

3rd. Were the persecuted sons of the Covenant justifiable in offering armed resistance to the civil power? That they did so on several occasions, as at Drumlog, Bothwell, and Airmoss, is historic fact. Were they justifiable in offering that resistance? Let that question be answered by asking another—Are a people justified in taking up arms at any time for the defence of their *civil* rights? That they may do so, is the voice of scripture, of reason, of history. If men may contend for their *civil* rights, who then will say that they may not contend for their *religious* rights? If, for their *properties*, who will say that they may not contend for their *religion*? Is not one's religion infinitely more precious to him than all other interests combined? It was when those rights of conscience, which no man can take from us, were mercilessly invaded—it was when to petition was illegal, and to remonstrate was treason—it was when the fountains of justice were all polluted—when an infuriated soldiery were scouring the country converting their beloved land into a hunting field, entering their houses, destroying their property, insulting their wives and their children—it was when all milder means of redress had proved abortive—it was then that the down-trodden sons of the covenant girded on the sword, in defence of their homes, their wives and children, their loved pastors, and especially their consciences. And who will blame them except the minions of the despot and the tyrant? If the English nobles were justifiable in girding on their good broad-swords on the plains of Runnemede, that they might wring from king John that Magna Charta, which is the bulwark of British liberty to this day—if the American Colonies were justifiable in striking for their rights and liberties in the days of Warren and Washington—if the Neapolitans were justifiable, a few years ago, in resisting the oppression of their tyrant king, and even expelling him from the throne—then who will have the hardihood to say, that our persecuted Presbyterian ancestors two hundred years ago were not justifiable in resisting, even unto blood, the worst despotism that ever trampled on the rights and liberties and consciences of any people?

4th. Were Cameron, Cargill, and Renwick, and their followers justifiable in ultimately renouncing the authority of the king? That they did so, is a fact. That they did so on rational and scriptural grounds, is the question at issue. It will serve to throw some light on that question, if it be considered that in every constitutional monarchy there is a contract between the king and the people. As is the case in every contract, there is a pledge on the one side, and a conditional pledge on the other. There is the coronation oath on the one side, and there is the oath of allegiance on the other. In that coronation oath, the monarch swears that he or she will govern according to certain fixed principles, designated the Constitution, and in the oath of allegiance, the people swear that they will bear true allegiance to him or her *in thus governing*. Thus the contract is mutual. The ruler is as much under a pledge as the subject. It will appear very evident, then, that if there be a failure on the one side, there is a corresponding freedom from obligation on the other. If the king violate his pledge, the people are *ipso facto* freed from theirs. If he wantonly and persistently tramples upon his coronation oath, the people are no longer bound by their oath of allegiance. They may cast off his authority.

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