The Solemn Acknowledgement

A Solemn ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF PUBLICK SINS And breaches of the COVENANT.

AND

A Solemn ENGAGEMENT to all the DUTIES contained therein, namely those, which do in a more speciall way relate unto the Dangers of these Times.

WITH

Two Acts of the COMMISSION of the GENERAL ASSEMBLY of the sixth of October, for renewing the Solemn League and COVENANT,

And for debarring of persons accessory to the late unlawfull Engagement, from renewing the COVENANT, receiving the Communion, and from exercise of Ecclesiastick Office, With their advice to Presbyteries for celebrating the Communion.

Together also with,

An Act of the Committee of Estates of the fourteenth of October for renewing the League and COVENANT.

EDINBURGH, Printed by Evan Tyler, Printer to the Kings most Excellent Majesty, 1648.

I - Preamble

A Solemn Acknowledgement of publick Sins and Breaches of the Covenant: And a solemn Engagement to all the Duties contained therein, namely those which do in a more speciall way relate unto the dangers of these times.

WEE Noblemen, Barons, Gentlemen, Burgesses, Ministers of the Gospel, and Commons of all sorts within this Kingdom, by the good hand of GOD upon us, taking in serious consideration the many sad aflictions and deep distresses wherewith we have been exercised for a long time past, and that the Land after it hath been sore wasted with the Sword and the Pestilence, and threatened with Famine, and that shame and contempt hath been poured out from the Lord against many thousands of

our Nation who did in a sinfull way make War upon the Kingdom of England, contrary to the Testimony of his Servants and desires of his People, and that the remnants of that Army returning to this Land have spoiled and oppressed many of our Brethren, and that the Malignant party is still numerous, and retaining their former principles wait for an opportunity to raise a new and dangerous War, not onely unto the rending of the bowels of this Kingdom, but unto the dividing us from England, and overturning of the work of God in all the three Kingdoms: And considering also that a cloud of calamities doth stil hang over our heads and threaten us with sad things to come, We cannot but look upon these things as from the Lord who is righteous in all his ways feeding us with the bread of tears, and making us to drink the waters of affliction untill we be taught to know how evil and bitter a thing it is to depart away from him, by breaking the Oath and Covenant which we have made with him, and that we may be humbled before him by confessing our sinne, and forsaking the evil of our way.

Therefore being pressed with so great necessities and straits, and warranted by the word of God, and having the example of Gods people of old, who in the time of their troubles, and when they were to seek delivery and a right way for themselves, that the Lord might be with them to prosper them, did humble themselves before him, and make a free and particular confession of the sins of their Princes, their Rulers, their Captains, their Priests and their people, and did ingage themselves to do no more so, but to reform their wayes and be stedfast in his Covenant; And remembering the practise of our predecessours in the year 1596. Wherein the General Assembly, and all the Kirk Judicatories, with the concurrence of many of the Nobility, Gentry and Burgesses, did with many tears acknowledge before God the breach of the Nationall Covenant, and ingaged themselves to a Reformation, even as our predecessors and theirs had before done in the Generall Assembly and convention of Estates in the year 1567. And perceiving that this duty, when gone about out of conscience and in sincerity, hath always been attended with a reviving out of troubles, and with a blessing and successe from Heaven; We do humbly and sincerely as in his sight, who is the searcher of hearts, acknowledge the many sins and great transgressions of the Land; We have done wickedly our Kings, our Princes, our Nobles, our Judges, our Officers, our Teachers, and our People: Albeit the Lord hath long and clearly spoken unto us we have not hearkened to his voice, Albeit he hath followed us with tender mercies, we have not been allured to wait upon him and walk in his way; and though he hath stricken us, yet we have not grieved: Nay though he hath consumed us, we have refused to receive correction; We have not remembred to render unto the Lord according to his goodnes and according to our own vows and promises, but have gone away backward by a continued course of backsliding, and have broken all the articles of that Solemn League and Covenant which we swore before God, Angels and men.

II - The Acknowledgement of Sins

Albeit there be in the land many of all ranks, who be for a Testimony unto the Truth, and for a name of joy and praise unto the Lord by living godly, studying to keep their garments pure, and being stedfast in the Covenant and cause of God; Yet we have reason to acknowledge that most of us have not endeavoured with that reality sincerity and constancy, that did become us, to preserve the work of Reformation in the Kirk of Scotland; Many have satisfied themselves with the purity of the Ordinances neglecting the power thereof; yea, some have turned aside to crooked wayes destructive to both. The prophane, loose and insolent carriage of many in our Armies, who went to the Assistance of our BRETHREN in ENGLAND, And the tamperings and unstrait dealing of some of our Commissioners and others of our Nation in London, the Isle of Wight and other places of that Kingdom have proved great lets to the work of Reformation, and setling of Kirk Government there, whereby Errour and Schism in that Land have been encreased, and Sectaries hardened in their way, We have been so far from endeavouring the extirpation of Prophanesse, and what is contrary to the power of godlinesse, that prophanity hath been much winked at and Prophane persons much countenanced and many times imployed untill iniquity and ungodlinesse hath gone over the face of the land as a flood; Nay, sufficient care hath not been had to separate betwixt the precious and the vile, by debarring from the Sacrament all ignorant and scandalous persons according to the Ordinances of this Kirk.

Neither have the Priviledges of the Parliaments and Liberties of the Subject been duly tendered; But some amongst our selves have labored to put into the hands of our King an arbitrary & unlimited power destructive to both, And many of us have bin accessory of late to those means & ways, whereby the freedom and priviledges of Parliaments have been encroached upon and the Subjects oppressed in their Consciences, persons and Estates: Neither hath it been our care to avoid these things which might harden the King in his evil way; But upon the contrary he hath not onely been permitted, but many of us have been instrumentall to make him exercise his power in many things tending to the prejudice of Religion and of the Covenant, and of the Peace and safety of these Kingdoms; Which is so farre from the right way of preserving his Majesties Person and Authority, that it cannot but provoke the Lord against him unto the hazard of both, Nay under a pretence of relieving and doing for the King whilst he refuses to do what was necessary for the House of God, some have ranversed and violated most of all the Articles of the Covenant.

Our own consciences within, and Gods judgements upon us without do convince us of the manifold wilfull renewed breaches of that Article which concerneth the discovery and punishment of Malignants, whose crimes have not onely been connived at but dispensed with and pardoned, and themselves received unto intimate fellowship with our selves, and entrusted with our Counsells, admitted unto our Parliaments, and put in places of Power and Authority for managing the publick affairs of the Kingdome, Whereby in Gods justice they got at last into their hands the whole power and strength of the Kingdom, both in Iudicatories and Armies, And did imploy the same unto the enacting and prosecuting an unlawfull Engagement in War against the Kingdom of England, Notwithstanding of the dissent of many

considerable Members of Parliament, who had given constant proof of their integrity in the Cause from the beginning, of many faithfull testimonies and free warnings of the servants of God, of the Supplications of many Synods, Presbyteries and Shires, and of the Declarations of the Generall Assembly and their Commissioners to the contrary: Which ingagement as it hath been the cause of much sin, so also of much misery and calamity unto this Land, and holds forth to us the grievousnesse of our sin of complying with Malignants in the greatnesse of our judgement, that we may be taught never to split again upon the same Rock, upon which the Lord hath set so remarkable a Beacon. And after all that is come to passe unto us because of this our trespasse, and after that grace hath been shewed unto us from the Lord our God by breaking these mens yoke from off our necks, and putting us again into a capacity to act for the good of Religion, our own safety, and the Peace and safety of this Kingdom, should we again break his Commandment and Covenant by joyning once more with the people of these abominations, and taking into our bosome those Serpents which had formerly stung us almost unto death: This as it would argue great madnesse and folly upon our part, So no doubt, if it be not avoided, will provoke the Lord against us to consume us untill there be no remnant nor escaping in the Land.

And albeit the Peace and Union betwixt the Kingdoms be a great blessing of God unto both and a Bond which we are obliged to preserve unviolated, And to endeavour that justice may be done upon the opposers thereof; Yet some in this Land, who have come under the Bond of the Covenant, have made it their great study how to dissolve this Union, and few or no endeavours have been used by any of us for punishing of such.

We have suffered many of our Brethren in severall parts of the Land to be oppressed of the common Enemy without compassion or relief; There hath been great murmuring and repining because of expense of means and pains in doing of our duty; Many by perswasion or terror have suffered themselves to be divided and withdrawn to make defection to the contrary part, Many have turned off to a detestable indifferency and neutrality in this Cause, which so much concerneth the glory of God and the good of these Kingdoms; Nay many have made it their study to walk so, as they might comply with all times and all the revolutions thereof. It hath not been our care to countenance, encourage, intrust and employ such onely, as from their hearts did affect and minde Gods work; But the hearts of such many times have been discouraged, and their hands weakened, their sufferings neglected, and themselves slighted, and many who were once open enemies and always secret underminers countenanced and employed, Nay even those who had been looked upon as Incendiaries, and upon whom the Lord had set marks of desperate Malignancy, falshood and deceit were brought in, as fit to manage publick affairs; Many have been the lets and impediments that have been cast in the way to retard and obstruct the Lords work, and some have keeped secret, what of themselves they were not able to suppresse and overcome.

Besides these and many other breaches of the Articles of the Covenant in the matter thereof, which it concerneth every one of us to search out and acknowledge before the Lord, as we would wish his wrath to be turned away from us; So have many of us

failed exceedingly in the manner of our following and pursuing the duties contained therein, not onely seeking great things for our selves and mixing of private interests and ends concerning our selves and friends and followers, with those things which concern the publick good, but many times preferring such to the Honour of God and good of his Cause, and retarding Gods work untill we might carry alongs with us our own interests and designes. It hath been our way to trust in the means and to relie upon the arm of flesh for successe; Albeit the Lord hath many times made us meet with disappointment therein, and stained the pride of all our Glory, by blasting every carnall confidence unto us: We have followed for the most part the counsells of flesh and blood, and walked more by the rules of policie then Piety, and have hearkened more unto men then unto God.

Albeit we made solemn publick profession before the World of our unfained desires to be humbled before the Lord for our own sinnes, and the sinnes of these Kingdoms, especially for our undervaluing of the inestimable benefit of the Gospel, and that we have not laboured for the power thereof, and received Christ into our hearts, and walked worthy of him in our lives, and of our true and unfained purpose, desire and endeavour for our selves, and all others under our power and charge both in publick and private, in all the duties which we owe to God and man to amend our lives, and each one to go before another in example of a reall Reformation, that the Lord might turn away his wrath and heavie indignation, and establish these Kirks and Kingdomes in truth and peace; Yet we have refused to be reformed and have walked proudly and obstinatly against the Lord, not valuing his Gospel, nor submitting our selves unto the obedience thereof, not seeking after Christ, nor studying to honour him in the excellency of his person, nor employ him in the vertue of his offices, nor making conscience of publick Ordinances nor private nor secret duties, nor studying to edifie one another in love. The ignorance of God and of his Son Jesus Christ prevailes exceedingly in the Land; The greatest part of Masters of families amongst Noblemen, Barons, Gentlemen, Burgesses and Commons neglect to seek God in their families, and to endeavour the Reformation thereof; And albeit it hath been much pressed, yet few of our Nobles and great ones ever to this day could be perswaded to perform family duties themselves and in their own persons; which makes so necessary and usefull a duty to be misregarded by others of inferior rank; Nay many of the Nobility, Gentry, and Burrows who should have been examples of Godlinesse and sober walking unto others, have been ring-leaders of excesse and rioting. Albeit we be the LORDS people ingaged to him in a solemn way, yet to this day we have not made it our study that judicatories and Armies should consist of, and places of power and trust be filled with men of a blamelesse and Christian conversation, and of known integrity and approven fidelity, affection and Zeal unto the Cause of God, but not onely those who have been neutrall and indifferent but disaffected and Malignant, and others who have been prophane and scandalous have been intrusted; By which it hath come to passe that judicatories have been the seats of injustice and iniquity, and many in our Armies by their miscarriages have become our plague unto the great prejudice of the Cause of God, the great scandall of the Gospel, and the great increase of loosenesse and prophanity throughout all the Land. It were impossible to reckon up all the abominations that are in the Land, but the blaspheming of the name of God, swearing by the Creatures, prophanation of the

Lords Day, uncleannesse, drunkennesse, excesse and rioting, vanity of apparrell, lying and deceit, railing and cursing, arbitrary and uncontrolled oppression, and grinding of the faces of the poor by Landlords and others in place and power are become ordinary and common sinnes; And besides all these things there be many other transgressions, whereof the Land wherein we live are guilty: All which we desire to acknowledge and to be humbled for, that the world may bear witnesse with us, that Righteousnesse belongeth unto God, and shame and confusion of face unto us as appears this day.

III - The Engagement to Duties

And because it is needfull for these who find mercy not onely to confesse but also to forsake their sinne, Therefore that the reality and sincerity of our repentance may appear, We do resolve and solemly ingage our selves before the LORD carefully to avoid for the time to come all these offences, whereof we have now made solemn publick acknowledgement, and all the snares and tentations which tend therunto: And to testifie the integrity of our resolution herein, and that we may be the better enabled in the power of the LORDS strength to perform the same, We do again Renue our Solemn League and Covenant, Promising hereafter to make Conscience of all the duties whereunto we are obliged in all the heads and Articles thereof, particularly of these which follow.

1. Because Religion is of all things the most excellent and precious, The advancing and promoving the power thereof against all ungodlinesse and profanitie, The securing and preserving the purity thereof against all error heresie and schisme, and namely, Independency, Anabaptisme, Antinomianisme, Arminianisme, and Socinianisme, Familisme, Libertinisme, Scepticisme, and Erastianisme, and the carrying on the work of Uniformity shall be studied and endeavoured by us before all worldly interests, whether concerning the King our selves or any other whatsomever. 2, Because many have of late laboured to supplant the liberties of the Kirk, we shall maintain and defend the Kirk of Scotland, in all her liberties and priviledges, against all who shall oppose or undermine the same or encroach thereupon under any pretext whatsomever. 3. We shall vindicat and maintain the liberties of the Subjects in all these things, which concern their consciences, persons and Estates. 4. We shall carefully maintain and defend the Union betwixt the Kingdoms, and avoid every thing that may weaken the same, or involve us in any measure of accession unto the guilt of those who have invaded the Kingdome of England. 5. As we have been always Loyall to our King, so we shall still endeavour to give unto God that which is Gods, and to Cesar the things which are Cesars. 6. We shall be so farre from conniving at, complying with, or countenancing of Malignancy, injustice, iniquity, prophanity and impiety, that we shall not onely avoid, and discountenance those things, and cherish and encourage these persons, who are zealous for the Cause of God, and walk according to the Gospel; But also shall take a more effectuall course then heretofore in our respective places and callings, for punishing and suppressing these evils, and faithfully endeavour that the best and fittest remedies may be applied

for taking away the causes thereof, and advancing the knowledge of God and Holines and Righteousnesse in the Land. And therefore in the last place, as we shall earnestly pray unto God that he would give us able men fearing God, men of truth and hating covetousnes to judge and bear charge among his people, so we shal according to our Places & Callings Endeavour that Judicatories and all places of power and trust both in Kirk and State may consist of, and be filled with such men as are of known good affection to the Cause of God and of a blamelesse and Christian conversation.

And because there be many, who heretofore have not made conscience of the oath of God, but some through fear, others by perswasion and upon base ends and humane interests have entered thereunto, who have afterwards discovered themselves to have dealt deceitfully with the Lord in swearing falsly by his name; Therefore we who do now renew our Covenant in reference to these duties and all other duties contained therein, Do in the sight of him who is the searcher of hearts solemnly professe that it is not upon any politick advantage or private interest or by-end, or because of any terror or perswasion from men, or hypocritically and deceitfully, that we do again take upon us the oath of God, But honestly and sincerely and from the sence of our duty, And that therefore denying our selves and our own things and laying aside all self-interest and ends, We shall above all things seek the honour of God, the good of his Cause and the wealth of his People, and that forsaking the counsels of flesh and blood, and not leaning upon carnall confidences, we shall depend upon the Lord, walk by the rule of his word, and hearken to the voice of his servants: In all which professing our own weaknesse We do earnestly pray to God who is the Father of mercies through his Son Jesus Christ, to be mercifull unto us, and to enable us by the power of his might, that we may do our duty unto the praise of his Grace in the Churches. Amen.

Edinburgh, 6. October 1648. *Post meridiem.*

Act for renewing of the Solemn League and Covenant.

THE Commission of the General Assembly considering that a great part of this Land have involved themselves in many and grosse breaches of the solemn League and Covenant; And that the hands of many are grown slack in following and pursuing the duties contained therein, And that many who not being come to sufficient age, when it was first sworn and subscribed, have not hithertills been received into the same, Do upon these and other grave and important considerations Appoint and Ordain the Solemn League and Covenant to be renewed throughout all the Congregations of this Kingdom; And because it is a duty of great weight and consequence, Ministers after the sight hereof would be carefull to take pains in their Doctrine and otherwise, that their people may be made sensible of these things wherein they have broken the Covenant, and be prepared for the renewing thereof with sutable affections and dispositions: And that these things may be the better performed, we have thought it necessary to condescend upon a solemn acknowledgement of publick sinnes and breaches of the Covenant, and a solemn Engagement to all the duties contained

therein, Namely, those which doe in a more speciall way relate unto the dangers of these times: And this solemn Acknowledgement and Engagement sent herewith shall bee made use of, And the League and Covenant shall be renewed in such manner as followes. First, There shall be intimation of a solemn publick humiliation and Fast the second Sabbath of December To bee kept upon the next Thursday and Lords Day thereafter, At which intimation the League and Covenant, and the publick acknowledgement of sinnes and Engagement unto duties are to be publickly read by the Minister in the audience of all the people, And they are to be exhorted to get copies thereof that they may be made acquainted therewith; And the Humiliation and Fast is to be keeped the next Thursday thereafter in reference to the breaches of the Covenant contained in the solemn publick Acknowledgement as the causes thereof, And the next Lords Day thereafter which is also to bee spent in publick Humiliation and Fasting, immediately after the Sermon, which is to be applied to the businesse of that day, The publick acknowledgement and Engagement is again to be publickly read, And thereafter prayer is to be made containing the confession of the breaches mentioned therein and begging mercy for these sinnes, and strength of God for renewing the Covenant in sincerity and Truth; After which Prayer the solemn League and Covenant is to bee read by the Minister, And then to be sworn by him and all the people, who are to ingage themselves for performance of all the duties contained therein, Namely these which are mentioned in the publick acknowledgement & Engagement and are opposit unto the sinnes therein confessed: And the action is to be closed with Prayer to God that his people may be enabled in the power of his strength to doe their duty according to their Oath now renewed in so solemn a way. It is also hereby provided, that all those who renew the League and Covenant shall again subscribe the same, And that none be admitted to the renewing or subscribing thereof who are excluded by the other act and direction sent herewith.

A. KER.

Edinb. 6. October *Post meridiem.*

Act concerning the debarring of Persons accessorie to the late unlawfull Engagement in War, from renewing the Covenant, receiving the Communion and from exercise of Ecclesiastick Office, with an advice to Presbyteries for celebration of the Communion.

THE Commissioners of the Generall Assembly having found it necessary that the solemn League and Covenant be renewed after so great and evident breaches thereof by many in this Kingdom; And considering how manifestly the Cause of God hath been endangered heretofore by too sudden receiving unto the Covenant those who have been in actuall opposition thereunto, before sufficient tryall and evidence had of their repentence: Do therefore appoint and Ordain, That all Presbyteries and Ministers within this Church in their severall bounds and respective charges take speciall care at the time of renewing the League & Covenant, That none who have had charge in the Army, which under the conduct of Duke Hamilton engaged in War against the Kingdom of England, or with the Forces that were in and about Sterling under the command of the Earle of Lanerk and George Munro; or have taken and

subscribed any Oaths, Bands or Declarations for carrying on these sinfull courses, or any other Oath or Band condemned by the Generall Assembly as destructive to the Covenant, Or have been forcers, urgers or seducers of others to joyn in the said Engagements and services so destructive to Religion, or have been active promoters thereof be admitted to subscribe, or renew the Oath of the League and Covenant, or to exercise any office or power in any of the Judicatories of this Kirk.

And further, considering that it is referred to us from the late Generall Assembly, to give advertisement to the Presbyteries of a fit opportunity of celebrating the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, and to send such advice as we should finde necessary for the time; We have thought fit to advertise Presbyteries, That the Sacrament of the Lords Supper may bee celebrated after the renewing of the Covenant as Ministers have conveniency in their severall Congregations; and that we have found it necessary that all who are involved in the aforementioned guiltinesse, be suspended from the Sacrament of the Lords Supper untill the Generall Assembly shall take such course as they think fit, concerning the receiving of them unto the Covenant and Communion.

A. Ker.

Edinburgh, 14. October 1648.

THE Committee of Estates being very sensible of the grievous backslidings of this Land in the manifold breaches of the Solemn League and Covenant, made and sworne to the most high GOD; Do therefore unanimously and heartily Approve the seasonable and pious resolution of the Commission of the Generall Assembly, for a Solemn Acknowledgement of publick Sinnes and Provocations, especially the breaches of the Covenant, and a Solemn Engagement to a more conscionable performance of the Duties therein contained, and for renewing the Solemn League and Covenant: And doe require and Ordain, that the directions of the said Commission of Assembly in their Act of the sixth of this moneth for a publick Acknowledgement of sins and ingagement to Duties be carefully followed, that the fast and Humiliation appointed by them be Religiously observed, and that the Solemn League and Covenant be sincerely and cordially renewed and subscribed in the manner they have prescribed in their said Act.

Extractum

Mr. Tho. Henderson.

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