

in omnibus suis actibus et consultis respiciant et agnoscant Dominum Jesum Christum per quem reges regnant et legum conditores justa decernunt, denique operam consiliumque ut externa salutis mercedia, toto sub imperio et auctoritate sua, populo suppetant. Ecclesiam vero Christi debere arbitramur, salvo semper suo proprio jure suæque libertate, quæcumque operæ gratiumve fauricem obtulerit ei civitas, accipere; novæque, has facultates religiosissime in bonum civium conferre, cum præsens, tum præsertim æternum. Dum autem obnix hanc in modum semper asserere conamur, deberi Christo ab omnibus civitatibus fidem et obedientiam, oportere etiam corpus unumquodque politicum laud secus ac singulos homines, stare a paribus ejus, et causam nomenque honore prosequi; contra, tamen, persuasum habemus, eadem nobis auctoritate præcipi et injungi, ut imperium omne arrogatum, sive a potestate civili sive ab ecclesiastica, in consuetudinem hominum, constanter et perpetuo improbemus ac repulsemus. Siquando civitas aliqua partem aliquam veræ Christi Ecclesiæ suum in patrocinium acceperit, secum consociaverit, opibus auxilioque adjuverit, libertatem quidem illorum qui ab ea dissident aut hoc pacto imminui aut in periculum adduci, adeo non putamus, ut talem contra societatem si modo justo fundamine nitatur hujus libertatis pulcherrimum esse munimentum censamus, percam enim optime jura consuetudine salva omnibus præsertim, concessa omnibus licentia, securitate pari, sub cuius fœdusque sua suo cuique more, Deum colendi. Ignari sanctissime adversamur, et ex animo repugnamus, — sicut et Patres nostri, maximo sibi vitæ discrimine sapientissime sunt adversati — vexationi et insectationi cujusque generis religionis causa — omnibus sive conatibus sive consiliis quæ eos spectant, ut vim aut penas aut supplicia hominibus ob fidem inferant, aut alio quovis modo sententias de veritate Dei coerceant aut constringant. Neque profecto levem nobis dolorem adferret, si forte credere cogeremur, ullam hisce nostris diebus ecclesiam Christi — præsertim quæ quondam ipsa luctata esset impigre et certasset contra servitum illorum qui jugo servitutis inique Dei urere Ecclesiam voluere, quæque gravissimo fœvisset multos, suis quosque terris exules, in quos nequitia tyrannidis rabiem intendisset — vel iudicio comprobasse suo, vel etiam tacite passam fuisse, premi gravitus et acerbis molestis ullos qui agnum sequerentur Dei, aut in ullos sæviri, qui colerent verum unicum Deum, prædicarentque evangelium Domini, qui sola est peccatorum spes ac salus.

Profitemur vobis, fratres charissimi, multum deesse nobis ut notitiam habeamus certam aut exploratam de multis quæ jam nunc a vobis agantur, quam tamen nobis suppliciter vehementer cupimus, quo majore animi studio, et alacritate solitudine, res vestras, cordibus in oculis, ad gratiæ solum adferamus. Nullam san potestatem de rebus vestris iudicium ferendi, nullam vobis jura, adrogamus. Animo tantummodo, et a vobis fide quæque, sententias illas quæ nostra mente mancipitas repositis vobis proferre volumus, qui sumus ipsi quæque socii vobiscum Dei illius viventis ecclesia.

Cujus nunc gratiæ vos ex animo commendamus; simul oramus ut per omnia quæ jam vos premant discrimina et angustias, ope solius sapientis Dei ad consilia perluamini, quibus ipse faustum exitum concedat, adeo ut per ea conceleretur sui nominis gloria, stabiliret etiam securitas, libertas, unitas pura denique felicitas — scilicet illius quam Filius Unigenitus suo sanguine redemit.

Vestras Dignitati et Fraternitati addictissimi
Pastores et Seniores Nationalis Synodi Scotticæ,
Nostro omnium nomine ac mandato,
W. Mear, Moderator.

[TRANSLATION.]

VERY REVEREND AND DEAR BRETHREN IN THE LORD,

In the times of the holy Apostles, the churches of Christ, in different countries of the world, were accustomed to comfort refresh, and edify one another, as well by mutual greetings and exhortations, as by friendly and brotherly counsel and communion, on matters affecting the common cause of their Lord and Saviour. Nor in later days has that practice gone out of use. And especially after the memorable and glorious era in which the worship of God and the institutions of our common religion were so auspiciously and happily reformed and restored, it tended much to knit together, in the bonds of a pure faith and holy love, those every where who were called out of the world to bear fearless testimony against most cruel tyranny and foul error. We call to memory the friendly intercourse which was of old between your fathers and ours, when it was our part to render a return of gratitude on account of benefits both important and most seasonable, conferred upon us by your country and your Church, in very troublous times. The vigorous aid which you gave towards carrying forward the work of reformation in these lands, to which we were once and again pledged by solemn covenant, by supplying our temporal need and ministering to the revival of our souls; your zeal, constancy, and faithfulness in asserting the sacred truth of Jesus, and warning all men to beware of the impious devices of those who shamelessly belied his name; your kind and hospitable entertainment of many of the servants of our God, who found a refuge from oppression and cruelty at home, in your asylum of freedom and of peace; these and many other such tokens of your good disposition towards us in times past, greatly urge us to the renewal and confirmation of our old and close alliance of mutual brotherhood. Nor are there wanting reasons now, in our present relations with one another, such as should make us desirous of cultivating your fellowship. The ministers of our Scottish Church, whose seats and the fields of whose assiduous labour are among you, constitute a band of friendship of the most intimate kind, inasmuch as our desire and yours also equally must be, that in all things they may be fellow-workers with you, in advancing the cause of the kingdom of God, and the eternal salvation of the