. Without the consent of his tribunal, no person might engage himself either as a domestic servant, or as a field laborer. If anyone incurred the displeasure of the clergy, they did not scruple to summon his servants and force them to state whatever they knew respecting him, and whatever they had seen done in his house. [In 1652, Sir Alexander Irvine indignantly writes, that the Presbytery of Aberdeen, "when they had tried many wayes, bot in vaine, to mak probable this their vaine imaginatione, they, at lenthe, when all other meanes failed thame, by ane unparalleled barbaritie, enforced my serwandis to reweall upon oathe what they sawe, herd, or knewe done within my house, beyond which no Turkische inquisitione could pase."—*Note 31*]. To speak disrespectfully of a preacher was a grievous offense; to differ from him was a heresy;* even to pass him in the streets without saluting him, was punished as a crime. His very name was regarded as sacred, and not to be taken in vain. And that it might be properly protected, and held in due honor, an Assembly of the Church, in 1642, forbade it to be used in any public paper unless the consent of the holy man had been previously obtained."

"The arbitrary and irresponsible tribunals, which now sprung up all over Scotland, united the executive

*Now it is "atheism." See speech of Rev. Jonathan Edwards in the New York National Reform Convention, 1873.

authority with the legislative, and exercised both functions at the same time. Declaring that certain acts ought not to be committed, they took the law into their own hands, and punished those who had committed them. According to the principles of this new jurisprudence, of which the clergy were the authors, it became a sin for any Scotchman to travel in a Catholic country. It was a sin for any Scotch inn-keeper to admit a Catholic into his inn. It was a sin for any Scotch town to hold a market either on Saturday or on Monday, because both days were near Sunday. It was a sin for a Scotchwoman to wait at a tavern; it was a sin for her to live alone; it was also a sin for her to live with unmarried sisters. It was a sin to go from one town to another on Sunday, however pressing the business might be. It was a sin to visit your friend on Sunday. . . . On that day horse-exercise was sinful; so was walking in the fields, or in the meadows, or in the streets, or enjoying the fine weather by sitting at the door of your own house. To go to sleep on Sunday, before the duties of the day were over, was also sinful, and deserved church censure. [The records of the Kirk-Session of Aberdeen, in 1656, have this entry: "Cite Issobell Balfort, servand to William Gordone, tailyeor, beeing found sleeping at the Loch side on the Lord's day in tyme of sermon."—*Note 186*]."

The prayers were nearly two hours long; and the regular sermons, on an average, about three and a half hours in length, and yet it was a great sin for even the children to feel tired of them.

"Halyburton, addressing the young people of his congregation, says: 'Have not you been glad when the Lord's day was over, or at least, *when the preaching was done* that ye might get your liberty? Has it not been a burden to you, to sit so long in the church? Well, *this is a great sin.*'"—*Note 186*.

These things appear bad enough, but they are mere trifles when compared with the enormities of their intolerance of heresy or "pretended liberty of conscience."

[“Rutherford’s Free Disputation against Pretended Liberty of Conscience” says: “We hold that toleration of all religions is not farre from blasphemy.” “If wolves be permitted to teach what is right in their own erroneous conscience, and there be no ‘Magistrate to put them to shame,’ Judges 18 : 7, and no King to punish them, then godliness and all that concernes the first Table of the Law must be marred.” “Wilde and atheisticall liberty of conscience.”—*Notes* 199, 200.]

“They taught that it was a sin to tolerate his [the heretic’s] notions at all, and that the proper course was to visit him with sharp and immediate punishment. Going yet further, they broke the domestic ties, and set parents against their offspring. They taught the father to smite the unbelieving child and to slay his own boy sooner than to allow him to propagate error. [“A third benefit (which is a branch of the former), is zeal in the godly against false teachers, who shall be so tender of the truth and glory of God and the safety of the church (all which are endangered by error), that it shall overcome natural affection in them; so that parents shall not *spare their own children*, being seducers, but shall either by an heroick act (such as was in Phinehas, Num. 25 : 8), *themselves judge him worthy to die, and give sentence and execute it*, or cause him to be punished, by bringing him to the Magistrate. . . . The toleration of a false religion in doctrine or worship, and the exemption of the erroneous from civil punishment, is no more lawful under the New Testament than it was under the Old.”—*Hutcheson’s Exposition on the Minor Prophets, the Prophets, the Prophecic of Zechariah*—*Note* 201.]

“As if this were not enough, they tried to extirpate

another affection, even more sacred and more devoted still. They laid their rude and merciless hands on the holiest passion of which our nature is capable, the love of a mother for her son. Into that sanctuary, they dared to intrude; into that they thrust their gaunt and ungente forms. If a mother held opinions of which they disapproved they did not scruple to invade her household, take away her children, and forbid her to hold communication with them. Or if, perchance, her son had incurred their displeasure, they were not satisfied with forcible separation, but they labored to corrupt her heart, and harden it against her child, so that she might be privy to the act. In one of these cases mentioned in the records of the church of Glasgow, the Kirk-Session of that town summoned before them a woman, merely because she had received into her own house her own son, after the clergy had excommunicated him. So effectually did they work upon her mind, that they induced her to promise, not only that she would shut her door against the child, but that she would aid in bringing him to punishment. She had sinned in loving him; she had sinned, even, in giving him shelter; but, says the record, 'she promised not to do it again, and to tell the magistrates when he comes next to her.'

"She promised not to do it again. She promised to forget him, whom she had borne of her womb and suckled at her breast. She promised to forget her boy, who had oftentimes crept to her knees, and had slept in her bosom, and whose tender frame she had watched over and nursed. . . . To hear of such things is enough to make one's blood surge again, and raise a tempest in our inmost nature. But to have seen them, to have lived in the midst of them, and yet not to have rebelled against them, is to us utterly inconceivable, and proves in how complete a thralldom the Scotch were held, and how thoroughly their minds, as well as their bodies, were enslaved.

"What more need I say? What further evidence

need I bring to elucidate the real character of one of the most detestable tyrannies ever seen on the earth? When the Scotch Kirk was at the height of its power, we may search history in vain for any institution which can compete with it, except the Spanish Inquisition. Between these two there is a close and intimate analogy. Both were intolerant, both were cruel, both made war upon the finest parts of human nature, and both destroyed every vestige of religious freedom."

We do not set forth these things for the purpose of condemning the ancient Covenanters before all other people. It is true they were fearfully intolerant, but they were no more so than any other body of religionists who ever did, or who ever shall, grasp for civil power and get it. We write and reproduce these things simply to show to the American people what National Reform really is, and what the practical application of National Reform principles will be in the United States so surely as its advocates shall secure their coveted "full and perfect union of *this* Kirk and Kingdom." We tell these things that the American people may know exactly what it is that the "evangelical churches," the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Third-party Prohibitionists, and others are doing when they lend their influence, and exert their energies, to help forward the work of National Reform. For, as these are the very principles which this Reformed Presbyterian National Reform Association declares its purpose to make of "practical application" "for the reformation" of this nation, all people may rest perfectly assured that the practical application will be made as surely as these men ever secure a shadow of power or authority to make it.

This all may rest assured of, because persecution for conscience' sake is the essential quality, the very reason of existence, of the National Reform Association. For, it was because William III. declared that "so long as he reigned there should be no persecution for conscience' sake;" because he would not allow his "authority to be made a tool of the irregular passions of any party;" because in taking his kingly oath as sovereign of Scotland he would not lay himself "under any obligation to be a persecutor;"—it was because of these things that the rigid Covenanters "occupied an attitude of firm and decided protest against the principles avowed by William. So "protesting," in their descent, they became Reformed Presbyterians; and because the Constitution of the United States embodies the very principles avowed by William,—because our National Constitution will not sanction "persecution for conscience' sake; because that Constitution will not allow that its "authority shall ever be a tool to the irregular passions of any party;" because that Constitution will not lay any of its officers under any obligation to be a persecutor—*that* is why the "special and distinctive principles" of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, the one in which she differs from all others, is her *practical protest* against the secular character of the United States Constitution." At the first she protested against the principles avowed by William; she now protests against the same principles as embodied in the United States Constitution. For this cause at the first she refused close incorporation with the Government of William and Mary; for this cause now she refuses "close incorporation with"

the United States Government. *These* are the "distinctive principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church;" and these "are the principles, and the only principles, of National Reform." Therefore, as Reformed Presbyterianism "originated the National Reform cause," and as "National Reform is simply the practical application of the distinctive principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church for the reformation of the nation;" it stands proved to a demonstration that *the essential quality, the very reason of existence*, of the National Reform cause is PERSECUTION FOR 'CONSCIENCE' SAKE.

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