

and the solemn engagement to all the duties contained therein," or if he cannot take time to look through all these, let him consider the following statute extracted from the National Covenant: "That all kings and princes at their coronation and reception of their princely authority, shall make their faithful promise by their solemn oath, in the presence of the eternal God, that enduring the whole time of their lives, they shall serve the same eternal God to the uttermost of their power, according as He hath required in His most holy word, contained in the Old and New Testament; and according to the same word shall maintain the true religion of Christ Jesus, the preaching of His holy word, the due and right ministration of the Sacraments now received and preached within this realm, and shall abolish and gainstand all false religion contrary to the same, and shall rule the people committed to their charge, according to the will and command of God revealed in his foresaid word, and according to the laudable laws and constitutions received in this realm, no-wise repugnant to the said will of the eternal God; and shall procure to the uttermost of their power, to the Kirk of God, and whole Christian people, true and perfect peace, in all time coming; and that they shall 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 foresaid crimes."

The Scottish Covenanters and the English Puritans were ardent in the cultivation of wisdom, and eager to transmit it untainted to their posterity. They were great in their day, many of them very great; and we of this age are indebted to them under God, for numerous and inestimable blessings. But certainly it would have been better, had they made less of statesmen and kept closer to the word of the Lord. If they had studied the constitution of the Christian church in the New Testament more accurately, they could scarcely have committed themselves to a scheme of church-policy, which the Redeemer taught not to His apostles, and which, as might have been anticipated, hard experience has proved to be impracticable. They appear to have felt in some measure, as if when Popes and Emperors were no longer to be authorized in the temple of God, there was a vacancy that ought to be filled by some visible presence potent enough to be the fountain of unity and order, the source of defence and support. It was not unnatural in them to feel so, in front of the Pope and his allies. But more grace would have led them to adopt the policy of the apostles, and, which their posterity are learning to do now, look directly to the King Invisible. And what did they get by trusting so much to an arm of flesh for protection, for property and power? Did it not turn them off naked and bare and persecute them most unmercifully in the interest first of prelacy, then of popery? And what good has come out of state patronage to the church, since the glorious revolution of 1688? Let the corrupted and disrupted condition of the church in the three kingdoms of our