COVENANT AND CONFLICT

1560 - 1638

A STUDY IN EARLY COVENANT HISTORY

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PREFACE.

The content of this Thesis is a study of early Scottish Covenant history from the Reformation to the Revolution of 1638. No claim is made to any new discoveries. It is rather a re-statement of the old insights which have long been available from the sources. To have been permitted to share in the revival of interest which is now being shown again in the Covenants of Scotland, both here and in America, has given me no small satisfaction.

I acknowledge my indebtedness to the Reverend Ian A. Muirhead, B.D., senior Lecturer in Ecclesiastical History at the University of Glasgow, who acted as my supervisor, and without whose guidance and encouragement, this work could not have been completed.

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SUMMARY.

1. The covenant concept was undoubtedly the dominating influence in shaping the course of historical events in Scotland from 1560 on. John Knox accepted and developed the covenant concept during his life time. He interpreted it as "the league and fellowship that is between God and his elect". It was the justification for active rebellion against all tyrannical and idolatrous sovereignty. It also became the basis of his "Theocratic" ideal for the Scottish nation. In the hands of subsequent Reformed preachers the covenant idea was developed into an impressive "Covenant Theology" which popularized the concept of the Scottish nation as a covenanted people, standing before God. Knox's concept of a State dominated by the Church laid the foundations of future disharmony between the religious and the civil spheres. During the long conflict with the Stuart Kings the covenant idea was peculiarly suited to the Scottish mind. It was the covenant which brought the nobility, the Kirkmen, and the people into a formidable union which remained the symbol of inherent Scottish authority throughout the period of conflict.

11. When James VI elected to rule by "Divine Right", a collision between the claims of a theocratic kirk and an authoritarian Crown became inevitable. This marked the beginning of what is known as the "Episcopacy controversy". To counter the Presbyterian pretensions of the Melvillian Party, James adopted the extreme policy of declaring himself head of the Church, ratified the power of bishops, and reconfirmed the jurisdiction of the King and Council. This policy was fraught with great dangers to the monarchy because James' assertion

of the royal prerogative, not only increased the opposition of the Kirkmen, but also offended the great Scottish nobility who had long been the hereditary advisers to the Scottish Kings. The chief interest of the reign accordingly lies in the statesman-like way in which James succeeded in countering the opposition of both Kirkmen and nobles, and finally managed to rivet a form of Episcopacy upon the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. It is claimed that James VI averted revolution by the skilful balancing of his temporising policies.

111. There is little doubt that this controversy which involved the Crown and Kirk and Parliament affected the people's attitude to monarchy. It is said that neither James nor Charles had any personal charisma. James was not above attempting to achieve his ends by fraudulent means. One cause of offence was his fondness for "dealing" and "dissembling". In both father and son it was a characteristic which destroyed confidence because neither could be relied on to keep his word. The revival of the Mediaeval doctrine of "Divine Right of Kings" was alien to the Scottish view of constitutional monarchy which had been stressed by George Buchanan and was taken over into a covenant concept and proclaimed by the Kirkmen. In the mood of the times the exercise of the royal prerogative soon began to undermine the sense of national security. In Kirk matters the proclamation of the royal authority was regarded as destroying the "discipline" and, since "religion was politics" in 17th century Scotland, it was equally regarded as damaging to the existence of constitutional government. The reality of this disharmony between the Crown, the Assembly, and the Parliament tended to widen the gap between the King

and the people. The decline in respect for kingship most likely was assisted by a growing awareness also of economic deprivation. There were disappointed expectations connected with the Union of 1603 when the improvement in trading relations did not materialize. Other related causes need to be taken into consideration. The removal of the government to London had the effect of making the Scottish hereditary nobility feel a sense of being "politically deprived". The removal of the King and Court to London, coupled with the apparent lack of interest which both James and Charles showed to Scotland, soon gave rise to the irritating thought among the Scots that they were the subjects of an "English King".

IV. Charles 1 was singularly unfitted to govern Scotland. He had learned nothing from his father's policy in governing which clearly indicated that to follow the path of compromise was the surest guiding. He ignored the evidence that what his father had achieved lacked popular support. He took the unprecented steps of alienating the great Scottish Lords and landowners by his Act of Revocation, spurned the great political and legal families, who had been his father's friends, and finally threw all caution to the winds, by his attempt to impose a New Liturgy and Canons upon the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, without the assent of either Assembly or Council and against the advice of the more moderate bishops. Charles' bishops, under the direction of Laud, deliberately sought to change the traditional form of worship in Scotland. Undoubtedly other causes, both political and social, combined to bring about the Scottish Revolution of 1638-1643. But it was the New Liturgy which was the match which kindled the fire. The National Covenant became the focus of the religious and political

conflict because it expressed in quite a remarkable way the convictions and hopes of the Scottish people at that time.

V. The attempt to subvert a century of traditional worship of the Church of Scotland was quite overthrown when the Glasgow Assembly met at the end of 1638. The royal attempt to impose the unwanted Liturgy aroused extreme passions which were mirrored with almost brutal clarity during the course of the Assembly. The Kirkmen had the last word. The Assembly declared who was the King and Head of the Church; it declared rule by Divine Right to be contrary to the fundamental laws of the kingdom; it left the Church free to determine its own affairs; it affirmed that the Men of the Covenant were on the side of the law; and it put beyond doubt that all petitioners had the right to receive a just trial before a proper Judicatory. Finally it established, what perhaps is self-evident to us, that the worship of a people is bound up with their individual character and outlook. Perhaps as never since, that was true of Presbyterian Scotland during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

I hereby declare that this Thesis is submitted after work was pursued as a Research Student in Glasgow University under the supervision of Rev. Ian A. Muirhead B.D. It has been composed by myself, and has not been accepted in part or whole in fulfilment of the requirements of any other degree or professional qualification.

1. THE BEGINNING OF THE COVENANT CONCEPT.

Although the word covenant does not appear in common use until 1596, there is no doubt that the idea went back to John Knox himself. In Knox's writings covenant appears very infrequently, but its equivalents, band and oath and league are referred to many times, even dating as far back as 1550. To what extent Knox was influenced at the beginning by the existence of the common band, which was an ancient Scottish custom, and had its origins in feudalism, and which had been perpetuated by the clan system, cannot be ignored. Pacts or bands or contracts had become a matter of great expediency during the break-up of feudalism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. (1). Mention is made of six of these bands, at least, connected with the beginning of the Reformation in Scotland between 1556-1560. (2). Others were to follow up to 1572. If this connection is accepted then it is clear that the social band had been given distinct religious overtones by 1560, and it was Knox who applied the term covenant to those ancient bands. It became in Knox's thought - "a covenant with God". Thus we are directed to look for an answer in the Biblical concept of the covenant-relationship between God and Israel in the Old Testament scriptures. And this view in the end, is confirmed by Knox's final theological emphasis concerning the covenant-relationship as it related to the Scottish nation.

It is usually accepted that Knox's theological development was influenced by Calvin and Lutheranism, but that there is no evidence that he was a slavish borrower of these men's ideas. The difference can be traced in their respective views of the covenant. For Calvin

(1) See J.B.Torrance, Scottish Journal of Theology, Vol.23, p.52ff, 1970.

(2) See Lumsden, The Covenants of Scotland, 1914.

the covenant has been fulfilled in the Incarnation, death and Resurrection of Christ, and man's obligations do not receive the same emphasis as in Knox. (3). Continental influences cannot be ruled out, and it has been pointed out that a more potent influence is to be found in Knox's contact with Tyndale and Hooper when he resided in England prior to 1556. Tyndale was no doubt influenced by the writings of Bullinger. But the important thing in Tyndale's covenant concept was the conditional aspect of the promise made by God. The individual's response is clearly stated by Tyndale: "God bindeth Himself to fulfil that mercy unto thee only if thou wilt endeavour thyself to keep His laws". (4). A further consideration which lends force to this suggestion is the emphasis which Tyndale put on the responsibility of kings and nobles, as well as preachers, to restore the people to the covenant obligations. Here we encounter too striking a similarity between the two reformers to be accidental. But it needs also to be pointed out that Knox's interpretation of the Biblical concept of covenant led him to the same conclusion, quite apart from Tyndale's influence. At the same time in Edwardian England Hooper with whom Knox also had contact was emphasising this same reciprocal aspect of the covenant: "God is bound to aid and succour, keep and preserve ... and at the last give to man eternal bliss and everlasting felicity ... if they contracted to obey, serve and keep God's commands". (5).

(3) See, R.L.Greaves on Knox's eclectic theology and polity, Scottish Church History Society, Vol.XVIII, part 2, 1973.
(4) See, Greaves, Knox and the Covenant Tradition, pp.30f, Journal of Ecclesiastical History, Vol. XXIV, 1973.
(5) Greaves, Knox and the Covenant Tradition, p. 31.

During the period 1550-1556 the evidence supports the view that the band or league had become associated in Knox's mind, not only with theological, but also with political issues. The political overtone of the covenant had been frequently demonstrated on the Continent : "The citizens of Geneva, twice over, met in their great Church of St. Peter and swore to the Eternal to resist the Duke and maintain their evangelical confession. The capitals of other Cantons also hallowed their struggle for the Gospel by an oath ..." (6). Knox had found it necessary to take refuge on the Continent, to escape the threats of Mary Tudor in England. Again in 1556 he answered an urgent call from his Genevan congregation, and surprisingly left Scotland at the moment when the Gentlemen of Mearns "required that he should minister unto them the Table of the Lord Jesus", and they pledged themselves to "refuse all society with Idolatry, and bound themselves to the uttermost of their powers, to maintain the true preaching of the Evangel of Jesus Christ as God should offer unto them preachers and opportunity".(7).

This meeting with Knox at the invitation of the Gentlemen of Mearns, which included John Erskine of Dun, Lord Lorne, who became the Earl of Argyll and Lord James, who became the Earl of Moray (1563) is important in that it may be regarded as the prelude which led to the signing of the first band by these same Gentlemen and others in 1557, and resulted in Knox's return from Geneva to lead the Reformation movement in Scotland. Knox's response to these letters from the

(6) See Wylie, History of Protestantism, Vol. VIII, pp. 520-521, also footnote.

(7) Knox, History of the Reformation in Scotland, Vo. 1, p.122, Ed. Dickinson.

nobility was almost immediate, but they apparently had second thoughts about the opportuneness of the business, and when Knox got to Dieppe "thare metthim contrare letteris ... not verray pleassing to the flesche ... I was compelled to stay for a tyme". (8). This interruption to his journey was taken by Knox as the sign of the signatories' lack of resolution in the cause as he sharply reminded them that: "the invisible and invincible power of God susteaneth and preserveth, according to his promeis all such as with simplicitie do obey Him".(9). The result was that when these letters were read to the whole nobilitie ... it was concluded, that thei wold follow ford wart thare purpose anes intended ... and that everie ane should be the more assured of other, a Commoun Band was maid, and by some subscribed, the tennour whereof followis:-

"We, perceaving how Sathan in his memberis, the Anti-christis of our tyme, cruelly doeth rage, seaking to dounethring and to destroy the Evangell of Christ, and his Congregatioun, aught, according to our bonden deuitie, to stryve in our Maisteris caus, evin unto the death, being certane of the victorie in him. The quilk our dewitie being weall considdered, We do promesse befoir the Majestie of God, and his congregatioun, that we (be his grace) shall with all diligence continually apply our hole power, substance, and our verray lyves, to manteane, sett fordward, and establish the most blessed word of God and his Congregatioun; and shall labour at our possibilitie to have faythfull Ministeris purely and trewlie to minister Christis Evangell

(8) The Works of Knox, Vol 1, p. 269, Ed. Laing, Edinburgh 1895. Hereafter read "Works", etc.
(9) Works, Vol. 1, p. 271.

and Sacramentes to his people. We shall manteane thame, nuriss thame, and defend thame, the haill congregatioun of Christ, and everie membour thairof, at our haill poweris and waring of our lyves, against Sathan , and all wicked power that does intend tyranny or truble against the foirsaid congregatioun. Onto the quhilk holy woord and congregatioun we do joyne us, also dois forsaike and renunce the congregatioun of Sathan, with all the superstitious abomination and idolatrie thareof: And moreover, shall declare our selfis manifestlie ennemies thairto, be this oure faithfull promesse befoir God, testified to his Congregatioun, be our subscriptionis at thir presentis:-

"At Edinburgh, the the thrid day of December, the year of God Jm Vc fyfty sevin yearis: God called to witness".

(Sic subscribitur). A. Erle of Ergile.

Glencarne.

Morton.

Archibald Lord of Lorne.

John Erskyne of Doun.

Et cetera.

This document is known to history as the "Godly Band". Its importance does not lie merely in the fact that it was subscribed by a group of representative laymen of high social status and political expertise, but who were committing themselves in a manner not to be compared with the traditional "pactions made by wordly men for worldly profit, but that they pledged themselves in the name of God to set forward the reformation of religion to God's Word". The emergence of the "Godly Band" in 1557 was the sign that new forces were at work.

These members of the nobility and others were thereby "pledging themselves beyond a verbal assault". (10). They were to form themselves into the "Lords of the Congregation", (to whom the origin of the General Assembly may well be traced), and who under the inspired leadership of John Knox carried the Reformation events forward to their climax with an astonishing rapidity. Political control had passed into the hands of Knox and the reforming lords, and by August 1560 (two years after the signing of the "Godly Band") the Reformed faith had been authoritatively declared by the Estates of the Realm, a Confession of Faith had been prepared and adopted, and the First Book of Discipline had been adopted by the Assembly (although not ratified by Parliament). (11.) By the end of August 1560, the Estates had abolished the Pope's jurisdiction, forbidden under certain penalties the celebration of the Mass, and had rescinded all laws unfavourable to the Protestant faith. (12).

The form of banding which began with the "Godly Band" continued throughout the period 1557-1572. But in Knox's thought the band had become fused with the covenant concept. His basic teaching on the covenant (although it tends to be obscured by the eclectic nature of his theology and polity) is adequately exemplified in two tracts published between 1554-1558. In the Admonition or Warning (1554) which appeared after the Accession of Mary Tudor in England, the message is firmly directed against idolatry, where idolatry specifically means Roman Catholicism: "This is the league between God and us and that he alone

(10) Mathieson, Politics and Religion, Vol.1, p.49.
(11) Works 11. p. 92.
(12) Acts of the Parliament of Scotland, Vol.11,p. 534.

salbe our God,... and sall flie frome all strange Godis". There is no doubt that the covenant concept is in Knox's mind, and that the fundamental covenant-obligation is to serve God and avoid idolatry: "In making whilk league ... we swair never to haif fellowship with ony religioun, ecept with that whilk God hath confirmit be his manifest Word". (13). And previously in 1550 Knox had referred to the Lord's Supper as "a band of mutuall love amangis us", (14) and in his exposition of Psalm VI there is the reference to "the league and fellowschip that is betuene God and his elect". (15). The message in the Admonition is a clear call by Knox to the Scottish people to unite in opposing idolatry: "it is necessarie that we avoyd ydolatrie, because that otherwise we declair oure selves little to regard the league and Covenant of God; for that league requyreis that we declair oure selves enemysis to all sortis of ydolatrie". (16). And since idolatries lure believers away from God, the reference which Knox makes to Exodus 34, appears to encourage a kind of vengeance upon idolaters:

> " But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves..." (17).

This was to be the responsibility of the magistrates. But every Protestant was bound by the covenant responsibility to avoid the Mass.(18). Anyone who participated in Roman Catholic worship was under judgment,

(13) Works, 111, pp.190-191
(14) Works, 111, p.74.
(15) Works, 111, p. 143.
(16) Works, 111, p. 93.
(17) Exodus 34, VV. 13, 17.
(18) Works, 111, pp. 190-195.

and his uncompromising attitude to idolatry paved the way for rebellion against the secular authority which upheld it.

In the Appellation which was published in 1553 Knox developed his concept of the covenant in relation to its political content. He took the warrant of the Scriptures as his approval for advocating the rebellion of believers, as well as godly nobles and magistrates, against princes who supported idolatry. He found ample support in the Old Testament from the example of the Hebrew Prophets, and especially in Jeremiah's teaching concerning the "New Covenant", for active resistance. There is little doubt that Knox regarded himself as standing in the line of this prophetic succession, which is confirmed in his encounters with Mary Stuart. The reciprocal nature of the covenant-obligation is clearly emphasised: "And thairfoir it shalbe profitable to your Majestie, to considder what is the thing your Grace's subjects lookis to receave of your Majestie, and what it is that ye aught to do unto thame by mutuall contract. Thei ar bound to obey you, and that not but in God. Ye ar bound to keape lawis unto thame. Ye crave of thame service: thei crave of you protectioun and defence against wicked doaris. Now, Madam, yf ye shall deny your dewtie to thame, (which especialle craves that ye punishe malefactoris) think ye to receave full obedience of thame? I feare, Madam, ye shall not". (19). Knox believed and taught that the covenant imposed a bond between the temporal powers and God, and that if they should fail in their duty they forfeited the right to obedience: "thairfoir will He that neither we obey thame be they Kingis or be they Queenis". (20).

(19) Works, 11, pp.372-373.
(20) Works, 111, pp. 192-193.

In this regard it was the responsibility of the people as well as kings, nobles, and magistrates to see that Christ was truly preached. It was in this covenant concept that Knox justified the active resistance of the people in 1558.

Knox's development of the covenant concept was not confined to warnings against idolatry, and the emphasis he put upon a mutual contract between God and the prince and the people. Richard Greaves (21) has drawn attention to the ecumenical implications arising from the eclectic nature of Knox's theology and polity: "For all that be of this league are one bodie ... recompting men, women and children ... and strangeris within the Covenant of the Lord: then plaine it is that if one bodie, thair must be one law, so that whatever God requyreth of one, in that behalf, he requyreth the same of all. (22).

All Protestants therefore belonged to this universal fellowship of Christians (except Anabaptists). "Within this league" distinctly refers to those who stand in the covenant-relationship. They are of "one body and one Commonwealth". This covenant is a reference to Deuteronomy 29, and this leads to another significant strand in Knox's covenant concept. In Knox's thought the Scottish nation is identified with the Commonwealth of Israel. Bible images were frequently used to remind the people that they stood in this covenant-relationship with God. (in the Appellation, in dialogues, and in sermons). And the covenant-relationship had a universal application: "every realm or natioun among the Gentiles are bound to the same league and Covenant with God made with his peopill Israel". (23).

(21) Scottish Church History Society Vol.XVIII, part 2, pp. 85f.
(22) Works, III, p.191.
(23) Works, IV, p. 505.

Another Old Testament parallel is where Scotland is identified with the deliverance from Egypt, "the possessioun of the land of Canaan", and a great number of reminders regarding moral obligations. (24). This is why there is an absence of"nationalistic sentiment" in Knox's Works. He is primarily concerned with bringing everything to the touch-stone of the Scriptures where the reality and the assurance of the covenant-relationship is confirmed to believers. In the Admonition the fundamental covenant obligation is the service of God. In the Appellation this covenant obligation is expanded to include the relationship between the Sovereign and his people. Indeed for Knox the nation is identified with the Church. They are "a holy people unto the Lord their God". And when the people are challenged "to keep thair land clene and unpollutit", we can say that Knox never came nearer than this to the Biblical concept of the Scottish people as standing in direct covenant-relationship with God. This led Knox to interpret contemporary events in the light of the covenant. Thus he sees the failure of the French soldiers as the intervention of God, (25) and the assistance given by the English, is linked with the covenant concept. (26). Indeed in the development of Knox's theology God and the nation are brought together in such a way that, the sequence of events since the Reformation, is to be regarded as "Salvation history". And the note of triumphant assurance is always present. When Mary Stuart and Francis delayed their acknowledgment of the Articles of the Confession of Faith, Knox was not disturbed, and made it known that he was not begging approval of the "religion whiche from God hes full

(24) Works, 11, pp. 443f.
(25) Works, 11, pp. 3-7.
(26) Works, 11. p. 86.

powar and neideth not the suffrage of man". (27). There was also the confident assertion that tyrannical princes could be deposed. (28). In his dialogue with Lethington it is this same sense of the unique destiny for the Scottish nation that claims attention. (29).

What we have to reckon with is that this sense of covenant played an important role in imparting a sense of unity in a time of national crisis both in 1560 and in 1638. Under the Melvillians and the preachers the covenant concept had been developed into an impressive "Covenant theology", which may be said to have reached its peak during the 1590s. But is was Knox who laid the foundations on which the later Kirkmen built. It is in this regard that the care which Knox took in making the Protestant position clear to the people from the beginning needs to be seen as an integral and continuing aspect of his covenant concept. It was necessary that the "face of the Kirk" should be seen. Accordingly after the signing of the "Godly Band" in 1557, Knox had stirred up those who were called the Lords of the Congregation ,"to goe fordward in that begun work, so soone as he came out of Geneva". (30). We are told that immediately after the signing the Godly Band, "the Lordis and Barons professing Jesus Christ, conveined frequently in counsall: in the whiche these Headis war concluded". (31). What follows shows that Protestant activities had assumed a new urgency. Under the direction of Knox, provision was made for an act of public worship. While no mention at this juncture is made of the sermon, yet the use of the Common Prayers (probably the Second Liturgy of

(27) Works, 11, p. 126.
(28) Works, 11, p. 172.
(29) Works, 11, pp. 441f.
(30) John Row, History of the Kirk of Scotland, 1558-1637, p.11, Ed. Laing, 1842, Wodrow Society. Hereafter read Row, etc.
(31) Works, 1, pp. 274-275.

Edward VI) is stressed. Most likely in Knox's mind this public assembly in the Parish Kirks signified the need to stress the unity of the Reformation movement. Arrangements were made by these Lords meeting in counsel, for doctrine, preaching, and interpretation of the Scriptures, to be made in private houses. (32). This was no doubt an expediency to meet temporary difficulties, but "reading of the Scriptures" became the object of repeated exhortations. The importance attached to the reading of the Scriptures is set forth in the First Book of Discipline, where every Church was enjoined to have a Bible in English. Not only were the people exhorted to convene to hear the Word, but also they were commanded to know the Confession of Faith and the Catechism, and to retain the morning and evening prayers. This exercise of the reading of the Scriptures in Kirks and "secreitly within thair awne houses" preceded the establishment of the Reformation in 1560. (33). The need for education in the tenets of the new faith was above all necessary, if Protestantism was ever to become a definite challenge to the Papal system. Knox met this need by instituting what is known as the "Exercise". This too is to be regarded as an important constituent of Knox's covenant thought. The Exercise had two objectives. First of all it emphasised the importance of the exercise in the life of the Congregation. It required, under the heading, that on certain days of the week, "the Churche suld assemble ... Psalmes may be convenientlie sung ... in greit townis we think expedient that every day thair be eathir sermon, or elles Common Prayers, with some exercise of reiding the Scripturis". Different requirements were designed to meet the needs of large and small towns. They could meet

(32) Works, 1, pp. 275-276.
(33) Works, 11, p.151.

every day, or thrice or twice a week, but each Church was at liberty to "appoint thair awin Polecie". (34). This first part of the Exercise had emphasised the need for regular assembling for reading of the Word and worship, and may therefore be best described in terms of a "fellowship meeting". Here again the need for oversight was stressed. "Oversiers, Elders, and Deacones were appointed to ruel with the minister in the Kirk" (35).

The second form of the Exercise was designed to meet the needs of the ministry. Knox urged this as of the first importance, and apparently it was not open to the Congregation. Perhaps Knox was following the practice of the Genevan Church which had a set course for the training of ministers. The need for trained ministers was paramount at this crucial stage. But this Exercise laid down by Knox was preserved as indispensable for the future of the Church. The end of the Exercise is clearly set down: "that the Churche of God may have a tryell of mennis knawledge, judgmentis, gracis, and utteranois; and also that suche as somewhat have proffitted in Godis Worde, may from tyme to tyme grow to more full perfectioun to serve the Churche as necessitie shall require". (36)

Knox found his warrant for the institution of the Exercise in Paul's injunction to the Church at Corinth on the Exercise of Prophesying. (1. Corinthians, 14, 29).

> Let two or three prophets speak and let the rest judge: but if anything be revealed to him that sitteth by, let the former keep silence. For ye may, one by one, all prophesy, that all may learn and all may receive consolation".

(34) Works, 11, pp. 237-238.
(35) Works, 11, p.151.
(36) Works, 11, pp. 242-245.

It would appear that in Corinth the Exercise of prophesying was open to all. Knox concedes that while "everie man shall have libertie to utter and declair his mynd and knawledge to the comfort and edification of the Churche"; yet in the interest of order Knox goes on to interpret Paul's injunction to mean that the Exercise was limited to the number of three "above the whiche ... they passed not for avoiding of confusion". (37).

It seems that at Geneva the members of Calvin's congregation were all free to take part. But the evidence seems to lead to the conclusion that those meetings where discussion did take place were meetings primarily for ministers, and is an indication that thus early the emphasis on the "priesthood of all believers" was beginning to give place to the preference for an educated ministry. (38).

By 1575 Presbyteries had been generally established and Row mentions that "in the cheif touns twenty ministers, or some fewer or more, as the bounds about that toune could affoord, with ane elder accompanieing each minister, meeting together everie week on a certaine day appoynted; at which tyme some portion of the holie Canonikal Scripture wes opened up and exponed by one of the saids ministers ... whilk wes called the Exercise of Prophesieing, in ecliptick expression, the Exercise of Ministers. After whilk exercise, all maters of discipline belonging to that praecinct or bounds were handled". (39). Row seems to indicate that the Exercise was for the

(37) Works, II, p.243.
(38) See Henderson, The Burning Bush, pp. 44-45.
(39) Row, p. 53.

ministers only, and that when the Exercise was over the business of the Presbytery was taken up. (40).

The importance of these Exercises is confirmed by the penalties imposed by the Assembly when they tended to be neglected. Knox himself as early as 1563 had issued a warning about the neglect of "our Conventions and Assemblies". (41). The Assembly of 1576 instigated penalties against the ministers who were failing to comply. It "ordains all ministers and readers within eight myles ... to repair to the place of the exercise of prophesieing weeklie ..." (then follow the penalties for failure)"for the first fault they shall confess their offence upon their knees before all the brethren; for the second, before the Provinciall Assemblie; for the third, to be summonded before the General Assembly, there to receave censure for his offence; and it is declared, that the fourth fault deserves deprivation". (42).

It is clear that the Church had no intention of letting these Exercises decay. The Glasgow Assembly of 1638 renewed the injunction about Exercise and Presbytery. In the second Episcopacy James 1 had the word "Exercise" occasionally substituted for Presbytery. (43). The perpetuation of the Exercise along with the morning and evening prayers played an important part in fixing the covenant concept in the minds of the Scottish people. In addition we must reckon with the influence of a generation of Protestant preachers who revivified

(40) See Row, p.47. "That maters falling out, new incidents and emergents betwixt the Provinciall Synods and Generall Assemblies shall be marked everie exercise, and put in frame twenty dayes before the Generall Assemblie".
(41) Works, 11, p. 395.
(42) Row, p. 58.
(43) See Henderson, The Burning Bush, pp. 54-55.

Old Testament parallels. They also succeeded in presenting the covenant-relationship in language which the ordinary man could understand, and succeeded finally in blending the covenant idea with Presbyterianism, until during the 1590s there emerged a ferment of covenant enthusiasm which swept the Scottish nation. It may be difficult to explain this sudden ferment in covenant renewing, but by 1596 (when the word "covenant" comes into general use) certain forces had been at work which combined to produce a sense of religious insecurity among the people. James VI's persistent use of the royal prerogative, along with the intrigues of the Catholic Earls, (Huntly and Errol), rumours of Spanish arms, and alleged communications by James with Rome and Madrid, were to add to the sense of insecurity. Apparently the general religious and moral climate of the nation gave rise to a sense of impending judgment. The Kirkmen moreover were troubled about the scarcity of ministers and money. Doubtless there were a variety of other reasons which had imparted a sense of fear and apprehension for the Church of Scotland. James Melville wrote of 1596: " a special year and fatal for the Church of Scotland.(44). Whatever the exact circumstances at the time, the call to "humiliation and repentance" was no doubt justified . (45).

What is noteworthy, however, is that the use of the word covenant implied more than subscription to the Confession of Faith, (1560) or the "King's Confession" (1581). An appeal went out for reformation of religion throughout the country. It was taken up by the General Assembly in the spring of 1596, which appeared to have been "haillelie

(44) James Melville, Diary, 1556-1601, p.222, Bannatyne Club, Edinburgh, 1829. Hereafter read Diary, etc.
(45). See G. Donaldson: The Scottish Reformation, p.200.

occupied with the tryall of thair members and exerceis of reformatioun and repentance, of corruptionnes in the office and lyves of the ministerie". This reformation was to begin with the ministers of the Kirk. It led to the instance when one minister, John Davidson, took the call so seriously that he summoned the "haill breithring to assemblit in the lesser Kirk", where they were exhorted to "resolution" and "confession", and "sa entring of new againe in covenant with thair God in Jesus Cryst...". (46).

A vivid description of what was meant by "renewing the covenant" is given by James Melville of an event which took place in Kilrenny Kirk, (near St.Andrews) during the month of August 1596. The covenant teaching is firmly tied to the Scriptures. The images employed recall Knox's identification of the Scottish nation with Israel in the Old Testament. Once more we are introduced to the concept of a covenanted people standing before God. For example, they are following the example of Moses on the Plain of Moab (Deuteronomy. 29-30), Joshua at Shechem (Joshua 24) and Samuel at Mizpah (1.Samuel 7). But there is an evangelical note that is not discernable in Knox's development of the covenant-relationship. The emphasis in Melville's theology and covenant liturgy is on a "Covenant of mercie and grace with thair God". The teaching is now bound up with the doctrine of Salvation, and therefore was of supreme importance in reminding the people of God's action in Redemption: "the Covenant of God is the contract, securitie and warrand of all our weilfear maid with Adam efter his fall, renewit with Noe efter the flud, then with Abraham, etc. ...". It contains a warning to those outside: outside the Covenant the

(46) See Diary, pp. 229-233.

sinner is "without God, without Chryst, a chyld of wrathe, alian from the Comounweill of his peiple, under the slaverie of the Devill and sinne and, finalie, a faggot for helle's fyre". But it was an integral and indispensable part of worship: the Covenant is renewed as often as the Word is preached, the Sacraments used, and the exercise of fasting and public repentance kept. And most importantly it all goes back to Christ who is: "the Cautionar of the Covenant and the Contract for ws ...". (47).

This new ferment of covenant renewing was, however, not confined to the impressive event which took place in Kilrenny Kirk, Fife, in 1596. It had been enjoined by the General Assembly. Both Melville and Calderwood confirm that this form of teaching had passed from Presbytery to Presbytery until, perhaps, thousands of men, women, and children had taken the covenant oath. We have to reckon with the fact that the impact of covenant theology had now become nation-wide, and was the force that was at work reshaping Scottish society. It cannot be adequately accounted for on the grounds of the feudal practice of the servants following their overlords, or the presence of social expectations. We have rather to reckon with sincere religious convictions especially due to a new confidence and hope which the covenant preachers had inspired in the hearts of the people by their evangelical emphasis on the "mercy and grace of God". Knox's covenant theology had been limited by the doctrine of Predestination. The kernel of the

(47) See Diary, pp. 229-243, also Calderwood, The History of the Kirk of Scotland (Edinburgh 1844) Vol. V., pp. 436-7. Hereafter read Calderwood etc.
"...the covenant was renewed in the Presbyterie of St.Andrews by a verie frequent assemblie of gentlemen and burgesses prepared for the purpose before by their ministers in everie parishe".

message in the Admonition, which may be summed up in his description of the covenant as follows: "This is the league between God and us, that he alone shall be our God and we salbe his peopill ... we shall seek to him, and sall flie frome all strange Godis". This implied, on the face of it, that if a man was in the covenant, that is, in league with God, then he could not permanently leave it and be damned. Yet Knox seems to indicate in the Admonition that a man could leave it and be damned. And here we come face to face with the apparent contradiction in Knox's covenant theology. "Even if such a person continued his apparent adherence to the Covenant, he could not be saved because he would always have been reprobate. In the Admonition Knox was, thus, using some rhetorical warnings that his theology could not support". (48).

It was inevitable that the Melvillian preachers should seek to resolve this apparent contradiction by a change of emphasis in their covenant theology. Grace and works needed to be related to the faith of the individual if the covenant oath was to have any meaning in the midst of a sixteenth century rigid Predestinarianism. In this regard a change in covenant theology is sufficiently examplified in the works of Robert Bruce and Robert Rollock, who were able to set covenant doctrine in relation to free grace, and so were able to preach the gospel. The writings of these churchmen must have played an important part in fusing covenant teaching and Presbyterianism in the minds of the people. The following brief references to the works of Bruce and

(48). See R.L. Greaves, Journal of Ecclesiastical History, Vol.XXIV, pp. 24-25; also Works, III, pp. 190-191f.
See also, W.R.Foster: "The Church Before the Covenants", p.2. "solid Calvinism formally expressed in the Confession of 1560 remained throughout the entire Reformation period".

Rollock show how the twin doctrines of grace and works worked to clarify for believers what had been formerly, at least, ambiguous.

In a series of sermons on the Sacraments, Bruce enlarges upon God's willingness to receive sinners. He clearly declares that God's call and human response are realities. Thus Salvation is - all of God and all of man, otherwise there would be no turning to God. The desire to crave mercy for sins, to call upon God's holy name for mercy and grace is the sign that God is calling them, otherwise "it is not possible for us to come to His Son". (49). But Bruce emphasises the need for the response of faith which works for the furtherance of the assurance of salvation. He shows how the signs of faith in the soul manifest themselves. "First of all, look to thy heart, and cast thine eye on it: gif thou hast a desire to pray, a desire to crave mercy for thy sins, to incall upon God's halie name for mercie and grace ... yit assured be that thou has in any measure to prayer is the true effect of the right faith". Moreover he asserts that faith and works are co-ordinates. Thus a second effect of faith is to be seen in a new orientation of life; "look and advise with thy self if thy heart can be content to renounce thy rankour, to forgive thy grudges, and that freely for God's cause". And a third effect is an upsurge of com - passion; "thou man bow thy heart and extend thy pitie, upon the poore members of Christ's body, and suffer them not to lack gif thou have; for except ye have this compassion, ye have na faith". (50).

(49) Sermons and Life of Robert Bruce, p.121, ed. Wm.Cunningham 1843, Wodrow Society. Hereafter read 'Sermons', etc.
(50) Sermons, pp. 145-146.

All along we get the impression of a fervent evangelical preacher. While Bruce admits that "we get als meekle in the simple word as we gat in the Sacrament", yet there is a hint that he seems to regard the Sacrament as more effective than the hearing of the word - a fact which goes to support how far the sacramental emphasis and the covenant were fused together. "The sacrament is appointed, that we may get a better grip of Christ, nor we gat in the simple word, that we may possesse Christ in our hearts and mindes mair fullie and largely nor we did of before in the simple word. That Christ may have a larger space, to make residence in our narrowe hearts nor we could have be the hearing of the simple word; and to possesse Christ mair fullie is a better thing ... The sacramentes are appointed that I might have him mair fullie in my saull; that I might have the bounds of it enlarged; that he may make the better residence in me".

This appeal to grace and mercy and the response of faith, which runs through Bruce's sermons, must have been a great source of encouragement for all who were seeking for the assurance of salvation. The great preparation was simply sorrow over sin. "But quhere there is a displeasure over sin, a purpose to do better, and earnest sobbing and sighing to get the thing that thou wants; in that saul quher God has placed this desire of Christ, it is the works of God's Spirit, and Christ wil enter there. And, therefore, suppose that saul be far fra the thing that he suld be at, let him not refuse to ga to the table; But let him ga with a profession of his awin infirmity and weakness, and with a desire of the thing that he wants. Every ane of you that finds your self this way disposed, let him ga in God's name, to the table". (51).

(51) Sermons, pp. 28-33.

The same evangelical appeal is discernible in a Collection of Confession which belongs to the same period, and included the Palatine Confession of 1591, later approved by ~~which came from~~ the Synod of Dort. (MCR) This Catechism was widely approved by the Church of Scotland. Here the covenant is referred to as having been first given to the Jewish nation that pointed to Christ. Now under the Gospel this covenant is "dispensed" by the preaching of the word and the administration of the sacraments. Here again these "Confessions" (and in particular the Palatine Confession) make it quite clear that repentance unto life is an evangelical grace. The offer of a full and free forgiveness is contained in the answer given to the question, What is faith? "It is not only a knowledge by which I do steadfastly assent to all things which God hath revealed to us in His Word: but also an assurance kindled in my heart by the Holy Spirit, through the Gospel, by which I rest upon God, making sure account, that forgiveness of sins, everlasting righteousness, and life is bestowed, not only upon others, but also upon me, and that freely by the mercy of God - for the merit and desert of Christ alone". (52).

By the end of the sixteenth century clearly the reality of a saving faith was firmly based in the preaching of the Gospel, and "true faith" kindled by the operation of the Holy Spirit. The full assurance of grace and salvation had become a credal statement of the Church: "such as truly believe in the Lord Jesus, and love Him in sincerity, endeavouring to walk in all good conscience before Him, may in this life be certainly assured that they are in a state of grace, and may rejoice in the hope of the glory of God". (53).

(52) Wm. Dunlop, A Collection of Confessions of Faith, Catechisms, Directories, Books of Discipline, etc. Vol. 1, pp. 35, 39, 71. 87, and 339ff.

(53) Wm. Dunlop, A Collection of Confessions of Faith etc., Vol. 1, p. 87.

In the decade which followed Bruce, Robert Rollock was to elaborate the federal theology into a double covenant scheme which covered works as well as grace. In his teaching the call of God was no longer confined to an elected élite. Rather the covenant-obligation was applicable to the whole nation - to each individual without exception. Thus he took pains to emphasise the inherent personal response involved in the covenant. "What consolation at all, much less a strong consolation, can that be, when as I am certain that the promise concerning Christ doth belong only in general to the Church, and not to myself also in particular? Nay, rather in that very thing is my grief increased when one sees that the benefits of Christ pertain to others, but not to myself at all". (54). In the Pauline sense, justification by faith was for Rollock the proper end of all evangelical doctrine. The covenant is therefore bound up with the doctrine of free grace. In other words "Effectual Calling" is the Gospel. "Now the doctrine of the Gospel may be comprehended in this form: Whosoever believeth shall be justified and live. The proposition is the voice of the Gospel, or of God himself calling. For therein is contained the first part of an effectual calling, which is nothing else but a proclamation of the free covenant the form whereof is contained in this proposition". (55). The covenant is therefore a free covenant, and since it is no longer restricted, it is effectual as the result of everyone's supernatural faith as he applies himself to Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the Covenant. Rollock identifies the covenant with all the Word of God. He

(54) Robert Rollock, Select Works, Vol. 1, pp.217f, ed. Wm.M.Gunn, Wodrow Society, 1844-49. Hereafter read, Rollock, etc.
(55) Rollock 1, p.195.

says that "God speaks nothing to man without a covenant". He singles out a covenant of grace attached to God's free mercy in Christ and a covenant of works attached to the law, and argues that the law of works is necessary because it operates in bringing Salvation by increasing the sense of moral failure: "for so the covenant of works and the rule of the law of works must be set before everyone which is without Christ seeking righteousness by the law and the works of the law to this end, if it may be, that by the sense of sin and the feeling of his own misery, he may be prepared to embrace the Covenant of grace in Christ. (56). Thus the open door into the Kingdom of God was faith first and foremost. First, faith in Christ, which was justifying faith, the sign of effectual calling. And, second, works of regeneration, which were required by believers - but not as merit - but as duties only, and testimonies of their thankfulness to God their Redeemer. (57). Regeneration was a process in time. And we may sum up Rollock's teaching in the following manner: man had been unable by his natural powers to do God's will, but that God in accordance with His eternal purpose had graciously intervened.

We gather from Melville and Calderwood how this teaching was set forth - and in language that not only elaborated God's compact with the elect - but included a clear justification for a special Divine band between God and the people of Scotland. (58).

The whole nation was regarded as having been predestined to fulfil a special role in God's purpose, not only for Scotland but for the world. And this conviction was to play an important part in the

(56) Rollock 1, p.36.
(57) Rollock 1, pp. 39-45.
(58) Melville, Diary, pp. 234, 239, 240; Calderwood V, pp. 436-437.

Covenanter's assurance of final victory. From the start the Reformation had been regarded as unique in Scottish history. And two generations of preachers had riveted the concept on the national conscience. Moreover the general use of Apocalyptic literature became a popular means of propagating this universal role. By this literary device they not only illuminated past events, but also employed it as a prophesy of things to come. Even in the early Post-Reformation period the claim was made by Knox that the Church of Scotland had these doctrines in "greater purity than any other Reformed Realm ". Some have found support for the view, not only of a wide-spread spiritual revival during the seventeenth century, but also for the evidence of an upsurge of national patriotism which finally culminated in the National Covenant of 1638.

Accordingly Burrell was not exaggerating covenant history when he wrote: "Scottish Divines had prepared themselves and their auditors for a historical climax that would transform mankind. (59). Sermons and Confessions diffused a sense of "Divine Imminence" - the sense of "Salvation history". (Heilsgeschichte).

"Never we believe was there a Kingdom, since that of the Jews, that with so much solemnity did, in a public national capacity - Kings, Lords, and Commons &c - consenting own their belief in the truth as it is in Jesus, and engage to a steady immoveable adherence to its interests, as our Church did by the National Covenant, when it did before the world, angels and men, avouch the Lord for its God and

(59). The Covenant Idea as a Revolutionary Symbol - Scotland 1596-1637, Scottish Church History Society, XXVIII, 1956, pp.348f; also Apocalyptic Vision of early Covenanters, Scottish Church History Society, XLIII, 1964, pp. 1-24.

devote itself to His Service . So that to us, in so far, what is said of Israel may be applied beyond other countries: Thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God: The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people to himself above all people that are upon the face of the earth". (Deuteronomy, 7, 6.).(60).

This declaration may be taken as representative of the general covenant outlook. They hailed the religious crisis of 1638 as the sign that God was on their side, and that the covenant contained the promise of inevitable victory. But they also took their stand on the ground that the covenant and the church were immutable. They believed in one covenant, one church. In spite of all the disturbing events connected with the reign of James 1 and Charles 1 they refused to leave the Mother Church. The policies of both Kings, as we have seen, had all along presented a potential threat to the Presbyterian system. It may be said that from 1584 Presbyterian hopes fluctuated considerably. Fears abounded that the true religion was in jeopardy in the land. "Sum men presses to erect an new Popedom ...". (61). The King's exercise of the royal control put them out of hope of getting anything done to put matters right in the Kirk. (62). Indeed during the first part of James 1's reign resentment against the use of the"prerogative" mounted so high that he was accused of pulling "the Crown of Royall authoritie within the spirituall kingdome af the head, and from the hands of Chryst Jesus, the onlie head and King of his Kirk..." (63).

(60) W.Dunlop, Ends and Uses of Confessions, p. 256.
(61) Diary, p. 93.
(62) See Row, pp. 152-153.
(63) Diary, pp. 93, 122.

In the face of this continuing conflict there is no doubt that the covenant concept exercised an important influence in preventing schism within the National Church. The obstinate refusal of both Kings to relax their exercise of the royal prerogative, together with the ferment raised by the attempt to impose the New Liturgy under Charles 1 might have been expected to end in a wholesale separation from the Mother Church. "Conventicles" or "Private Meetings", for prayer and Scripture reading had been a feature of the life of the Reformed Church in Scotland since the days of Knox. But the life of the Kirk had never been in danger from the disruptive influences of Anabaptists, Brownists, or Puritans, as had happened in England and elsewhere. This did not mean that a "creeping Episcopalianism" did not create a wide-spread alarm. It was only at the end of his reign that James' high-handed methods connected with the "Five Articles of Perth" 1618, created doubts in the minds of many about the survival of the Presbyterian system. As a consequence of James' action, at first, to enforce obedience to "The Articles", Conventicles began to appear for the first time, and in mid and south west Scotland "church attendances began to be halved". (64). But it appears that this action on the part of some Kirk people is to be taken more as an act of "protest" rather than a deliberate intention to schism. Indeed the only thing that was new was that a number of ministers began to meet with their people in places where they were free to hold an act of public worship according to the "traditional form", that is, without conforming to the King's "Articles". Indeed those ministers and members who disobeyed had no

(64) J.K. Hewison, The Covenanters, 1, p.191. "All the rest of that yeare, the King's Majestie was urging the Bishops to take ordour with ministers that would not conforme". Row, pp. 324f.

intention of forming a new Congregation.

When the "Articles" controversy was at its peak between 1618-24, the consequence was rather a firming of the Kirkmen's determination to withstand all Prelatical opposition. There is a description of a disturbance in Edinburgh: "At sundrie tymes of this year, there were sundrie privie meetings of ministers and the good Christians of Edinburgh: setting apart dayes for fasting, prayer and humilitation, crying to God for help in such a needfull tyme..." (65). Such evidence of disturbance could easily have led to separation, but those who engaged in these "Conventicles" were not aware of doing anything which was unlawful. The Prelatical Party accused them of being Separatists, Puritans, and Brownists, nevertheless they remained, and strove to reform a "corrupt" church from the inside.

What was meant by a "corrupt Church" during the confusion of the period, is difficult to define. It was likely that "kneeling at Communion" was the main cause of contention. But the evidence shows that there existed other reasons for the conflict between ministers and their congregations. The charge of Arminianism was in the air, and the fear of Anabaptism was never far away: "the minister and the people fell in disputing and reasoning together, and the people not getting satisfaction rose, from the Table and went away, beseeching God to judge his awin cause betwix them and their minister &c". (66) . What can be said with confidence is that out of this controversy about the "Articles" and the "Liturgy" there emerged a group of leaders,

(65) Row, p. 328.
(66) Row, p. 321.

who included men like Dickson of Edinburgh, and Bruce of Stirling, later to be joined by Rutherford, (Anwoth) Dickson, (Irvine) Henderson (Leuchars), and Robert Baillie of Kilwinning, who vehemently opposed the innovations of James and Charles. These ministers later appear as the "Traditionalists" who were determined on the overthrow of Episcopacy. (67).

The conclusion to be drawn from the time of the troubles which existed between 1620-1638 is the steadfast loyalty of its members both clerical and lay, to the Mother Church. (68). In spite of "warding" and persecution, they refused to abdicate their Presbyterian principles. Even those who sought refuge in Ulster regarded themselves as separated geographically, but not in theory, from the Mother Church.

Later there was some evidence that the Radicals, who had triumphed over the innovations of James and Charles, were inclined to favour differences in public worship which went beyond the traditional forms. By 1640, however, Baillie draws attention to what seems like the beginning of something different coming into Scotland from Ireland. He speaks about their "Private Meeting" and the "conceits" they were spreading. (69). But these practices were not acceptable to the Scottish Kirkmen: "the Presbytery and Magistrates of Stirling began to suppress these private meetings, and began to paint in black letters all the singularities they knew". (70). These Churchmen took their

(67) See David Stevenson,'Conventicles in the Kirk', 1619-1637, Scottish Church History Society, Vol.XVIII, 1973, pp. 99f.
(68) See Row, pp. 337-390.
(69) Robert Baillie, Journal and Letters, Vol.1, p.249, Ed. Laing, Bannatyne Club. Hereafter read "Letters" etc.
(70) Letters, 1, p. 249.

stand on the ground that the covenant and the Kirk were immutable. They believed in one covenant and one Church. Accordingly they held firmly to the Presbyterian principle, in the face of all opposition, and bent all their efforts to reform the National Church from the inside. It was for this reason that all "Private Meetings" were regarded with abhorrence.

In dealing with the beginning of the covenant concept there is much which cannot be clearly defined, yet there is no doubt that it went back to Knox himself. He made use of the old Scottish "band" and blended it into a covenant with God in the Scriptual sense. In the development of Knox's covenant theology attention is drawn to the following conclusions. (i). In the use of the Bible parallels the Scottish nation is identified with Israel in the Old Testament. The people thus stand in a covenant-relationship before God in which reciprocal covenant-obligations are involved. (ii). By instigating what was called the "Exercise", provision was made for the strengthening of the Protestant faith, and education in the Reformed doctrines, by meetings in churches and in the homes of the people for the reading of the Scriptures, hearing the sermon and the prayers. And (iii) by the Exercise of prophesying for ministers intended to serve the purpose of providing candidates for the ministry. In consequence there appeared a generation of Protestant preachers who carried forward the work which Knox had begun, and imparted a sense of crisis and destiny which sank deep into the national conscience as the conflict between Church and State developed.

During the Melvillian period which was marked by the rise of the

Presbyterian Party and the beginning of the "Episcopacy controversy", covenant teaching and Presbyterianism became fused in the minds of the people. A new confidence was created by the stressing of "Bible liberties" and the Gospel of free grace, which worked steadily towards strengthening the belief that the Scottish nation was called to fulfil a special role in God's purpose for the world. There is much to support the view that along with this went an upsurge of national feeling which reached its climax in the National Covenant of 1638.

The disturbances caused by the Stuart Kings in Scotland by their use of the "Prerogative" and the widespread alarm caused by the threatened innovations in worship, might easily have led to separation from the Mother Church. But the "Men of the Covenant" and the Kirk were immutable. Therefore they held firmly to their Presbyterian principles, and remained to bend their efforts to reforming the Kirk from the inside. The motivating force behind their audacious efforts was a firm belief that their covenant oath bound them to preserve the purity of the Church according to the Word of God.

11. THE JACOBEAN COMPROMISE 1567- 1625.

The long reign of James VI is mainly occupied with the controversy over Episcopalianism. Covenant history now becomes centred in the extension of the Presbyterian form of Church government which was being advocated by Andrew Melville. Apparently it was new to the Scottish Church, where ministers and bishops had co-existed under Knox, although by 1575, a year after Andrew Melville's return, the General Assembly had given a judgment that: "the nam bischope was comoun to euerie pastor, and ordeinit that breither sould inquire ferdar bathe in that and uther poinctes of the discipline and policie of the Kirk". (76). Concurrently there had appeared a new assertion of the Church's right to convene free Assemblies, and to exercise sole jurisdiction in matters of "doctrine and discipline". But jurisdiction, as we have seen, in the light of the covenant concept, was concerned with the civil as well as the ecclesiastical. It was the minister who taught the magistrate how it should be done according to God's Word. "The minister, on the uther part, exerces nocht Ciuill jurisdiction, but teaches the magistrat whow it sould be done according to the Word of God". (77).

The Presbyterians had started off with high hopes when their first Protestant Prince ascended the throne. But when James came of age and took the reins of government into his own hands, the peace which had existed between the Church and Crown suddenly came to an end. James VI soon made it clear that the circumstances of the Reformation Settlement, both in its religious and political aspects, were not to his liking. He quickly had made up his mind that he intended to rule as well as reign. The dramatic sequence of events

(76) Diary, p.41.
(77) Diary, pp.68ff.

which marked the course of his long reign demonstrate how . . . he succeeded in managing the business of kingship in a very difficult situation. From the start, two apparently irreconcilable principles set the stage for a prolonged conflict. James suddenly declared his intention to rule by "Divine Right", (a Mediaeval Theory of Kingship, which James later elaborated into a meticulous system of precepts for the guidance of his heir). This was finally published as the "Basilikon Doron". The book contained instructions about the office of the King in ruling the Kirk, that the "parity of ministers" did not agree with monarchy, and that bishops were essential for the Three Estates of Parliament. The publication of this document, which had been supplemented by the "True Law of Free Monarchies", appeared as late as 1598. But James' mind had been made up long before then. Long Regencies had tightened the grip of the nobles on matters of State. But in addition "fiery ministers" had got a taste of government, and had begun to imagine that they had achieved a form of democratic government. Their political philosophy involved making the civil subservient to the ecclesiastical. The whole concept militated against James' idea of kingly rule. Thus he determined on the use of the royal prerogative as a counter-poise to the pretensions both of the nobility and the kirkmen. James however had the sense to realise that in the atmosphere of the times, it was necessary to provide some "religious sanction" in order to win the obedience of all classes of the people. Thus the theory of Divine Right became the "touchstone of all thought and action .... and James succeeded in establishing absolute government in Scotland to a degree that Kingdom had never known". (79).

(79) D.H.Willson, James I, pp. 130, 313, 1956.

The whole interest of the reign centres in how James was able to maintain a balance between these two extremes. It was to avoid the dangerous conflict in these two spheres of opposition which filled James VI's long reign with intrigue, dissembling, compromise and often fraud. First an unusual degree of political skill was needed to deal with the problem of the hereditary nobility. A long line of Regents had established the nobles as the traditional advisers in matters of State. Here James showed a remarkable dexterity at manipulating events. He had a true discernment of the interests which would best serve the ends of his political philosophy. He was capable of dissembling or temporising or even assuming an obsequious attitude as the occasion demanded. This in large measure explained the diplomatic juggling which went on well into the 1590s, involving Elizabeth and France and Spain and also the Jesuits and Catholic Earls. This diplomatic skill saved James from stepping over the line which would have been damaging to his main ambitions. That is, he was very careful not to alienate England nor the Kirkmen or the people. James even succeeded in reassuring the Catholic community in both kingdoms by his clemency to the Catholic Earls and also by his quite sincere desire for religious toleration. Calderwood has paid a deserved tribute to James' ingeniousness: "when he realised that the Ruthven faction was becoming damaging to his interests, he pretended to give up his friendship with Lennox". (80). But often what looked like craftiness on James' part contained the true ingredients of Statesmanship. Spottiswoode's tribute in the end was not wholly undeserved. He described James VI as the "Scottish Solomon" -admired for his wisdom. (81).

(80). David Calderwood, History of the Kirk of Scotland, Vol. 111, pp. 673f, Ed. Thomas Thomson, Wodrow Society. Hereafter read Calderwood, etc.

(81) See C.S.Terry, A History of Scotland, p. 310.

James early resolved to avoid being side-tracked into irrational courses by Popish or Presbyterian factions. He was adept at using suspicions to serve his purpose. For example, he used the threat of the Spanish invasions in order to rouse popular sympathy for the Crown and so ease the way for his Episcopal designs. He had given it out that "papists should be vigorously used". But Calderwood at least noted the pretence. "Putting at Papists" (VII, p.5), as he describes it, was rather intended further to advance the King's favour. On the other hand, the frequent intrigues of the Catholic Earls was used by James as a counter-poise to the Melvillian Presbyterian designs. Ultimately this form of strategy on the King's part was necessarily adopted with such frequency that, (82) Row referred to the pretext as "threed-bair", a subterfuge simply to advance the King's Episcopal designs.

Before considering James' master-stroke towards the creation of a subservient Parliament by the invention known as the "Lords of the Articles", James had resorted to other devices which combined to break down the considerable opposition he had to face from the ruling classes. James apparently had no scruples with regard to resorting to flattery and promises and even bribes. It became patently clear that the way to advancement lay along the line of Court favour. In this direction James wielded a most effective instrument in his control of what was known as the "Royal Patrimony". By an Act of 1587 all ecclesiastical property was annexed to the Crown "with certain exceptions". (83). The Act also had made some dissatisfaction for the

(82) Row, p.306.
(83) See W.C.Dickinson & G. Donaldson, Source Book Vol.11, p.44 Hereafter read, Source Book, etc; Acts of Scottish Parliament Vol. 111, p. 431.

payment of the clergy "in their degrees". "Na guid was done for the Kirk bot be the contrar, sche was spuilyiet be a plane law of the ane halff of her patrimonie". (84). By the lavish distribution of these Church lands among the nobles James was able finally to treble the number of his supporters designed to further both his political and ecclesiastical designs. Mathieson confirms (85): "There was none that was brought under the King's obedience but for reward either given or promised". It is said that the annullment of this Act lay at the root of all Charles' troubles later (1626). But in 1587 James succeeded by the use he made of grants of church lands in creating a considerable excess of those who were grateful for royal favours. From the nobles, bishops, barons and burgesses so affected James made his choice of those who composed the Lords of the Articles. The purpose of this "Commission" was to determine all matters to be brought before Parliament beforehand; the result was that by this means the King robbed the Scottish Estates of its powers. Parliament simply did little more than rubber stamp the proposals prepared by the "Articles". James succeeded in gaining control of Parliament by manipulating this organisation: "James brought the nobility to heel and transformed a loose and inneffectual monarchy into a paternal despotism". (86). After 1603 James could boast that he was able to govern Scotland from Whitehall with his pen.

The Presbyterians had begun to look with expectation towards their first Protestant Prince. But the passing of the "Black Acts", (1584)

(84) Diary, p. 173.
(85) W.L.Mathieson, Politics & Religion, Vol. 1, p. 168. Hereafter read Politics & Religion, etc.
(86) C.S.Terry, A History of Scotland, p.310.

had put a temporary damper on their hopes. James through Parliament asserted the royal authority in religious and civil matters and increased the power of the bishops. Not surprising by these sudden turns of events he caused considerable apprehension: "the King talkes upon him to rewel and commund alsweill in Chryst's spirituall Kingdome as in his awin ciuill . . . the reanes of Discipline, etc. ... ar put in the hands of the Court and thair corrupt Bischopes". (87). This was the first stroke of the royal prerogative, and it appeared to the Kirkmen that James had set himself to destroy what he had pledged himself to uphold. Only three years previously, (1581) James had signed the "King's Confession", which was to become the basis of the National Covenant of 1638. "Papistical superstitions" were only one aspect of what the "Confession" condemned. It had confirmed Christ as the only King and Head of the Church, had distinguished between the civil and ecclesiastical powers, and above all had asserted the right to free Assemblies. Now Presbyterian rejoicing had turned to mourning. The apparent ease with which the "Black Acts" slipped through was probably due to an obsequious Parliament. No doubt it was also helped by the recognition of the benefits Episcopacy had rendered at a time when the Presbyterian organization was weak. However the event signalized the beginning of the Presbyterian controversy which spanned two reigns. It involved the question of "bishops", "discipline", "jurisdiction", and all "innovations". Bishops, it can be said were never alien to the Scottish Church, being an integral part of the Knoxian Church Polity. Mathieson indicates (88) that the Knoxian Church inclined more to

(87). Diary, pp. 128-129.
(88) Politics & Religion Vol. 1, p. 285.

Presbyterianism, yet oddly, Calderwood (Vol IV, p.206) has a reference to "that form lately invented in the land called Presbytery". The best way is to regard the two systems as existing side by side, and working agreeably well, until Melville came with his doctrine of the "Two Kingdoms", which really went far to confuse the division between the two jurisdictions, since ministers had been given the right to teach the magistrates, and all the godly ought to hear and obey. (89). The aphorism "no bishop no king" was probably an exaggeration invented by James to make the situation look more precarious than it was. But James was confirmed in the view that the Episcopal system offered the best opportunity for the exercise of the royal prerogative in matters ecclesiastic. In fact James had come to regard Episcopacy as the "bene esse of the State, with the bishop's authority asserted over the Church generally, and the bishop responsible now to the King, not as previously to the Assembly". (90). In this instance the two extremes were the "Divine Right of Kings" and the "Divine Right of Presbytery" and they were clearly incompatable. James had to do something to diminish the political powers which the Scottish Church had inherited at the Reformation. A general consternation swept through the Presbyterian ranks as a result of the King's action. "They haiff pulled the Crown of royal authority within the spirituall kingdome . . . af the head, and from the hands of Chryst Jesus the onlie head and King of his Kirk". (91). But most likely there was beginning to emerge a "moderate party" both in the Assembly and Parliament who saw in some form of Episcopacy a better hope of peace for the

(89) Diary, p. 68.
(90) Robert S. Rait, The Making of Scotland, p.168, 1929.
(91) Diary, pp. 121-123.

Church than extreme Presbyterianism could offer.

But these "moderating" influences apart, James was able to make almost every situation serve the interests of his balancing expediency. Throughout this period circumstances imposed upon James the necessity of practising the art of conciliation. He was wise enough to know that to hold a theory of government without the machinery to make it work was futile. He realised that some restriction in the exercise of the royal prerogative was essential to his ultimate aims. He knew how to assess the mood of the people. James' skill, as Melville instances (92) was demonstrated in his ability to solve discordant policies: " and thereafter exponing all our greiffs and petitiones, receavit, as said is, verie guid answers, namelie a promise of a Parliament with all convenient diligence, etc...". He skilfully avoided the ultra-Protestant partnership of the Ruthven Lords by appointing Maitland chancellor. This resulted in paving the way to a greater degree of national unity than had existed under Arran. As James had relaxed the severity of the so-called "Black Acts" in 1592, and had shown his skill at easing tensions, while keeping the ultimate authority in his own hands, so "he was ready to end all quarrels; he was willing to compose all matters that troubled his peace though with some disadvantage". (93). Nevertheless James pursued his plan for extending the jurisdiction of the bishops because it was through the instrumentality of bishops in Parliament that he hoped to curb the extreme Presbyterians. His attempt at tampering with the Discipline (94) immediately had aroused Melvillian denunciation: "thereupon exhortation [was] giffen to dell with his Magestie in

(92) Diary, p. 214.
(93) D.H.Willson, James I, p.25.
(94) See Diary, p. 189.

maist graue and instant maner . . .". But James skilfully directed his policy towards winning the support of the middle classes - lairds, burgesses, and not least the moderate party in the Kirk, while at the same time stirring up exaggerated reports about Popish plots. It was really a ruse to keep the people on the qui vive and to strengthen the plausibility of his own plea for the need of a stronger central authority by the extension of the Episcopal jurisdiction. (95). And this was in spite of the fact that from the time of the Second Book of Discipline (1578) and by Act of Assembly the "Presbytery" had taken over the authority of bishops. (96).

During the late 1590s James was able to capitalise on a series of changing circumstances to further his Episcopal designs by appointing clerical Parliamentary representatives. It had been James' ambition all along to create an Ecclesiastical Estate. Whether he thought that this would strengthen his jurisdiction to appoint and prorogue Assemblies was doubtless a motivating factor. The Crown's interference with the authority and prerogative of the General Assembly had just been firmly denounced. (97). One link in the chain of circumstances which helped James' schemes to strengthen his hold on the Kirk at this time was the arrogance of the Presbyterians themselves which was epitomised by Andrew Melville's reference to James as "God's silly vassal". At the same time David Black and the Edinburgh ministers had let fly a barrage of calumniating innuendos against James and the Court. When they refused to bridle their tongues, claiming their "right to preach", James resolved on a "show of arms" in Edinburgh. But James who had no liking

(95) Row refers to this ruse as a common feature of James' policy, p.306.
(96). See Source Book, Vol. 11, pp. 16f.
(97). See Calderwood, Vol. V, pp.481-482, for the Kirkmen's reaction to James' censure of Mr. David Black: "But seeing it was the libertie of Christ Jesus' Gospell and Kingdome that was so heavilie hurt in the discipline thereof . . .".

for violence and, feeling secure in the revulsion of sympathy in his favour which the ministers' actions had created, wisely decided not to push the issue beyond a "remonstrance". Such a high-handed solution of the Edinburgh problem might have had repercussions elsewhere. James was thinking of Elizabeth and the English Succession, and his reputation as a Protestant Prince. But Calderwood suggests that the affair ended up in a less revolutionary manner than at first appeared possible because of the increasing influence of moderates in the Assembly and Council : "who accorded to the truce, and leaving off the sharpenesse of application, studeing alwayes to peace, and hoping for agreement ...". (98) . Other factors at this time had made the changing situation more propitious to the exercise of the royal prerogative. In the late 1590s the national situation had lost much of its urgency and James was able somewhat to relax the diplomatic tension he had to rely on to keep the nobility and Kirkmen on agreeable terms with the Crown. For one thing, the ultra-Protestant tradition was in decline among the majority of the great Scottish Peers. (99). For another thing, the return of the Catholic Earls (Huntly and Errol) to the Protestant fold did much to mitigate the fear from the Catholic faction.

The extraordinary thing is that it was when the Church of Scotland had "now come to her perfectioun, and the greatest puritie that ever she atteaned unto, both in doctrine and discipline, so that her beautie was admirable to forraine kirks", (100) that James was able to score a victory over the Kirkmen by the appointment of "Parliamentary Bishops", (1597). It was a time too when "covenanting fervour" had received a

(98) Calderwood Vol. V, pp. 485-490.
(99) See Diary, p.315, as confirmation in the case of Lord Hume.
(100) Calderwood Vol. V, pp. 387f; Diary, p 222.

new impetus by the "renewing of the covenant" and the catechetical events at Kilrenny Kirk. No situation might have been deemed less propitious to a "creeping Episcopalianism". Yet in spite of the fact that the Melvilles and Calderwoods and Dicksons were still forces to be reckoned with, James went forward with the creation of his "Ecclesiastical Estate". Obviously new forces were at work which the Presbyterian party were not able to control. But James had retained his power to appoint Assemblies. He also showed his skill at manipulating Assemblies to serve his Episcopal schemes at Perth in 1597. Melville shows how much the control had passed into the King's hands:"by voting and dealing the King's will was wrought". (101). But James had masked his real intention of having "Parliamentary Bishops" by arguing that the cause of the Kirk would be better served from having someone acting from within. James' real intention was to rivet his hold on the Kirk. He later openly declared that he intended to "put in that roum, and these offices, sic as thought guid, wha wald accept thereof, and doe thair dewtie to him and his countrey". (102). In any case the choice of Perth as the meeting place for the Assembly was suspect from the beginning since it gave James more ready access to the northern ministers whose Episcopal leanings best aided his schemes.

When James left for England, (1603) he left behind him an obsequious Privy Council which ratified Acts already prepared by the Lords of Articles. All matters which James disliked were razed out before they came before Parliament. Between 1605 and 1621 James turned successfully to the device of shifting the convening Assemblies to Perth or Dundee or Montrose in order to get through his final Episcopal

(101) Diary, p. 274.
(102) Diary, p. 308.

schemes which involved permanent Moderators of Synods, clerical votes in Parliament and lastly the notorious "Five Articles". And when Presbyterian opposition proved too stubborn James simply resorted to the use of the prerogative to ratify articles which had not been actually passed by the Assembly but were assumed to have been "solemnly concluded at Dundee or Montrose". (103). When opposition broke out into open revolt over the question of "clerical votes in Parliament", which had been declared by the Presbyterians repugnant to the Word of God,(104) James had turned his ingenuity to mollifying the humour of the Kirkmen. He "dilated" with effect that the bishops' connection with the Kirk's Polity would best serve the means of controlling Popery. But the main instrument for restraining recalcitrant ministers was the reminder that presentations to Benefices were in the King's hands. And James was able to counter the Presbyterian arguments about "votes in Parliament as being unlawful" by actually bringing forward practical arguments about the need for the Kirk's voice being heard in Parliament: they would no longer need to "stand at the doore, giving in papers of petitiouns, and yitt skarse gett a faire answere, when they had waited on manie dayes". (105). James never intended anything deleterious to the Church. He had frequently declared that he had no "minde to bring in Papisticall or Anglican bishopping; but onlie to have the best and wisest of the ministrie appointed by the General Assemblie. . ." (106). It needs to be said that James' schemes to fasten Episcopacy and the royal authority on the Kirk cannot wholly be

(103) Calderwood, Vol. VII, pp. 3,9,25,37.
(104) Diary, p.301. "But that anie General Assemblie, before the last in Dondie, haid determined that ministers sould vott in Parliament, it was flatlie denyed . . . that often tymes that question haid bein agitat in Assemblies and amangs breithring, bot could never be fund, whow it could stand with the office of a minister to be a Lord in Parliament, nor was able to be schawin be the Word of God".
(105) Calderwood, Vol. V, p. 669.
(106) Calderwood, Vol. V, pp. 693-694.

attributed to "votting and dealling". (107). It is true that the northern ministers influenced the chain of events because of their radicalism. But contemporary evidence makes claim to a changing climate of opinion that it would be better to "lose sum thing rather nor all". (108). Did this exaggeration arise in their minds because of the fear of possible conformity with England, in spite of the assurances James had given?.

It may seem surprising in spite of so much Presbyterian agitation that there never had been anything resembling an anti-bishop campaign in Scotland. The weakness of the Presbyterian organization had aided the need for Episcopal jurisdiction and administration, even in spite of an intensified campaign by the Melville party. Meanwhile the influence of the moderates had been enhancing the cause of toleration - and they seem to have achieved a considerable degree of passive obedience. But James' notice of the danger of the extreme Presbyterians must not be passed over. He went as far as "warding" offenders, but never exercised the power of excommunication. James' harshest punishment was vented against the Melvilles who had stood as a direct challenge to his new ambition of planting Diocesan Episcopacy in Scotland. Melville saw the King's action as the destruction of all that he had been trying to build up all his days. (109).

It is idle to pretend that the power of Assemblies after 1610 was not mitigated by the growing influence of Diocesan Synods. Row is surely indulging in exaggeration when he declares that Assemblies had become mere "ciphers and their doings corrupt". What irritated the Presbyterians was the existence of a new kind of "privie Conference ...

(107). Diary, p. 274.
(108) Diary, p. 265
(109) Calderwood, Vol.V, pp. 655-668. See Jockupland's Letter.

where everything was reasoned and concluded, (as Row asserts) and the Assembly did nothing but reading and voyceing". (110). There is little doubt that the tendency at Diocesan conferences to leave out any mention of Presbytery was a source of real annoyance to the zealous Presbyterians. Calderwood presents us with a far more balanced judgment of the ecclesiastical situation at the close of James' reign. He deplores the King's action in "giving bishops episcopal jurisdiction where they never had possession" through the setting up of the Courts of High Commission to deal with "scandals in religion", but Calderwood makes it clear that these changes were never an attempt to oust the General Assembly as a legislative body. So Calderwood regards the ecclesiastical structure set up by James in Scotland as Episcopacy with a difference: "the bishops sall be subject in all things concerning their life, office, and benefice, to the censure of the General Assemblie..." It was acknowledged, however, that the power of Presbytery and General Assembly was greatly reduced; "yet notwithstanding it was not altogether extinguished or abolished". (111). In other words the Presbyterian system still existed. All that had taken place was the grafting of bishops on to the Presbyterian system. Even the courts of High Commission shared their authority with the courts of the Church. Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions still functioned as before, exercising the powers of discipline in questions of marriage, Sabbath-breaking and the persecution of Papists. When James came to introduce his major change in policy in 1610, he had to get the sanctions of the Assembly. Generally speaking the ordinary members of the Church were little aware of the existence of Bishops. Moreover they had never been

(110) Row, pp. 301, 306.
(111) Calderwood Vol. VII, pp. 102, 103.

popular with the Scottish people. In their "titular status" many of them had begun to show an arrogance which the Scots regarded with disfavour. If Row is to be trusted it seems that "thir doings at this corrupt Assemblie, (Glasgow, 1610) were heavilie regraited by good brethren, and godly professors ...". (112).

Perhaps a truer picture of the Kirk after the Glasgow Assembly (1610) is that it conformed nearer to what the Church of Scotland had been like in its immediate post-Reformation aspect when Presbyterianism and Episcopacy had co-existed. All through his reign James had exercised a limited control only. He was able to manipulate Assemblies but he could not ignore them. James wisely interpreted his role as Moderator between extreme factions. It may be wrong to call James' ecclesiastical achievment as Episcopacy at all. Better "to style it the Jacobean Compromise". (113).

That compromise (as we have seen) was always precarious, because "changes" imposed by the Crown had never been "matters indifferent" to the Melvilles, Calderwoods and Bruces. Petitions still poured in asking for the return of the "Discipline". The militancy of the Presbyterians was mitigated by the widespread tendency of the ministers to accept the change on grounds of toleration. (114). When in 1618 James attempted to force upon the Kirk the "Innovations in Worship" known as the Five Articles of Perth, it was only too clear that he was deceived into expecting consummations for which the religious climate offered not the slightest warrant. The "Articles" themselves which dealt with such matters as kneeling at Communion, private Communion, Baptism, and Confirmation, together with observance of the great festival events of

(112) Row, p.282.
(113) G.Donaldson: James V - James VII, p.207, 1965.
(114) Calderwood, Vol. VII, p. 138 "their resorting to the diocesan Assemblies ... is onlie toleration".

the Christian year, such as Christmas, Easter, Whitsun etc. to our contemporary way of viewing such things looked innocuous enough. But from the start the Presbyterians had shown an almost paranoiac aversion to these "innovations". The Knoxian form of worship had by now become part of the religious ethos of the Scottish people. Moreover James seemed to be acting with a lack of caution which was not in character. He proceeded to present the "Articles" at the Perth Assembly before the commissioners had even seen them - and even against the advice of some of his bishops. Once again the Episcopal tradition of the northern commissioners aided their passage through the Assembly, while the commissioners from the south and west solidly opposed them. "The action (says Mathieson) was ill-considered and could have damaged James' whole Ecclesiastical Settlement". (115).

Ministers found their congregations halved and conventicles began to spring up in many areas. In the face of this widespread resentment James relented and promised not to press the innovations, even withdrawing the proclamation to "kneel at communion". The trouble was that these were only half measures. Protests against holding an "unlawful Assembly went unheeded" - an act of contumacy which wounded the Presbyterians deeply. Meanwhile the "Articles" continued to have a divisive effect upon the Kirk life throughout Scotland because some clergy observed them as a private matter. Indeed to the Kirkmen (says Calderwood) the Articles were not thought of "as lawes binding either to fault or paine, but as admonitions and institutions ,.. Such ceremonies are juris privati non publici. Ilk man is bound in conscience by word, first to discerne what is indifferent and then to direct himself in the

(115) Politics & Religion, Vol.1, p. 317.

right use of everie individuall thing for his owne edification.."(116)

It would have been better if James had let the matter rest there permanently, but he decided to have the "Articles" ratified by Parliament which was to meet in 1621, and the events associated with the passing of the Act increased the sense of religious insecurity among the people. James had promised the Parliament in Edinburgh 1605 not to enforce conformity with the Church of England. On the eve of Parliament of 1621 the intensification of James' campaign concerning the Perth Acts suggested a more determined move towards "conformity". New proclamations appeared at Market Crosses, "intimating to all our lieges and subjects of our express will and pleasure concerning obedience to be given to the Acts and Ordinances of the foresaid Assembly" . (Perth). In addition the continued harrassment of those ministers who refused to preach on "holie dayes", and did not administer the communion (kneeling) according to the conclusions of the Perth Assembly , increased the apprehension that James was determined to impose his will on the Kirkmen. (117). Welsh even denounced those who practised the "innovations" as having fallen from their callings and even accused them as idolatrous. "They are no more to be counted orthodoxes, but apostats". (118). Positive reasons were advanced why Parliament should reject the "Articles". They emphasised the unlawfulness of the Perth Assembly, that the "changes" confirmed the Papists in their errors , that Parliament would be passing Acts already called in question by "the ministrie, but also by the greattest part of the most zealous professors of the whole bodie of the Kingdome". (119).

(116) Calderwood, Vol. VII, p. 477.
(117) See Calderwood, Vol. VII,pp. 414-424 - The proceedings of the High Commission against John Scrimgeour.
(118) Calderwood, Vol. VII, p. 409.
(119) Calderwood, Vol. VII, p. 481.

In spite of this last desperate attempt by the Kirkmen the offending "Articles" were finally ratified by Parliament, in like manner as a "show of agreement" had got them passed the Assembly at Perth (1618).

We have no way of telling how far the old King was acting vindictively. By devious ways and specious expedients James had succeeded in imposing the rudiments of Episcopacy on the Church of Scotland. It needs to be remembered that there was nothing absolute about James' victory. It was an "attenuated Episcopacy". It worked because of James' temporising skill. The rejection of the "Innovations in Worship" showed how Presbyterian the Church of Scotland still was. Bishops formed but an alien and extraneous addition to a system that remained thoroughly Presbyterian. A factor of the first importance is that throughout this period of ecclesiastical change, Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries had continued to function with an astonishing effectiveness. From the passing of the "Black Acts" (1584) to the events of "Black Saturday" (1621), the fires of resentment had been kindled again and again. At the end of the reign the revulsion which the ratification of the Perth "Articles" occasioned among the people of Edinburgh in 1621 was typical of a growing acrimony against the King himself: "the people of Edinburgh ... desired to heir none but suche as wold spake evill of the King". (121).

James VI despite his exercise of the royal prerogative succeeded in leaving the Church in comparative peace at the end of his reign. It is true that there were times when he had begun to travel down the road which might have led to revolt, but he had the wisdom to stop

(121) Calderwood, Vol. VII, p. 509.

before he had gone too far. His rashest action came at the end of his reign when he attempted to enforce the Articles of Perth, and might have permanently damaged the ecclesiastical system he had striven to build up.

It can be said that James' temporising ability and his power of assessing the mood of all classes of the people go together. His passionate belief in the Divine Right of Kings was sincerely held. He recognised that the "prerogative" was a form of government that needed to be restricted. James was equally committed to the Episcopal system as the bene esse of the State, although the office of bishop had never been entirely acceptable in the Scottish Church, except in times of necessity , where the Presbyterian system happened to be weak.

But between 1597 and 1621 James had succeeded in planting an "attenuated Episcopacy" upon the Church of Scotland. In this regard his schemes were aided by shifting the meeting places of the Assemblies; by claiming Assembly sanction for Acts that had not in fact received the Assembly's approval, but had been later ratified by the royal prerogative; by popularising the idea that bishops were the best way of controlling Popery; and that clerical votes in Parliament best served the Church's cause; ministers latterly moved to comply because they had begun after 1605 to fear the imposition of something more drastic - conformity with England.

But James' Episcopal limitations were only too apparent. His Diocesan conferences never took the place of the legislative powers of the General Assembly. Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries continued to function normally throughout the period. And in the end all that had been achieved was something akin to what had existed in the immediate post-Reformation Church of Scotland. All in all the "Jacobean Compromise" is a good description.

111. DECLINE IN RESPECT FOR MONARCHY.

There is little doubt that the controversy had affected the peoples' attitude to monarchy. It was only too apparent that James VI had achieved his ends by fraudulent means. He was noted for his fondness for "dealing" and dissembling", and that had made his sincerity suspect. It was a legacy which his son Charles did nothing to mitigate. There probably never really existed anything approaching a "King-subject relationship" between the Stuarts and their peoples. In a feudal society it is difficult to imagine a more dominating loyalty than what was due to the local Overlord. In some sense it would also be true that the King would stand in a similar succession where the response of loyalty operated. In truth the presence of conflict between the Crown and the people created a feeling of uncertainty, and a sense of constitutional hazard which destroyed sympathy in the end.

When James VI revived the mediaeval concept of Divine Right, it certainly recalled Tudor despotism, and in any case was entirely out of harmony with the view of monarchy proposed by George Buchanan and also by Knox. Buchanan's De Juri Regni appeared in 1579, and stressed a limited monarchy. Monarchy according to Buchanan consisted in a mutual pact between the King and the people. It was similar, therefore to the "bond" between the Overlord and his servants. But for Buchanan it stood on a "constitutional basis". These were "laws" involving "reciprocal obedience." The Knoxian view was practically undistinguishable from the the De Juri teaching. In an encounter with Mary Stuart we have Knox's most graphic expression of the relation of the Prince to the people. "If their Princes exceed their bounds ,

Madam, and do against that whereof they should be obeyed, it is no doubt but that they be resisted, even by power... and think not Madam, that wrong is done unto you when you are willed to be subject unto God: for it is He that subjects people under Princes and causes obedience to be given unto them; yea, God craves of Kings that they be as it were, foster fathers to His Church and commands Queens to be nurses unto His people. And this subjection, Madam, unto God and unto His troubled Church, is the greatest dignity that flesh can get upon the face of the earth, for it shall carry them to everlasting glory". (122). A similar view had been expressed by John Craig, Knox's colleague in St.Giles, namely, that "Princes are not only bound to the laws and promises to their subjects, but in case they fail they may justly be deposed, for the bond between the Prince and the people is reciprocal". (123). The King was ordained by God and seems to suggest that the hereditary principle was expedient, and that the King acts through the consent of the people.

We deduce from this that the system of government which was approved by Knox, Buchanan and Melville, was that it centred round the King and the Three Estates of the Realm, and was ordained by God. It was a view also which included the concept of the Prince as the "Chief Magistrate" who was looked upon as the dispenser of justice, with the power to redress grievances. The King was someone to whom the people had access with their grievances, petitions and supplications, which practice went back far before the Reformation. Already under the Stuart Kings there is beginning to appear some corroborative evidence that the people's expectations were becoming somewhat

(122) Knox Vol. 11, pp. 282-283.
(123) Henderson, The Burning Bush, p. 121.

diminished: Row refers to the futility of petitions "in these corrupt times".

The exercise of the royal prerogative accordingly had created a sense of insecurity because it undermined the "free laws and liberties of the land". During the conflict with James and Charles constant appeal was made to the Acts of Assembly and Parliament. They were able to make that appeal on the grounds of sheer constitutional premises. Against these rights James' condemnation of "the wickedness of disobedience and revolt" filled both Kirkmen and people with alarm.(124). In other words, "absolute rule" stood in direct opposition to Melville's doctrine of the "two Kingdoms". Of Christ's Kingdom James was not a head or a King but a member: "Ther is twa Kings and twa Kingdomes in Scotland. Thair is Chryst Jesus the King, and His Kingdome the Kirk, whase subiect King James the Saxt is, and of whase Kingdome nocht a King, nor a lord, nor a heid, bot a member" (125). And indeed the area of James' jurisdiction in the civil sphere was never clearly defined. Calderwood drew attention to the people's fears of absolute rule that it was "directed against the course of God's worke in our Kirk and ellis where, as rebellious to kings. (126) There is little doubt that the tone of James' "Basilikon Doron" lent strength to this view. He had come to regard the Scottish Reformation as the result of popular tumult and rebellion. (127). The subsequent history of events, especially during his minority, had given dominant Presbyterians a taste of government which had become repugnant to James.

(124) True Law of Free Monarchies, 1598.
(125) Diary, pp. 245-246.
(126) Calderwood, Vol.V, p.727.(The Law of Free Monarchies was printed, 1589.)
(127) Diary, p. 295. "The rewling of the Kirk weill is na small part of the King's office". (Basilikon Doron).

He had denounced their pretence at humility, but at the same time they did not conceal their arrogance in presuming to "judge and give law to their King but will be judged nor controlled by none". (Basilikon Doron). There is some justification for regarding the processes of "petitions" and "supplications" and the presenting of "grievances" to Parliament, together with the emphasis on the people's rights to free Assemblies and Parliaments, as the achievement of a form of democratic government. It was for this reason that even the least militant among the Presbyterians found James' theory of "Divine Right" repugnant to the Word of God. The proclamation of the royal authority which aimed at destroying the "Discipline" began to widen the gap between the people and the Crown. The authority of the General Assembly, the "parity of ministers", and the right to free Assemblies and Parliaments had become the traditional standards of the religious and political life of the Scottish community. The point of divergence between the Crown and the people emerged here and grew wider as the King's attempts to enforce his authority continued to gain in momentum during the last part of his reign.

It is true that James did not deliberately turn a blind eye to the need for popular support. When it suited his diplomatic interests he had shown his intention to deal harshly with the Catholic Earls, and had roused himself into a ferment of Protestant concern in the face of the threat from Spain (1588), to win the favour of the people. James even refrained from carrying out his threat against the Edinburgh ministers for not conforming to the "Articles of Perth", because of the damage it might do to his reputation as a Protestant prince. There were shocking inconsistences in his character which created the

impression in the minds of his subjects that he was thoroughly unreliable. Diplomatic juggling, while he was able to wield it effectively to make good his purpose, had raised questions affecting the King's sincerity. Unfortunately James was not above acting treacherously. When he had decided not to press the "Perth Articles", and had let David Black and the recalcitrant Edinburgh ministers off with a "remonstrance", then later "deprived" David Dickson and others for the same offence, there was no concealing the evidence of the royal treachery. When the bishops were ordered to take account of "the abuses, the extravancies of preachours in the pulpit", it signalised that respect for the King's dignity was becoming eroded.(128) The King's frequent use of the terms "sedition" and "treason" did not help matters, especially when most of the charges which were aimed at particular ministers could not be legally justified.

There is little doubt that the people's reactions to the "Five Articles" indicate quite clearly that James himself was aware of a decline in the respect for kingship. Nothing was more pathetic than the "peevish" declaration which James made against those who had refused to yield to the royal authority. "He [would] let the Kirk of Scotland know, what it was to have adoe with an old king, or to abuse his lenitie that he would have noe conventions of ministers to treatte, in times coming of matters of the kirk, but onlie the bishops..."(129). The threat was empty although in the interval between 1618 and 1621

(128) Calderwood Vol. VII, pp. 531, 543, 549, 553, 559. The ministers cited were:- David Dickson, Irvine, George Dunbar, Ayr, George Johnson, Ancrome, Thomas Abernethie, Ekfoord, John Smith, Maxtoun.

(129) Calderwood, Vol. VII, p. 289.

acts of "depriving" of ministers for non-conformity went ahead on a modified scale. Members of the Privy Council, as well as the Kirkmen, apparently had come under a like condemnation. When the "Perth Articles" came up for ratification in 1621, James had found it necessary to remind the members of the Secret Council of their promise to obey the King's laws and Acts of Parliament. But Calderwood (130) indicates they had shown only a half-hearted acquiescence in the King's demands. They expressed themselves as obeying "passivelie and not activelie ... and were dismissed with a gentle and generall admonition, without particulare inquirie". The old contrivance of "voting and dealing" had to be brought into operation once more. (131).

Questions respecting James' sincerity were also raised by his policy of toleration which had had the effect of increasing fears of the spread of Catholicism throughout the Kingdom. When James suddenly proclaimed his authority over the Kirk and extended the power of bishops in the 1580s, the Presbyterians had accused him of setting up a new Popedom: "It is a tytle falselie usurpit by Antichryst to call himselff head of the Kirk". (132). The introduction of the "Articles of Perth" had had the effect of renewing this suspicion in even a more acute form. The "ceremonies" were regarded as "the entry of Papistry". By 1622 James' attitude to the "Popish recusants" had intensified alarm among the people because the King's policy of "toleration" was "opening too wide the gate of popularitie". Doubtless the King's favour for the Catholics opened up the prospect of increased influence on their part in national affairs. The lessening of

(130) Calderwood,Vol. VII, p. 515.
(131) Calderwood,Vol. VII, p. 488. "Few wold have consented to the ratification of the Five Articles in Parliament, if they had beene left to their owne libertie, and not wrought upon by the Marqueis of Hamilton".
(132) Diary, p.68.

restrictions had produced a restless spirit among the Catholics. They would seek "to aspire to a superiority", which meant of course that the King's policy was opening the way to responsible offices of State and might bring about what the Kirkmen feared most: that "they would never rest until they get the subversion of true religion". This apprehension had begun to take root even south of the Border. The Bishop of Canterbury had found it necessary to admonish James on this very matter. He was accordingly asked to consider "what your Act is, and what may be the event of it". (133).

Nothing worked against respect for kingship more than the fear that the glory of Christ's Kingdom was in danger. "Novations" and novelties in doctrine, sacraments and discipline, and every attempt to interfere with free Assemblies and Parliaments, shook the people's confidence in the institution of monarchy. James' usurpation of the power to "deprive" ministers was always met with the counter-demand that "all ministers removed shall be restored". It was Montrose who read accurately the "writing on the wall", when he counselled Charles I. to practise temperate government. He saw the King still as the "Lord's Anointed", but he was wise enough to know that there were deep roots in the Scottish nation that could not be easily plucked up. When Charles took up the reins of government it was clear that things had completely changed. The power and authority had passed again into the hands of the great Scottish ruling families. It was no longer the exercise of the royal prerogative that counted. Rather the Privy Council and Parliament obeyed the forces which Argyll controlled. The royal skill at diplomatic juggling was at an end.

(133) Calderwood, Vol. VII, pp. 485, 578. "Resist, therefore, the establishing of ceremonies, as a re-entrie of Papistrie".

Additional reasons for the decline in the people's respect for monarchy have been attributed to the personalities of the Kings themselves. "James had no charisma whatever, and Charles very little ; neither was much loved or feared by those who were fairly close to them, or by the people at large. James hated the English as a Scot; his ungainly presence, mumbling speech, and dirty ways, did not inspire respect". He was even accused of "homosexual associations " with Buckingham... "In the light of these stories it is clear that the sanctity of monarchy itself would soon be called in question ; Charles was far more respectable than his father in his personal habits, but he was no more successful in winning personal admiration... By 1640 there was not much left of the Divinity that doth hedge a King". (134).

In all probability social conditions played a much greater part in bringing about the Scottish Revolution of 1638, than we have corroborative evidences for. The search for economic reasons is made more difficult by the fact that religion dominated 17th century Scotland to the eclipse of what we call to-day socio-economic questions. The claim is made that Scotland in comparison with England was shockingly poor, but it is as difficult to make accurate comparisons as it is to compare the relative wealth of America and Britain to-day. In 17th century Scotland wages were meagre and the people very poor,yet there was no evidence of growing social unrest among the lower classes. (135.)

(134) L.Stone, The Causes of the English Revolution, 1529-1642, pp. 89-90, 1972.
(135) See G.D.Henderson's The Church of Scotland. A Short History. p. 85, 1939.

We have no direct proof that the Kirkmen were concerned with questions of working conditions and wages as were the Quakers in England. According to Henderson (quoted above) the ordinary life of the people was little affected by what seems to have been epoch making changes. But the lack of evidence of a conflict society does not necessarily mean the non-existence of "suppressed classes". Moreover we could be in error if we conclude that the Kirkmen did not concern themselves with social conditions. Since they took the whole Bible as their field, the question of "social righteousness" would not be left out of their reckoning. How far social conditions formed a standard for revolt in 1638 is difficult to assess. Stevenson (136) says that "the causes of revolt were social only in so far as a variety of motives led the Scottish society to unite to an unusual extent against the King". At the end of his book Stevenson draws more specific attention to these motives under headings borrowed from Lawrence Stone's "The Causes of the English Revolution". (137). One of these "causes" is referred to as "Dysfunction" which is to be understood as disharmony between the Social system and the Political. This disharmony is regarded as resulting from the change in the political system which had followed the Union of the Crowns (1603). One result of the change of the seat of government to London was that it created a sense of political deprivation among the Scottish nobility. Both James and Charles adopted a policy of advancing to offices of State such persons as Hamilton and Lennox and Lanark who had no strong loyalty to Scotland, and who had no deep interest in Scottish affairs.

(136) Stevenson, The Scottish Revolution, 1638-43, p.28. Hereafter read, "Stevenson, etc."
(137) Stevenson, pp. 315-326.

Moreover the interruption of the free exercise of constitutional machinery as a direct consequence of the Crown's choice of the Lords of the Articles intensified the frustrations of the great Scottish nobility who had long been the hereditary advisers to the Scottish monarchy. James I himself had become "Anglicised" to a degree which made the brusque manners of the Scottish nobility disagreeable when compared with the greater refinement of the English court. Moreover the comparative wealth of the English aristocracy increased among the Scots a sense of inferiority. Finally the prospect of Anglican Episcopacy being foisted on to Scottish Presbyterianism brought this element of discord to a head under Charles I.

A second sociological factor listed by Stone takes in the question of "satisfaction and expectation". Provision had been made in the Treaty of Union for free-trade between the Kingdoms. Europe generally seemed to be experiencing a growth in economic improvement, but whether Scotland shared in these improved conditions cannot be verified. A grievance was that free-trade with England did not materialise. "Union had shown the Scots new horizons but did not seem to provide them with opportunities to meet them". (138). But Stevenson warns us against transposing the events of later European Revolutions into the earlier period. "Retrospectively", (139) he says, "sociologists tend to see class conflict as linking all revolutions in history". That is a deduction which may be logically made from a survey of the continuing cycle of events. And therefore Stone's theories are no doubt justifiable as a retrospective sociological

(138) Stevenson, p.320
(139) Stevenson, pp. 315-326.

projection based upon the insights of later revolutions. Accordingly it can be argued that a covenant as the "standard of revolt" would have a natural attraction for the discontented in 17th century Scotland. It would have been very surprising if the suppressed classes had failed to manifest a suitable resilience when the opportunity of improving their lot presented itself.

Whatever importance however may be attached to the ideas of "Dysfunction" and "unfulfilled expectations", we have to reckon with the evidence that trading prospects were anything but bright in both Kingdoms. James I had succeeded in bringing about peace with Spain and had opened trading routes both with that country and the Netherlands. Charles I also had the best intentions towards his northern Kingdom. At first he had consulted the Council on the questions of advancing its prosperity. Both the Act of Revocation and the revival of the Justice-Ayres were intended to serve this purpose, but in spite of such attempts to encourage industry and commerce the trading prospects languished. Foreign wars continued to discolate trade. Scarcity of commodities made prices high. There was always a scarcity of money in the Exchequer: P.Hume Brown has summed up the situation succintly. "Foreign levies, coast defences, and the mustering of the people kept the country in a state of disquiet, and did not conduce to the peaceful development of its resources. Moreover there was a vague uneasiness in all classes of the nation as to the outcome of the economic readjustment which was to be effected by the transfer of the Church property to the Crown, and in this uneasiness lay all the possibilities of discontent, and even of future revolution". (140).

(140) Register of the Privy Council of Scotland, 1627-8 Vol.11, p.II.

At this period also we come across specific references to numerous complaints coming from many boroughs drawing attention to privations related to the export of wool. The wording of a Missive to Charles draws attention to the seriousness of their complaint (July 1625). "Very heavy regret and complaint made unto us anent the frequent exportation of wool which has brought such a great misery on this Kingdom ... as many thousands of people and poor families who had no other means of living but by their industry are turned into beggars". (141).

Harvest failures were also a recurring phenomenon leaving famine in their train. In 1596 Melville records a severe famine in the south and west: "In spite of provision of flour coming in from other countries, yet ... many died". For some reason also he makes mention in his Diary of abuses of the King's Patrimony which "affected the welfare of the common people". Also he takes account of "intolerable taxations, exactions and imposts to be made upon the King's subjects", resulting in unhappiness and "the wreck of pure laborous". (142). In his history Calderwood also refers to a famine which took place in 1623 which "increased daily till at last many both in burgh and land died of hunger". The suffering fell heaviest upon the poor as might be expected who "died through famine in the fields and in the hie wayes", but it affected persons of all ranks. (143). When Charles I visited Scotland in 1633 allusions are also made to failing crops throughout the land.

(141) Register of Privy Council of Scotland, Vol. 1, 2nd Series, p.75.
(142) Diary, pp. 131, 243.
(143) Calderwood, Vol. VII, p. 594.

It is reasonable to deduce, with Stevenson, that a variety of motives combined to make the covenant the standard of revolt against Charles I in 1638. But predominantly the "griefs" which were coming before the Council were religious in nature. The main focus of attention becomes the "Liturgy Imbroglio". As we have seen James VI never threw caution to the winds. Bishops may not have been regarded in Scotland as the esse of the Church, but they had been in the main acceptable. "James' modus operandi was to use the kirk itself to carry out his plans. But he had the wit to clothe his proceedings , however autocratic they might be, with at least a decent semblance of legality". We have seen that in the instance of the "Perth Articles", although he appeared reluctant to admit the right to disobedience , but he stopped short of "damaging the whole ecclesiastical settlement" he had managed to set up by his skill at temporising. (144). By 1625 the ecclesiastical structure which James had brought about resembled more nearly the aspect of the Knoxian system at the immediate post-Reformation era.

New influences were also at work which were potentially dangerous to monarchy. Increasingly from 1603 the idea of a king who ruled from London tended to diminish the loyalty of the Scots people. We cannot speak of anything resembling a "brand of Scottish Nationalism", but there seems to have been an upsurge of the National spirit.

There was also a "recrudescence of Presbyterian fervour" - a revival which most likely stemmed from the intensification of covenant teaching connected with the Kilrenny Kirk events. (1596). (145.).

(144) See Politics & Religion., Vol.1, p. 317.
(145) Diary, pp. 239ff.

There is no doubt that the implications of the Reformation Gospel had been intelligibly disseminated. (146). Some writers have even pointed to something in the nature of a religious revival. " A quite surprising religious exaltation characterised many Scotsmen throughout the 17th century". (147). This provides a background to the nation-wide response which the National Covenant awakened in 1638 and which has been described as the "Second Scottish Reformation". The teaching of the covenant had embodied and corroborated what the people believed to be God's will for the nation. The word covenant had become a significant way of expressing the hopes inherent in both Scottish and English political thought. It may have been that the Reformers had made the people into theologians without the refinement of the Colleges. (148). However they were able to wield a language of communication which was extremely important where the ordinary people were concerned. Quite logically this ferment of covenant teaching would influence the upsurge of national feeling at this time. Moreover the fear existed of Scotland becoming a mere appendage of England. Rule through the machinery of the Privy Council dimished the mystery of government in the Scottish mind. There was no disguising the resentment felt among the ancient ruling classes in Scotland. The people began to speak about "alien influences" coming in from England. Fears began to arise about the "Constitution". For one thing the appointment of Archbishop Spottiswoode

(146) Hugh Watt, Recalling the Scots Covenants, pp. 22-23.
(147) S.A.Burrell, Apocalyptic Vision, XLIII, pp. 1-24, 1964.
(148) Politics & Religion, Vol. 1, p.182.

See also, The Scottish Covenanters 1660-1688 by I.B.Cowan,p.17 "... there is general agreement that constitutional opposition to the king was as important as matters of religion. Unfortunately the radical nature of this opposition and the designs and background of those who supported it have still to be fully investigated".

as Chancellor in 1635 was hotly resented by the nobility. The election of bishops as "Commissioners of Estates", and Justices of the Peace, from among the clergy gave offence because it diminished lay representation, and was taken as an attempt to increase Stuart despotism. Above all the suspicion grew that the thought of an "absentee King" would have the effect of diminishing interest in Scottish civil and religious Institutions. In no small measure the appeal of the Covenant lay in the fact that it was regarded as answering both interests.

It is assumed that prior to the Reformation period the king-subject relationship had not gone beyond the loyalty which the servants owed to their feudal Overlord. Certainly the Stuart concept of "Divine Right" was alien to the Scottish people. Inevitably the conflict with James and Charles was intensified as a result of the fundamental divergence which began to take shape at the Reformation between the rights of the king and the rights of the people over whom he ruled.

It was the case that Buchanan had proposed what was in fact a limited monarchy. This idea of a "mutual contract" between the King and the people was familiar, as we have seen from the dialogue between Knox and Mary Stewart where he hints that unworthy Princes may be deposed. That was in fact a foreshadowing of Buchanan's theory of "reciprocal responsibility". However Andrew Melville went much further in his doctrine of the " ~~The~~ Two Kingdoms". There we come upon the idea that the "Two Kingdoms" are not equally and exclusively separate. James is not a "King nor a Lord but a member of Christ's Kingdom" of which the secular state is a part. It is here that we come upon the notion of a "Theocracy" as the coherent constituent.

What is beyond reasonable doubt is that the Men of the Covenant

were in favour of "Constitutional Monarchy". And they believed that a "covenanted Prince" would serve the good of the Church and the people, according to God's Word; that he would uphold the Reformed Faith, Presbyterian Church government, the right to free Assemblies and all that affected worship and discipline. That was identical with the will of the people. In the light of these doctrines the exercise of the royal prerogative by both James and Charles was the touch-stone of the main opposition to the Stuart Monarchy.

But in addition we have to take account of a variety of other causes which affected the people's relation to the monarchy. It has been claimed that the character of the Kings themselves may have contributed to the people's decline in their respect for monarchy. But of much greater significance was the growing disenchantment which began to affect the Scottish outlook after the Union of the Crowns (1603). The promise of "free trade" between the two Kingdoms languished. Scotland remained notoriously poor, often to the point of starvation. There existed disharmony also as a result of moving the seat of government to London. The ancient Scottish ruling families regarded themselves as being "politically deprived".

Social and political factors in 17th century Scotland should not be studied in isolation from the influence of the monarchy, but it was the question of religion that finally precipitated the conflict between the King and the nation. It was the Book of Canons and the New Liturgy under Charles and Laud which made the National Covenant of 1638 the standard of revolt. After only eighteen years of rule, Charles succeeded in enlisting the opposition of all classes of the people against him. He was by common consent singularly unfitted to rule Scotland.

IV. THE LITURGY IMBROGLIO.

From the start Charles 1 showed a lack of sensitivity where Scotland was concerned, which did not forebode well for the future. Behind all his blunders lay his failure to understand that he was only a "constitutional ruler over a free people". (149). The attitude which Charles adopted to these ancient constitutional rights led to the rise of a Constitutional Party in Parliament which came to include both nobles and Kirkmen. He instituted persecutions against those who resisted the royal prerogative, and that widened "the rift between the people and the bishops". (150). He came to rely on such men as Montrose, Hamilton, Lanark, Lennox and Spottiswoode who were the supporters of his unpopular Episcopate. He rejected the counsel of men like Rothes, who was perhaps the only one attuned to English life. (151). The Scots whom Charles mainly gathered around him have been described merely as adventurers whose desire for royal favour was not matched by a corresponding desire to serve their native country. The causes of opposition are accordingly easy to single out. The King's policy to overlook the Scottish nobility, his preference for Englishmen, his unprecedented appointment of bishops to offices of State, and not least, his failure to understand the importance of the General Assembly, showed a disregard for prudence and precedent which a wiser counsel could have obviated. These influences which affected Court and country ultimately united all classes in a single minded opposition to the Crown and finally drove them down the narrow road to rebellion. (152).

(149) James K. Hewison, The Covenanters. A Study of the Church of Scotland from the Reformation to the Revolution, Vol.1, p.209. Hereafter read, Hewison, etc.
(150) Row, pp. 350f.
(151) David Mathew, Scotland under Charles 1., p.15, 1967.
(152) L.Stone, The Causes of English Revolution, pp. 8f.

At the very outset Charles' handling of the Act of Revocation (1627), laid the foundation of a disharmony between the Crown and the nobility which was to remain unabated. At first it looked like the one statesmanship act of the entire reign, but in point of fact, it was so ill-advised in the circumstances that from this act flowed all the evils that dogged Charles' footsteps to the end. It alienated the landowners throughout the Kingdom and created both animosities and uncertainties which time did nothing to mitigate.

The action was interpreted as being actuated by good intentions towards the Church. But unfortunately in 1626 over the question of the "teinds", as later in 1636 over the question of the "Liturgy", Charles had shown himself incapable of acting with due deliberation and necessary caution. "Proclamations" began to appear at the King's behest announcing his intention to overhaul the "Teinds". The action was precipitate and without any attempt at explanation: this was clearly not expected and was the occasion of a "Protest" directed against meetings of the Lords of the Articles who had " concluded among them sundrie things that were an evident hurt both to Kirk and country, they penned an humble supplication which was to be subscryb-ed by many, both of the nobilitie, barrons, and burgesses..." (153). Moreover it became clear that the "re-organisation" of the Teinds had a double purpose. It was not only directed to help the Kirk, but was intended also to confer certain financial bebefits on the Crown. Actually Charles' real intentions were not easily disguised. He was angling for a strong clerical party to support him in Parliament. It seems that the King's intention was to "restore Abbots and to invest

(153) Row, p. 364.

them in the seats and revenues of Abbeys (about 48) who are all to sit and carry voices in Parliament - to sway the whole house". (Quoted by P.Hume Brown from Sir William Brereton's, "Early Travellers in Scotland"). (154).

In fact this royal policy actually produced the opposite effect. To the grievances of the nobility were added those of the bishops when they realised that the King's action was going to bebefit the Crown "money-wise" more than the Church. And the whole episode connected with the Act of Revocation was bound to have repercussions which would be damaging to the royal security. Indeed Charles' scheme met with a recalcitrant nobility, and it was only under threat of legal action that they finally submitted particulars of the valuation of their "Teinds" and lands. (155).

In fairness to Charles and Laud the need to overhaul the revenues of the Kirk were long overdue. An Act of Parliament dating from 1567 had decreed that the Thirds of Benefices were first to be paid to the ministers for their stipends, and the super-plus was to be applied to the King's use. (156). The Act had been notoriously difficult to implement. Perhaps Charles had been influenced by the example of his father, who had long contemplated the inauguration of what was called a "Constant Platt" to meet the needs of adequate stipends for the ministers. However the needs were not merely confined to furnishing an adequate stipend, but an equally urgent need was for the planting of Kirks to meet the spiritual needs of a growing population. Nothing however was attempted until the year 1617, which year James had paid

(154) Source Book Vol.11, p, 82
(155) Row, pp. 342-345. "The ministers were all charged de novo to give in the valuation of their teinds and lands of their parishes more exactlie than at the first they were given in".
(156) Acts of The Parliament of Scotland, Vol,111, 24c, 10.

one of his long delayed visits to Scotland. But if Charles failed on the side of altruism, so did James. It has been claimed that most likely James was motivated more by his desire to achieve alterations in worship, which finally were embodied in the "Perth Articles", than from a pure concern for the lot of his impoverished clergy. It is perhaps an exaggeration to suggest that the "Constant Platt" was dangled before needy clergy to smooth the way for the "Innovations". The evidence is that James' designs became apparent, and in the end he returned to England: "miscontent that he had not gotten his will in the maters of the Kirk - blaming Calderwood thereof more than any other minister". (157).

It must be acknowledged that James' "Platt" had done something to improve the lot of the ministers even although consent or otherwise to the Innovations had resulted in great irregularities. For one thing it was better than the collected "Thirds" which went back to 1567. The difference in benefit to the ministers after the inception of the new scale of stipends laid down in the "Constant Platt" promised an augmentation which gave no small satisfaction. In 1561 the Reformation Kirk had estimated the stipend in terms of 100-300 merks; in 1617 the minimum was 500 or a maximum of 1000 merks. But the system instituted by James had lent itself to abuses other than the preferment which had accrued to those who favoured the proposed "Innovations". But the initial complications went back to the time of the Reformation itself when lands and revenues which had formerly belonged to the Abbeys and Monasteries had been alienated to the Crown, and then granted in

(157) Row, p. 312.

commendam to a great many of the Scottish ruling houses. As a result the Church had been denued of a large portion of her general "Teind".

James' "Platt" while it had done something had fallen very far short of putting this abuse right. But obviously the whole circumstances attached to the question of the "Teind" called for an actuarial skill far in excess of what James could possibly have provided to unravel the situation. Spottiswoode accused James' "Platt" as having worked rather to the "detriment of the Kirk, for what augmentation was granted the same was recompensed to the givers by the prolongation of their former leases for numbers of years, and thereby the Church was more damnified than bettered". At any rate the powers given to Commissioners had resulted in greatly reducing the number of Churches and stipends in about 200 cases. And certainly this policy of the "Prolongation of Leases" delayed the time when the whole "Teind" could be reclaimed for the Kirk. But an unfortunate aspect of the "Platt" was that it gave rise to a class of speculative persons known as "Tackmen of the Teinds". They actually fulfilled the function of acting as "middle men" between the ecclesiastical titulalars of the Teinds and the Teind-paying community at large, and so they relieved the titulars of the trouble and unpopularity involved in the process of collecting. (159).

(159). For more detail see David Masson, Introduction to Register of Privy Council, Vol. 1, 1625-27, 2nd series, CXV, CXLVII, CLXVI, Edinburgh, 1899. See also, W.R.Foster, The Church before the Covenants, p.160. "To assign a stipend to a minister did not necessarily mean that a minister would receive the total amount assigned. Stipends were a matter of endless litigation, as can be seen in almost any volume of the Acts and Decreets of the Court of Session".

When Charles proposed his Act of Revocation in 1626, he had attempted to defend his action on the grounds of precedent which related to Patronages and Beneficies formerly annexed to the Crown. But the abruptness of the Proclamation caused alarm among the nobility. Moreover it was hardly the right time, since the Proclamation followed hard on the heels of Charles' illegal nominations to the Privy Council. It cannot be seriously advanced that all the ills which dogged Charles' steps stemmed from this one precipitate act, but there is little doubt that it marked the beginning of troubles. "Many of the ministers began in their sermons to inveigh aganis noblemen and others who would not quyt their Teinds...". (160). Charles had at first attempted to mitigate the alarm by issuing a letter of explanation: "so that none may pretend ignorance of the same". (161). Even so, the response was disappointing. A voluntary surrender of Kirk Lands, Teinds, and Patronages had not followed. Actually the Act was so sweeping in its immediate demands, since it called for the surrender of what was now regarded as all illegal gifts of lands which had originally belonged to the Pre-Reformation Church, that its harshness could not avoid resentment. In November 1626 petitions drawn up by both nobles and clergy were despatched to Charles in London. It resulted in Charles having second thoughts, and a New Commission was issued in January, 1627 which aimed at bringing about more reasonable conditions and satisfaction.

It was the intention on the part of the King that this New Commission should be engaged in the task of revising and completing the

(160) Row, p. 342.
(161) Register of Privy Council, Vol. 1, 1625-27, pp. 351-353.

work of the "Constant Platt". (1617). It made provision for a much needed overhaul of the Parish system; it took account of the unwieldly size of Parishes, and gave attention to the building of churches and their repair, and, of course, the question of the provision of sufficient stipends. Clearly there was some reason for ministerial gratitude for the Church secured an annual payment. This is set out in what is referred to Charles' four "Decreits Arbitral" which was intended to explicate matters where the Teinds' controversy was concerned. Both the Ministry and the Crown came to benefit out of the ancient Patrimony. (162).

The suddenness of the Act of Revocation may be taken as evidence of Charles' serious lack of thought and deliberation in the circumstances. At the same time the landowners can hardly be excused when, in one sense, the nobility had looked upon the Reformed Kirk as their creation. But what mortally offended the nobility was the use Charles had made of the royal prerogative to implement the Act under the powers exercised by the "Articles": "It cost the Crown the support of the class it normally relied on. The nobility became Protestants to grab the Church lands. They became Covenanters to keep them". (163). That may partly be true, but the main motive which led to the revolt against the Crown was religious. It was the Liturgy imbroglio which finally triggered off the "Revolution".

Charles was to display an extraordinary lack of tact and sensitivity in his attitued to Scotland. Perhaps his greatest error was his failure to understand the character and tradition of the Scottish

(162) C.S.Terry, A History of Scotland, p.320, 1920.
(163) C.S.Terry, p. 320.

people. He had been brought up in England and did not like the Scots. But his greatest error was that he acted as though Scotland was " a pendicle of the Dioces of York", instead of a separate Church and Kingdom. (164). It may be fairly argued that centuries of struggle for independence had forged in the Scottish people the reality of a free spirit that make the theory of "Divine Right", which demanded from his subjects unquestioned obedience, hardly acceptable. It was confidently asserted that the "pact" between the King and his subjects was reciprocal. And both were bound by obedience to the Word of God. The royal prerogative had never had much chance of surviving in such an atmosphere. James VI had realised its restricted nature, and so succeeded in retaining the reins of government in his own hands.

Another issue was the traditional role which the great Scottish magnates had exercised in advising the King. This link had been forged through long minorities. The influence exercised by such ancient houses as the Mortons and Maitlands had the effect of reducing the status of the Scottish Monarchy, so that the King's control had been noticeably weakened. Even under James VI the direction of the Crown had been markedly influenced by the changing policies of individual magnates. Later James, as we have seen, had succeeded in exercising a balancing influence which avoided the worst effects of open conflict. Nevertheless there had always lurked in the practice of government through the Privy Council a potential danger to monarchy. This was what Charles was soon to find out.

James had succeeded in leaving behind him a relatively united House of Peers in Scotland. It was this balance which Charles began

(164) R.Baillie, Letters & Journal Vol. 1, p.2. Ed., Laing,Bannatyne Club, 1841. Hereafter read "letters", etc.

to upset at the start of his reign, first by deliberately ignoring the rights of the ruling houses in his appointments to the Privy Council, and, secondly, by the Act of Revocation. Anyway the shift of the government to London was becoming more and more a source of chagrin to the nobility. The changing character of the Privy Council was leaving them devoid of the machinery for controlling an absent monarch.(165). It became clear ultimately that the only way to rectify this situation was to take the control of government into their own hands.

There seems no reason to doubt that Charles was sincere in his desire to fulfil his father's wish in trying to reform the Scottish service. (166). And if only Charles had compounded idealism with sagacity matters might have turned out differently.

For one thing Charles failed to grasp how tenuous a thing the form of Episcopacy which his father had achieved really was. It became clear at the outset that his attempt to increase the political power of the bishops only widened the gap between the Crown and the ruling classes. A divided Cabinet played havoc with Charles' schemes in the end. The pernicious influence of Laud combined with Charles' almost insane intractability played an equally disastrous part in making his reign shipwreck. But Charles ought to have been able to take account of the fact that agitation over the "Articles of Perth" had not cooled off. "Petitions" both from Kirkmen and Lords were still flooding in; there were "divisions and many evils in the Kirk".

1. There were good reasons for increased Presbyterian alarms. Tracts

(165) David Mathew, Charles 1, pp. 31f.
(166) "Large Declaration", see Terry, p. 328.

and pamphlets were beginning to be circulated widely. However not least the Crowning Ceremony of Charles in Holyrood Abbey (1633) had sparked off a good deal of criticism. It had been after the form of the English service, and under the direction of Laud, who now began to be referred to as the "beast of Revelation". The whole affair was declaimed as savouring of "Popish" and "Arminian" doctrines,while the entire blame was put squarely on Laud's shoulders, who was denounced as ruling "the King fullie, so that in effect he was Primat, Patriarch, or Cardinall,(call him what you will), of all Britaine and Ireland". (167). 2. The whole situation of course was exacerbated by events in England connected with the treatment being meted out to the non-Conformists there. Even the bishops themselves were becoming aware of a changing attitude which the King's and Laud's actions were creating between themselves and the people. The rejection of Charles' scheme to have King James' version of the Psalms was to be interpreted as the evidence of a growing resentment. (168). These were the early evidences of the state of the Scottish mood , (1633) which ought to have caused Charles to pause and reflect. If the events of the Coronation Ceremony in Holyrood Abbey, and the reactions to his father's "Perth Articles" had resulted in disturbance, was it likely that further "Innovations" in religion would pass unheeded? These were portents that ought not to have been ignored.

Another contributary cause of Charles' failure was his failure to understand how deep-seated the solidarity of Scottish life was.

(167) Row, p.369.
(168) Row, p. 352.

There was the Clan System to be reckoned with, which though its members were given to feuding among themselves, yet they were united by the ties of a strong social bond. Equally there were blood ties which united the Scottish ruling classes - the Argyles, Hamiltons, Stuarts , etc., which had nothing to do with political affinities, such as existed mainly in the southern Kingdom. Charles must have been surprised at the extent to which the people had become outraged when Balmerino had been charged with treason (1634), particularly as his only fault had been confined to a defence of the liberties of the Kirk against the royal prerogative. Actually again the "Balmerino affair" ought to have served as a warning to Charles not to persist in pushing these "Novations" which his father had wisely refrained from doing. It was a plea to Charles to consider "the long experience and incomparable knowledge that your Royal father had in matters of government, alswell in church as in commonwealth", and so to respect the conscience of the people and the laws of the Kirk. (169). Nevertheless Balmerino's imprison - ment had its aftermath. It further reduced confidence in the King's government; it greatly increased the opposition of the Council; and hardened the people's dislike to Charles' and Laud's Episcopacy throughout Scotland.

Charles' lack of understanding was to have other more serious repercussions. He failed to understand the distinct nature of the Church of Scotland and the importance of the General Assembly. James VI's experiment in Episcopacy had practically left the Presbyterian system of Church government intact. Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries functioned as before. Synodical Conferences perhaps had lost some-

(169) Row, pp. 376-381.

thing of their original importance. Above all the General Assembly was still the repository of a political power that had remained undiminished since the Reformation. It was firmly held by the Kirkmen that bishops had no legal warrant in Scripture. Bishops were only usurpers of the powers of the Assembly. The Presbytery was the "Christ's ordinance, the Bishop an anti-Christian ordinance". The Kirkmen repudiated the King's claim to be "Head of the Church", and hotly condemned the authority of the Court of High Commission. (170). "The Kirkmen were united in an angry contempt for all Erastian compromises ... Melville had not yielded and that was an essential point to remember ... Presbyterian political power gave rise in south west Scotland to a confident intransigance". (171).

It is perhaps true to say that neither Charles nor Laud quite anticipated the degree of opposition which their proposed changes of "worship" would meet with in Scotland. It might have been argued that the Union of 1603 had raised hopes in some quarters for a greater measure of "uniformity" between the two Churches. It is a matter of speculation as to how far Charles might have succeeded in this direction, if he had chosen a different method of approach. It has to be remembered that the Five Articles of Perth had continued to be a real "apple of discord". And, as we have seen, bishops had never been seriously accepted as part of the Presbyterian Church polity. But what heightened alarm among the people of Scotland was Laud's policy in England. A campaign was on foot in England to enhance the beauty of worship by increasing ritual and ceremony. Even in England this

(170) Row, p. 361.
(171) D. Matthew, Charles I., p.35.

enthusiasm for more ritual had not met with universal approval. Indeed zealous Protestants south of the Border had expressed their fears that Laud intended to restore Popery. That was an exaggeration. But in Scotland Laud roundly had declared that he had found "no religion at all", because the Church services were so bare. Accordingly it is easy to understand how this fear that Laud and Charles intended to lead the Church to Rome would gain momentum north of the Border. Already younger bishops were being encouraged to pave the way for the "New Innovations" which were to be incorporated in a "New Book of Canons and Liturgy" now being prepared for the Church of Scotland. The whole procedure showed, not only Charles' lack of understanding, and his complete disregard for his father's tact and diplomacy, but also his quite deliberate rejection of the advice of the "old moderates" among the bishops themselves. The prevailing religious atmosphere in 1636 was not conducive either to understanding or to compromise.

Everything connected with the first appearance of what became known as "The Books" caused disquiet. For one thing the Book of Canons when it was published early in 1636 came without any reference to either the General Assembly or Parliament. Then the Articles of the Canons confirmed Charles' intention to exercise an unrestricted use of the royal prerogative: there was everything in fact to fan the fires of indignation on the part of Kirkmen - the Canons emphasised the royal supremacy over the Kirk, confirmed ordination by bishops, worship according to the Book of Common Order, Diocesan Synods, kneeling at prayers, and other instructions about Church furniture. But the most disturbing aspect of the whole affair was the absence of any

reference to Ruling Elders, Kirk Sessions, Presbyteries;- and "lastlie the Generall Assemblie (the great bulwark, under God, of this kirk, from which onlie ecclesiasticall canons can, by the law of this land, flow, and not from some particulare persons) is in effect abolished". (172). The production of the Books was done in the most secretive manner so that when Charles issued the "Missive" at the end of 1636 proclaiming the Liturgy there were both general surprise and alarm throughout the nation. Robert Baillie had no doubt that there were matters in it which would affect the peace of the Church. "The Proclamation of our Liturgie is the matter of my greatest affliction... Whonever I am greatly affrayit that this aple of contention have banishit peice from our poor Church heirefter for ever". (173). The surprising thing, however, is that so little knowledge of the Service Book was available beforehand to the people most concerned. Only when signs of a gathering storm became clear did "the bishops bid all ministers see what faults they would finde in the saids books, and [to] give in their remarks to the next Synod in October". (174). It is conceivable that this was merely a bluff on Laud's part. In any case it was the habit of Laud's life simply to act on the assumption that, "the King was the sole foundation of power... having absolute authority to sanction the Episcopal Church and its Liturgy".

An additional mistake was that Charles issued the "Missive" before the "Books" had been seen. Baillie who was not against a modified Episcopacy expressed his amazement in a letter to his cousin

(172) Row, pp. 394-395.
(173) Letters Vol I, p.1.
(174) Row, p.407.

Spang in Holland: "yit to this day we cannot git ane sight of that Book ...almost all our nobilitie and gentrie of both sexes, counts that Book as little better than the Masse". (175). And when the Liturgy was published, it was by general consensus taken as "restoring the service of the Roman Church". Samuel Rutherford who had been banished to Aberdeen for his opposition to the "Books" was sure that things looked dark indeed for the Presbyterian cause in Scotland : "Popery is intended (he wrote to John Stuart, Provost of Ayr) if I saw a call from New England, I would follow it".

Nothing could have been more damaging to any hope of compromise between the Knoxian and English forms than Charles' and Laud's high-handed rejection of the "revisions" of the English Prayer Book which were suggested on the Presbyterian side.

It certainly seems inconceivable that Charles should pay so little heed to the storm which was brewing in Scotland over the proposed "Liturgy": doubtless there was a lack of proper liaison between the Council, on the one hand, and the Court on the other, during the early stages. At any rate Charles complained that Traquair had failed to furnish him with information regarding the Scottish business. Traquair blamed Laud for withholding the information sent, (176) but there is some reason to suspect that the Privy Council had endeavoured to "play down" the extent of the opposition occasioned by the appearance of the Service Books. However it became clear very soon that the Edinburgh tumult was more than a staged demonstration. While Charles' mind had been put at rest by the explanation that the affair

(175) Letters, Vol.1, pp. 4-5.
(176) The Earl of Rothes, A Relation of Proceedings concerning the Church of Scotland, p.207, Ed. Laing, hereafter read "Rothes" etc.

was a mere fracas fomented by "a number of base and rascally people", yet Robert Baillie saw the New Liturgy as the basic reason for the disturbance. It was now being circulated generally that the Liturgy contained "sundry Popish rites". Very soon it was clear to all and sundry that the Edinburgh outburst represented a general protest : clergy, nobility, and all ranks of the people flocked to Edinburgh with Petitions against the Liturgy. (177.)

It has always proved difficult to fit the causes of Revolutions into an ordered analytical framework. (178). Only that does not rule out the quest for a uniform principle of disharmony. In Charles 1's case it was disharmony between the ruler and the ruled. The Revolution crisis of 1638 was not ostensibly precipitated by the question of bishops (per se), but by Charles' attempt to impose the "Innovations" in worship on an unwilling people. There were two elements in the conflict: the Liturgy was regarded as the subversion of a century of worship in the Scottish Kirk; and there was a pretty strong suspicion of "Popery". It is to be expected that resentments ran high and therefore some degree of distortion of the facts are not to be left out of the reckoning. It is noteworthy that Row, Henderson and Baillie unite in denouncing the Liturgy: "This Popish - English - Scottish -Masse - Service Book". (179). Henderson who finally emerged as the force behind the National Covenant had expressed similar sentiments. And Baillie, who was not likely to be easily thrown off balance by public opinion, was certain that the impression made on the Scottish mind was

(177) Letters Vol. 1, p.35.
(178) See Stone, The Causes of English Revolution, p.8.
(179) Row, pp. 398-401.

deleterious. It was so unacceptable that there was "no difference betwixt it and the the Englishe Service - save in one; to wit, in additione to sundrie moe Popish rites, which the English wants". (180) . Moreover these epithets became the current terms of abuse on the lips of the ordinary man in the street. They saw in the Communion Service the essential parts of the Mass and that the whole intention of these "Novations" was to make way for the Anti-Christ of Rome. It may be truly said that fear and resentment coalesced to produce the "Revol - ution".

By the summer of 1638 both Councillors and Kirkmen had been thrown into a state of extreme apprehension by Charles' obstinacy . Privy Councillors had shown their reluctance to arrange for the public reading of the New Service Book. Baillie was profoundly troubled about the consequence of the "Book". He had written to the Archbishop of Glasgow in a tone indicative of his deep feelings, that the merest glimpse of the "Books" which had been augmented by the opinions of others had "filled [his] minde with such a measure of grief that I am scarce able to preach to my own flock. (181). It was Row who finally indicated the extent of the inevitable threat to authority: "In the moneth of Julie after a calme arose a storme; for the Service Books now being printed, and some of them bought by some ministers ...there came out a writ arguments and reasons whu the said Service Booke should not be receaved in this Kirk of Scotland..." (182).

The stage was now reached when Charles and Laud ought to have made some attempt to quell the rising tumult with some measure of conciliation. It may be taken as axiomatic that "Revolutions" are never inevitable until they have happened. The peoples' murmurings against

(180) Letters, 1, p.4.
(181) Letters 1, p.12.
(182) Row, p.407. See also I.B. Cowan, The Scottish Covenanters I660-I688, p. I7. " Indeed on those and on other issues the book, when finally produced in I637, went to quite the other extreme. The Kalendar contained more saints' days than the corresponding English version".

the "Black Book" now called for a return to the "temporising policies" of James VI. Charles had unfortunately made up his mind to force his will on a "recalcitrant people". He infuriated the people more by issuing orders for the removal of the Court of Session to Linlithgow (Oct. 1637), and then to Dundee. It was designed to strip Edinburgh of the power to delay events, but it only had a humilitating effect and proved to be totally futile in staying the march of events. These tactics however which were designed to "delay them, that, being wearied with tyme, they might fall off", originally failed. (183). Meanwhile the King's demands remained unremitted. All subjects both ecclesiastic and civil were commanded to conform to the Liturgy against the next Pasch, under pain of horning, and every minister in their Diocese to buy two of these Books. The alternatives were now becoming unavoidable: "either they must swallow down all that the Canterburians can invent, or oppose them plainly in their lawless practises". (184).Already Baillie had expressed his fears of " a bloudie Civil war."

The "Supplications" had gone unanswered from the Court. The Council had failed to implement the King's demands. The Petitioners had taken up their position in Parliament House. They began to organise themselves into what is now known to history as the "Tables". Obviously the control was passing into their hands.

However as yet there was no open intention to revolt. The "Petitions" were increasing, but they only corresponded to a verbal assault. Moreover they had indicated their resolve to act "constitutionally" .

(183) Letters,1 p.35. "To counterpose this policie, the other party, after a little astonishment, and rage, resolved, in the short tyme was given to stay, to draw up a formall complaint against the bishops, as authors of the Book, and all the troubles that had and was like to follow on it".

(184) Letters 1, p.28.

This desire was corroborated by their dispersal at the King's behest from the capital. But their determination to pursue their purpose was still unabated. They proceeded to leave behind them in Edinburgh a certain number of chosen commissioners who were to support the cause of the petitioners by lawful means. The action which the commissioners took in the interval is significant because it underlined their legal intentions. They drew up what was called "A Narrative of History" to show that their action was in accord with the laws of the Church and the State. It doubtlessly showed the ingenousness of Wariston whose hand from now on was to be clearly seen. But the "Narrative" was intended to show that the worship and Discipline of the Scottish Kirk stood on the basis of the Constitution. And it confirmed that from the Reformation the General Assembly had largely moulded Scottish history.

The National Covenant appeared in the spring of 1638 having been presented for subscriptions first in Greyfriars Church in Edinburgh . It was surprisingly mild in its terms considering that it was mainly the creation of Wariston, who had castigated the Old Church as - "this vomit of Roman superstition". In spite of such extravagant terms there were nevertheless some reliable grounds for suspecting that the "New Liturgy" was aimed at undermining Protestant doctrine. Baillie and Rollock, Wariston and Henderson shared in a general apprehension: there were "changes to startle the most Protestant Church in Christendom", a whole array of things which could not be thought of as "things indifferent", which included the "Rubric about baptismal water, wafer bread, Fair linen cloth, the attitude of the officiating minister, changes in

the Communion Service, etc.". (186). It is therefore not surprising that the Covenant itself should be based mainly in the Negative Confession of 1581, since its framers felt it incumbent on themselves to draw attention to what they had called "Papal abominations". But the absence of pointed references to bishops may be taken as an attempt, on the part of the Covenant framers, to win the support of the Episcopalians. The Scottish nobility did not favour bishops meddling in civil affairs, but that did not mean that they were in favour of replacing Episcopacy by extreme Presbyterianism in both spiritual and temporal affairs. (187). It was Rothes who made the momentous issue clear to all classes - Nobility, Clergy and Commons. And there was no attempt to disguise what was at stake. The action of the King struck at the fundamental things of the Nation. The threat was to "our religion, our Kirk, liberties, lives and fortunes. The innovations of the Service Book, Canons, and High Commission not only restrain our liberties, but they take from us all means of ordinary and lawful remedy". (188). It was Henderson's clear reasoning that lifted the matter out of the atmosphere of clamour and excitement. He engaged in no violent protest against the Prayer Book, although, he had been moved, in the first instance, to rise in defence of the Fife ministers whom Charles had subjected to horning. He made it clear to the Privy Council that in matters of "Worship" they were not bound by a blind obedience. Henderson accordingly made a plea for time to read the "Book" which had as

(186) R,L.Orr, Alexander Henderson, p.78: Row, pp. 398f. "But our new Service Book is much more Popish nor the English Book and much less Protestant..."
(187) David Mathew, Scotland under Charlesl., p. 246.
(188) Robert L. Orr, Alexander Henderson, p.113.

yet not been warranted either by Assembly or Parliament. It was therefore quietly made clear to Charles and Laud that the Kirk of Scotland was a free Kirk and that her own ministers were the best judges of what was best for preserving the principles of the Reformation. Henderson took the occasion to remind the Council that the Books resembled the Roman doctrine and Practices. (189). Henderson's emphasis of the legal basis of the whole procedure gave the Petitioners confidence. They believed that in protesting against the King's high-handed action they stood on the side of the law and the Constitution.

Charles' reactions further proved that he was impervious to "the general grudge and murmur of the people". He turned a deaf ear to the warnings of the Council who were now becoming aware of the danger. Neither did the Covenant's denunciation of "Popery" concern Charles very much. It was Henderson's phrasing of a clause at the end of the document which Charles interpreted as being directed against himself. They were prepared to hazard in the defence of the true religion - "our bodies, means, and whole power against all sorts of persons whatsoever". Charles, however, was not persuaded that something more sinister was not intended, even when the Men of the Covenant protested that they would "hazard their lives in defence of his Majesty's person and authority." All that they wanted was the recognition of " a free Generall Assemblie and Parliaments, as the onlie means to redresse what was complained upon". (190). That was no doubt a genuine expression of their intention at the beginning. But as the conflict intensified the loyalty they professed to the monarch came to

(189) Robert L. Orr, Alexander Henderson, pp. 81-84.
(190) Row, p. 492.

be restricted by what was due to a Covenanted King" (191).

There was now a clarity about the Covenant situation in Scotland that even Charles and Laud could not ignore. The signing of the Covenant left Charles in no doubt that all classes were ranged against his intention to impose the "Innovations". The nobility had joined forces with the Council. It appeared that both were on the side of the Covenant, and the Men of the Covenant were on the side of the law of the land. They had protested from the start that "supplications are not disturbances of peace; that many people were desyrous, in a peacable ordourly way, that their greevances should be redressed..." (192). They had no intention of insurrection.

But the Kirkmen had not yet abandoned all hope of conciliation and reconciliation. Perhaps it was a slender hope in the light of the royal intransigence. But those who signed the National Covenant believed that the triumph of the Kirk principles was inevitable, and that Charles would come to see the light. Although things looked dark their great hope was that the Prince would relent... Their prayer was that God would "turne this affaire, which may wracke all, to the redressing of all, to purge the Church of all that leaven and tyrannie of the English bishops... and give to our laws and Parliaments the old and full authority and liberty and truth, to joyne the heart of the King to his subjects". (193). In other words they confidently believed that there was nothing in the Covenant to give offence to anyone, and therefore when Charles became better informed of "the truth

(191) David Mathew, Scotland under Charles 1, p. 256.
(192) Row, p. 492.
(193) Letters, 1, pp. 48-49.

of our cause", better things would ensue. Baillie himself had ardently striven to avoid any wording in the Covenant which might have given offence. (194).

From this point on, the hope of conciliation began to fade. Instead of taking a new look at the situation, Charles acted with a rashness hardly surpassed. He endeavoured to pass the onus on to the Covenanters. They were charged to "rescinde and render their subscribid Covenants to his Majestie, and so put the Kingdome in a peacable posture". (195). And at this point also Charles resorted to his strategy of delaying tactics which, not only increased the irritation of the Covenant committee, but also had the effect of deepening their suspicion. There is little doubt that Charles was adept at masking his real intentions. By a series of ruses he avoided giving a direct answer to the "supplications". He apparently had hopes that some unforeseeable circumstances would finally turn the tide in his favour. With surprising magnanimity he made a promise to grant free Assemblies and Parliaments. He even offered to withdraw the offending "Novations", and the Proclamation against the offending Covenanters. Apparently this pretence was at the instigation of the bishops who had hoped by this means to divide the people. (196). By now this kind of delaying tactics and duplicity had succeeded in creating an atmosphere of suspicion and uncertainty which

(194) Letters, 1, p.53. "These were also changed; so that no word, I hope, remaines in this write, whilk, in any congruitie, can be drawne against the Prince".

(195) Row, p. 492.

(196) Row, p. 487. "The Commissioners, asserters of the good cause, finding this a draught of the bishops to divyde them etc.".

not merely involved Charles but also swept the bishops into its vortex. And the "writing on the wall" was clear for all to read: "We have no assurance yet or warrand that one line of The Booke shall be remitted, bot hopes are made of withdrawing both Liturgie, and Canons, and Commission, and all, if we would let the Bishops alone; bot the most part is peremtorly resolved not to endure any longer their lawlesse tyrannie". The concessions Charles intended were no concessions at all. He only conceded not to press the Service Book, but "in a legal way, and to regulate the High Commission". (197). The answer of Council and petitioners was a demand for the dismissal of the Service Book, Canons and High Commission.

An irreconciliable situation had now emerged. Those who had signed the Covenant took their stand on legal grounds. They knew that history was on their side: "they knew no other Bans betwixt a King and his subjects bot religion and lawes, if these were broken, men's lives were not dear to them". (198). In the circumstances the petitioners felt that they were being forced into rebellion. The unrestricted exercise of the royal prerogative was met by a greater determination of the people to resist. Charges of treason against the petitioners made "legal and peaceful" solutions more remote. "The commissioners ... resolved to renew the Covenant, subscrybed by the King and wholl countrey, annis 1580 and 1581, and since that renewed..." (199). It was for these reasons that the alternative began to loom large: " the Supplicants either incurre the imputation of treason or else casten all into the hands of their adversaries ... against the duty they owe

(197) Letters 1, pp. 54f.
(198) Letters 1, p.92.
(199) Row, p.488.

to God, the Church and Country". (200). It was not long before the National Covenant was to become the means of focussing the mind of the entire nation upon those very issues which were apparently at stake. Indeed it soon began to appear that the whole strategy on the part of the Crown was to make the "subjects either receive their consciences doe condemne, or directly oppose themselves against his Majestie's Proclamation." (201).

Epithet after epithet focussed attention on the Covenant as a "Divine event". Henderson could refer to it as "This day of the Lord's power, wherein He saw His people willingly offer themselves in multitudes, like the dew drops of the morning ... wherein the arm of the Lord was revealed and the Princes of the people assembled to swear allegiance to the King of Kings". Wariston saw the event as the fall of Anti-Christ and the rise of Christ. A no less confirming incident was the wide-spread appeal which the Covenant had made: "all our countrey, now to count of is as one man in this business, which goes on like Elias' cloud, froma hand-breadth to fill the skyes". (202). Moreover in the last resort unseen forces would fight for the Covenant cause: "The Supplicants would doe their duty, and commit the event to God Almighty, who is sufficiently able to protect his owne cause, and their just proceedings". (203)

The trouble was that Charles could not be trusted. And those on whom he relied for advice - Hamilton, Lennox and Laud - were equally unreliable. Even when he had conceded a free Assembly and Parliament,

(200) Letters 1, p. 56
(201) Letters 1, p. 57.
(202) Letters 1, pp. 93-93.
(203) Letters 1, p. 59.

Charles still attempted to introduce divisive measures. He made it known that he preferred Aberdeen to Glasgow for the Assembly. He imagined that the atmosphere in the north would be more congenial to his cause. (204). Another ruse was his sudden offer of concessions regarding "the unhappie Books ... the Commission ... Perth Articles ... minister's entry as we could wish; bishops subjected to the Assemblie". The only condition which Charles made was that subscription to the Covenant should cease. (205). At the same time rumours began to be circulated about the King's intention to substitute the "King's Confession" of 1581 to divide the ranks of the Covenanters. There is every reason to believe that this sudden change of course sprang from some promise of military aid from England and Holland. (206).

These pusillanimous efforts on Charles' part only had the effect of binding the Covenanters closer together. The point had now been reached when it was necessary to call a halt to half-measures: "it would have been better if Charles had at first granted all, than to offer some few things which could content none". 207). It appeared to the Petitioners that the King might attempt to overthrow the Kingdom in order to set up the "innovations".

When we attempt to sum up Charles I's failure we need to take account of more than his apparent lack of sensitivity and understanding. There is little doubt that he underestimated the inwardness and seriousness of the movement. These were entrenched convictions which James VI had tended to increase: "the Presbyterian Polity carried with it a

(204) Row, p. 500.
(205) Letters 1, p.104).
(206) See C.S. Terry. A History of Scotland, p. 339.
(207) Letters, I, p.87.

conscious recognition of its own truth. Its ministers had not accepted defeat. They were united in an angry contempt for all Erastian compromises". (208).

Charles had inherited the Erastian system from his father. James had started down the road that led to "Revolution", but he had the sense to stop before he had gone too far. Where James was able to bring to difficult situations, between the Kirkmen and the Crown, a quite unique temporising skill, Charles displayed an intransigence which was quite irrational.

It may be that at the beginning Charles had been misinformed about the extent of Scottish discontent, but it soon transpired that his spurious promises and half concessions deceived neither the Council, the Kirkmen, nor the people. While Charles procrastinated and shifted, Henderson and Wariston were leaders who knew what they wanted and who were convinced that the King's demands were "aganis the lawes and practise of the Kingdome and Kirk." (208). Again Hamilton and Laud did not match the dedication and energy of the Covenant leaders. Charles' choice of advisers therefore contributed in no small measure to his failure. No one of real political or military stature came to the support of his cause. But Charles' attitude to those around him presented a problem. It was said that he remained an enigma to those he relied on. Even Hamilton confessed that he was not able to understand the King's mind. (209).

Charles' action ended up by putting control into the hands of the

(208) David Mathew, Scotland under Charles 1., p.35
(208) Row, p. 498.
(209) Letters 1, p.83. "Nothing at all was done in the counsell: the Commisioner was not pleased to this day to acquaint any there with his Majestie's minde".

Covenanters who took control both of the ecclesiastical and civil jurisdictions. It put an end to the King's supremacy over the Kirk, (after the Glasgow Assembly). and established the prestige of the General Assembly for all time. In the end the "revolution" signalised the triumph of the Kirkmen: the Glasgow "Assemblie with great boldness, zeall, and resolution, satt still, while in the Lord's good favour and rich mercie they concluded all" - and dissolved on its own authority on 20th December, 1638.(210). The men of the Covenant justified the "conflict" in the only way they knew: "the chief Magistrate has stepped out of line with society and the Divine Hierarchy". (Henderson).

(210). Row, p. 505.

V. THE GLASGOW ASSEMBLY AND AFTERMATH.

The direct result of Charles 1's action in attempting to impose the unwanted Liturgy and Canons upon the Scottish Church was to range nobles and ministers, burgesses and commons in protest against him. They had legal access to present their grievances both to the Council and the King. Accordingly they claimed the right of petition in which they firmly pointed out that the King's action in presenting the new Liturgy, supported by many of the Prelates, was undermining the traditional form of worship and bringing discord into the Kirk. They also made it clear that their resort to "Supplication" was according to the laws of the land. As a consequence they were asking the Council to give their action legal sanction. Moreover it took the affair out of the hands of the bishops. When it became clear to the Petitioners that the Council was divided, they decided to appeal to the King as dispenser of justice. Thus it can be claimed that when Henderson and Wariston framed the National Covenant they were taking their stand on constitutional grounds. And when Charles levelled against them the charge of treason, he was denying the subject's right to the means of ordinary and lawful remedy.

The Petitioners declared their intention to carry their opposition to Charles' "Innovations" to its final conclusion when they set up the famous "Committees" in Parliament House, known to history as the "Tables". By general consent, the signing of the National Covenant was tantamount to a declaration of war, for it put the Covenanters in a situation where they had either to submit or oppose. At the beginning of 1638 the Petitioners in setting up the "Tables" intended to

give the impression that they had no intention of usurping the authority of the Council, but before the Glasgow Assembly closed there is little doubt that the Assembly had taken over the law of the land and had made itself a substitute for Parliament. This was the beginning of what is called the "Scottish Revolution", which was to spread into England and finally destroyed absolute monarchy. And there is no doubt that it was a religious conflict or it was nothing.

The issue before the Glasgow Assembly (November 1638) was the abolition of Episcopacy and the establishment of the Presbyterian system of Church government in Scotland. The Commissioners proceeded to act with terrifying ruthlessness. They swept away the bishops, they annulled the Five Articles of Perth, and the Liturgy and Canons, and restored the powers of the Synods, Presbyteries, and Kirk Sessions . They proposed annual meetings of the General Assembly. These sweeping reforms were motivated by the conviction that they were rescuing the Kirk from the corrupting influence of Popery. Was their ruthless action justified? It was given out that when Henderson and Baillie first saw "The Books" they had expressed their concern. For one thing the New Book of Canons (1636) did not mention the General Assembly or Kirk Sessions or Presbyteries. (211). Therefore the Book of Canons put in jeopardy the Acts and Procedure of the Second Book of Discipline. Thus it affected the Presbyterian polity of the Church of Scotland. Again the New Liturgy was intended to replace the Old Service Book which had been in use since the days of Knox.It was regarded by Baillie and Rollock as undermining Presbyterian doctrine when it introduced a Rubric about Baptismal water, with changes

(211) Stevenson, p.45.

in the Communion Services, and other directives about linen cloth and the attitude of the officiating minister. (212). But an equally disturbing matter was that the New Service Book was looked upon as the act of an autocrat. Apprehension had increased among the Covenanters on account of the extended use to which Charles had put the exercise of the royal prerogative in England. Both Charles and Laud were the sponsors of a "creeping Episcopalianism". But in Scotland the real fear in the minds of the people was that Charles was trying to "Romanize" the Kirk. (213).

Fear of Rome undoubtedly played a predominant part in bringing about the revolutionary changes affected at Glasgow. The Assembly dealt summarily with everything which stood in the way of extreme Presbyterianism. The Commissioners went beyond the moderate terms expressed in the Covenant. It looked very much as if the followers of Melville were in the saddle, intent on pursuing the paths of bigotry and intolerance. Baillie said that the atmosphere savoured of civil war. When Charles submitted to the demands of the Covenanters and agreed to the calling of an Assembly and Parliament, he had at the time laid down certain conditions, which were contrary to the procedure of a free Assembly: the ministers "should not bind themselves up not to speak of everie thing that concerns doctrine, discipline, maners, in the persone of any whomsoever: it is aganis the lawes and practise of the Kingdome and Kirk" (214) There was only a matter affecting deposed ministers and rents of bishops. Although it was a small matter it increased suspicion and firmed the resolution of the Covenanters who dominated the Assembly. It also showed how ill- advised

(212) Robert L. Orr, Alexander Henderson, pp. 15-16.
(213) Robert L. Orr, Alexander Henderson, p.25, also Stevenson, pp. 45-48.
(214) Row, pp. 497-498.

Charles was about the true state of the Scottish mood. Indeed Charles had made himself so untrustworthy in the eyes of the Covenanters that they made preparations to hold an Assembly in the event of Charles refusing. Moreover the mood of the Assembly was undoubtedly affected by a rumour which began to be circulated that Lennox was trying to persuade the King to use force against the Scots. Perhaps such a possibility did cross their minds. But Baillie suggests that Charles hesitated being "tossed here and there with diversitie of resolutions . The bloodie counsell of St.Andrews and Ross, upon assurance of ane sufficient party in the countrey, was past from..." The Covenanters force of arms was undoubtedly over-emphasised by Charles' advisers(215) In any case the Scots were far from such acts of hostilitie, if they be not forced on them". (216). Nevertheless their readiness to meet force with force was seriously envisaged. The Earl of Rothes had declared himself in this vein: "we have here in present consideration the most important business that ever concerned this nation ". (217). There we have a hint of the consequence that might follow if the ordinary legal remedies to their grievances were denied. At least one man there confessed that he was in a dilemma. Baillie was "full of doubts about our General Assemblie, ir the King discharge it, when it is so earnestly sought, that my heart hinders me to be a Member of it". A Parliament without the King was "a horrible foun - tain of all mischiefs". (218.) Uncertainty about Charles'

(215) Letters 1, p.73; I.B.Cowan, The Scottish Covenanters, 1660-88, pp. 22,23.
(216) Letters 1, p.82.
(217) See R.L. Orr, Alexanderson Henderson, p.115, for Rothes' speech.
(218) Letters 1, pp. 95-96.

intentions moved the Covenanters to take no chances. Preparations for a full-scale rebellion grew apace. The potential to oppose force with force daily took shape. "All our countrey, now to count of, is as one man in this business which goes on like Elias' cloud, from a hand-breadth to fill the whole skyes". (219).

Before the Assembly opened on 21st Vovember,1638,the Covenant was fast becoming the symbol of the united opposition of the nation to all religious innovations whatsoever. Henderson had set the Covenant on a "constitutional basis" by the inclusion of the "King's Confession" (1581), and by the citation of former Acts of Parliament. They went beyond the original intention of the wording of the National Covenant by launching an attack upon the bishops as being unlawful. The reason no doubt for this harsh declaration stemmed from the fact that many of them had been on the King's side in championing the cause of the Liturgy. They were discredited in the eyes of the Covenanters because they had become identified with Charles' despotism. The attack on the bishops may be regarded as a secondary development which involved other revolutionary motivations such as the Act of Revocation and the discontent over increased taxation, imposts and ship-money, which over the reign had been a continuing source of disharmony. However that may be, the demands of the Petitioners had been focussed on the religious question. They made a proclamation, "declareing the inhibiting of the Service Book and Book of Canons in all tyme comeing, and makeing voyd all Acts of Councill past in favours thereof; also discharging all exercise of the High Commission

(219) Letters 1,p. 93.

till it be regulated". (220).

Therefore the conflict between the Crown and the Kirk is rightly understood in terms of the religious issues involved. Where the Covenanters and Kirkmen were concerned the conflict was to determine who was "the Head of the Church of Scotland", and the right to call "free Assemblies". Thus the clamant demand for an Assembly was intended to diminish or end the royal influence.

Accordingly when Charles conceded to a General Assembly which was to meet at Glasgow on 21st November,1638, the choice of Commissioners became a matter of great importance to both parties in the conflict. There had been no meetings of the Scottish General Assembly for twenty years. (And for longer according to Row). As we have seen Charles had little knowledge of Scottish affairs and certainly under-estimated the importance of the Assembly in the life of the Scottish people. His father had not made that mistake and, although he had succeeded in establishing Diocesan Synods, they had never usurped the jurisdiction of General Assemblies. We may regard this as representing the limits of James' "Episcopal achievement".

Elections for a "free Assembly" might have been carried out according to the precedents which had governed these appointments since 1597 in James' reign. And at the beginning both sides hoped for a peaceful settlement. The Covenanters hoped for a return to the Presbyterian system which had existed in the 1590s, while Hamilton hoped to get the Assembly to agree to some form of Episcopacy; later the hope was extended to include subscriptions to the newly

(220) Row, p. 493.

re-issued "King's Confession". (1581). There are two references about the time of the Assembly which confirm these views. As late as November 28th, 1638, Baillie hoped that "the Assembly would not [be] broken up, at least not so soon ... [but] to sitt till matters were brought to some tolerable conclusion". (221). And Burnet who was not out of touch with events at Court, wrote: "His Majesty's positive pleasure was that Episcopacy might be limited, not abolished." (222).

On Charles' part this was a pious hope because the Covenanters firmed in their opposition to Episcopacy during the summer of 1638, until by the autumn they had become committed to nothing less than the restoration of the fundamental principles of Presbyterian Church government. These conflicting interests created a situation where the vote of the Assembly came to be of the first importance to both sides. The Covenanters, as we have seen, knew what they wanted. They believed in the rightness of their cause - that the affairs of the Kirk were the Law of God, and therefore had nothing to do with the will of any earthly King. (223) Whatever may have been the procedure for election of Commissioners going back to 1597, by the year 1638 the preponderance of Commissioners from the Covenanting ranks, raised the question of "abuse" associated with the elections. The temptation to make the most of whatever opportunities were open to them, lent strength to the charge of irregularities . The Covenanters were not prepared to condone any procedural illegalities but their own.

(221). Letters, 1, p.138.
(222). Gilbert Burnet, Memoirs and Lives of James and William, Dukes of Hamilton, p. 117,1852. Hereafter read Burnet etc.
(223) Row, p. 504.

Hamilton was fully acquainted with the difficulties which would inevitably arise in connection with such an Assembly. He was also aware that he had a limited field of manoeuvre in comparison with the dominant Covenanters. But he tried to assure the Assembly that the King was aware of their grievances, and of his good intentions:"after many words hither and yonder, the Marueis Shewing, that he had commission to punish faultie bishops, to rectify all their abuse, to limit-at that office, so that it should not be able to wrong the Church , and to doe many moe things than he would expresse".(224). Hamilton may have been guilty of dissembling at times, even of insinuation, but his responsible position as King's Commissioner demanded of him that he should be nothing lacking in serious intention as he strove every way to match the Covenanters' undoubted ingeniousness.

When the warrant to hold an Assembly at Glasgow first appeared, Hamilton had issued a demand in the form of Articles to the "Tables" which related to the re-instatement of all ministers who had been deposed on anti-Covenant grounds. There are also references made by Row (225) related to the rents of bishops and ministers. This essay on Hamilton's part was immediately denounced as an attempt to "prae-limitation of our Assemblie, and so did incroach on the freedome thereof ...". (226).

But Hamilton was fully alive to the need of putting difficulties in the way of his opponents. Not unexpectedly this interference by the Crown was promptly answered that Church matters were best

(224) Letters 1, p. 142.
(225) Row, p. 497.
(226) Letters 1, p.100 ; Row, p. 479.

left to the Church i.e. to the judgment of the Assembly itself in this instance.

About the same time a disturbing controversy was being waged within the ranks of the Covenanters themselves on the issue of Commissioners to the ensing Assembly. Baillie talks about "wrangling" over the question whether "Ruleing Elders were lawfull and necessare members of Assemblies", and was obviously worried about its consequence. (227). What occasioned dis harmony among the Covenanters was a direction contained in one of the Articles sent down from the "Tables" which had created "jealousy between the brethren and the gentry". What is referred to as "Laick elders" was regarded as a "novation" which apparently had the support of the gentry. By August 1638, Presbyteries had received directions that "it is statute and ordained that, in all tyme comming, three of the wysest and graivest of the brethrin salbe directed from everie Presbyterie at the most, as Commissioners to everie Assemblie ... that one be directed from everie Presbyterie in the name of the Barrouns, and one out of everie Brough, except Edinburgh who shall have power to direct two Commissioners to the Generall Assemblie". (228). That had been the traditional procedure i.e. three ministers and two laymen, with slight variations. Baillie had no fault to find with the "lawfulness and expediency of our old practice and standing law for Elders sitting and voteing in presbyterial matters especially in election of Commissioners to Assemblies". (229).

(227) Letters, 1, p.136.
(228) Letters, 1, p.469. c.f. W.R.Foster, "The Church Before The Covenants" on this question of Commissioners, pp. 119,121, also pp. 88, 89.
(229) Letters, 1, p.99.

Baillie's own Presbytery (Irvine) finally appointed three ministers and one ruling elder in the name of the barons.

From Wariston's own hand, however, other directions had been issued in the name of the "Committee" in the form of printed Reasons : "these ar therfor to exhort, requeist, and to charge you to consider the lawfulnes and necessitie of useing this remedie according to the printed Reasonnes for a Generall Assemblie, for the better preparation of the Commissioners ... choose your Commissioners according to the directioun to be delivered with these unto you". (230). Moreover in a "Note of the Private Articles" which were sent down at the same time, they were not only to seek out "well-affected" Commissioners, but also to use their influence to limit the number who might be chosen from "evil-disposed Presbyteries". This "Note" also urged "well-affected barons and ministers" to use their influence to serve this cause. Whatever end the appointment of these "Laick elders" was meant to serve in the Assembly, they were classed in a letter dated 6th November 1638, from William Wilkie as being in the same category as the procedure against Episcopacy.

At all events the inference to be drawn from the presence of "wrangling" was that the nobility and gentry were agitating against the old custom of election. Indeed the nobles, barons, and gentry were so adamant about this question of laick elders, "that they all resolved to quit us in the cause, if presently they obtained not that poynt". (231).

(230) Letters 1, p.471.
(231) Letters 1, p.100: also see McCoy: "Robert Baillie & The Second Scots Reformation", pp. 53-54.

It looked like an attempt on the part of the élite to usurp the place of the ordinary lay-elders.

It is difficult to determine in the unusual circumstances how far this issue of the election of elders can be stigmatised as illegal. The dangers of "division" within the ranks of the Covenanters overcame the scruples of the "Committee" who gave in to the demands of the barons. The introduction of division was seen as "the ready way to turn the Assembly upside down, to put us in a labyrinth inextricable". (232.)

The knowledge of this disharmony within the ranks of the Covenanters presented Charles and Hamilton with an opportunity of which they had made the most. Burnet refers to the episode in the following way: "this division between some of the wiser ministers and the Lords of the Covenant concerning the lay ruling elders, was seized upon by Hamilton as he pointed out that the inordinate power of the Covenant Lords might in the end bring them into greater servitude than either King or Bishops". (233).

The issue of "The King's Confession" (1581), as a divisive stratagem seemed to have more chance of succeeding of drawing support away from the Covenant. It certainly came as a great surprise when Charles suddenly conceded a General Assembly, especially at the time when he had publicly stated that the Covenanters were just as "malignant as ever" (Sept. 15, 1638). But behind this unexpected display of magnanimity, as it turned out, lay the plot to deepen

(232) Letters 1, p.125.
(233) Burnet, p.101.

the rift within the Covenanting ranks, by the re-issue of the old "King's Confession". And to gain sympathy and subscriptions, at the same time, Charles made public his pretended change of mind regarding the "unhappie Books, the Commission also simply discharged, Perth Articles made free; Ministers entry as we could wish; Bishops subjected to the Assemblie; the Assemblie and Parliament indicted at the tymes and places wee could have desyred..." (234).

It was transparent to Row that the King's Covenant was " divisive, wicked motion, devysed by the Bishops, a subtill plot devysed to divide them, and to destroy their subscrybed Covenant". (235). There was nothing illegal about Charles' action, and one of his primary concerns was to save the bishops. As early as August the "Committee" had already "sent nine directions to each Presbyterie for their way of choosing Commissioners ,. Private Articles and Instructions were sent ... to the well-affected in each Presbyterie... to have in readiness the Bishops faults in doctrine and life, with the proofs, to be readie to dispute in the poynts to be handled at the Assemblie, &c ". (236.)

Hamilton made the most of the opportunity. He appealed to Huntly and the Aberdeen Doctors in the North, together with the King's friends throughout Scotland to get as many subscriptions to the King's Confession as possible. Following the example of the Covenanters, he had issued along with it a "remonstrance" against lay elders to get as many ministers to sign it as possible, "against the sitting of the Assembly". (237).

(234) Letters 1, p.104.
(235) Row, p.499.
(236) Row, p. 498.
(237) Burnet, p.107; Spalding,History of the Troubles and Memorable Transactions in Scotland. 1624-1645, Vol1, p.81. 1792. (Hereafter read,Spalding,etc.)

The King's plan however only had a temporary success. Only 28000 subscribed it in all, of which 12000 was due to Huntly's influence. The Lords at Holyrood House had subscribed, but later withdrew because they were under the impression that the Confession included an "anti-Episcopal clause". (238). The dominating influence which most likely militated against a wider subscription throughout the nation was the fear which the Covenanters had instilled into the minds of many that it was treasonable to sign. Undoubtedly these were reasons for hesitating. At least the Aberdeen Chronicler's account implies that there was real apprehension on the part of the Northern Commissioners about going to Glasgow. The King had written to the Aberdeen Doctors encouraging them to attend the Glasgow Assembly "but none obeyed for plain fear". (239). The presence of apprehension was by no means groundless. Hamilton had made a Proclamation that all should come to the Assembly in a "peaceable manner", but this request had been ignored by the Covenanters who came as they pleased: "Not a gown visible but all had swords and daggers". (240). In the end Commissioners came from Aberdeen, even one who was an avowed anti-Covenanter, and anti-Covenanters as we shall see, were not welcome because of their "divisive influence". On this very ground Commissions from the University of Glasgow were set aside. (241).

The question of the appointment of Commissioners to the Glasgow Assembly has to be viewed in the light of the undoubted dominating position of the Covenanters. Charges of "prelimiting" the Assembly

(238) Spalding Vol. 1, p.79.
(239) Spalding Vol. 1, p.86.
(240) Burnet, Vol.1, p.135.
(241) Letters 1, pp. 134-135.

were made on both sides. The minimum requirement for a "free Assembly" was described by Rothes at the time: "Such an one as is indicted lawfully, with a large time, consisting of two ministers and one lay elder chosen out of every Presbytery". (242). It was, in effect, a confirmation of "The Committees" directive. (243). It was doubtful how far this ruling was adhered to.

Hamilton in his final speech to the Assembly made the question of elections and Commissions his main point of attack. He went as far as to declare that even some of the Covenanters themselves did not regard the Assembly free. Allowing for the fact that Hamilton was inclined to make insinuations to suit his purpose, as for example, when he claimed that ministers chosen by ruling elders for the Assembly had no warrant in either the Church or Kingdom. Nonetheless it seems odd that he should go on protesting at every step, if he had no legal grounds for so doing.

Burnet's account must be taken into consideration when he says: "All elections however disorderly were judged good: their ears were shut upon reason and the Bishops' declinator being read was rejected and an answer drawn". (244). When the Commissioner's objections on all counts were ipso facto swept aside by the triumphant Covenanters there is only one conclusion to be drawn, that Covenanting interests were regnant.

(242) Rothes, p.166.
(243) Letters 1, p.103. "And thereafter all sessions did choose their elders to go to the Presbyteries after the 20th day there to vote for the choyse of three ministers and one elder to take Commission for the expected Generall Assemblie".
(244) Burnet, pp. 125-129.

It has been said that there is no reason to doubt that the Assembly reflected fairly the opinions of churchmen on the great questions of the day. It can be said also that the members attending represented in diversity, from the highest peerage to the lowest peasant.(245). And while the composition of the Assembly may have been based on more than one precedent, (the 1597 Act apart), yet the evidence suggests that the choice of Commissioners showed an excess of laymen over ministers and favoured the Covenanters. (246). Moreover the transaction of business in the Assembly lends strength to this conclusion. The Covenanters were able to sweep everything before them. There was not only a massive preponderance of Covenanting sympathy, but by the time the elections had taken place the elders exceeded the number of ministers by six or seven. Therefore in the interval ministers had been removed for one pretext or another. This discrepancy had occasioned protest from some ministers themselves. To Hamilton the imbalance was so obvious that he advised Charles that nullity was inevitable.

It is perhaps salutary to recall that when Charles elected to introduce the "King's Confession" the decision was not ill-conceived having regard to the situation. For at that stage a great number of Covenanting subscriptions did not spring from deep convictions of what the National Covenant was leading to. And the hectic activities of the Covenanters on their side to get "well favour" Commissioners to go, show that doubts existed. Moreover the excess of laymen over ministers indicated a levelling up process made to get as great a voting

(245) J.K.Hewison, The Covenants, Vol.1, p.300: c.f. F.N.McCoy: Robert Baillie and the Second Scots Reformation, pp. 53-54.
(246) David Mathew, Scotland under Charles 1, p.254.

advantage as possible if need arose, which it hardly ever did.

All in all the evidence points to a "packing" of the Assembly. They came to Glasgow says Spalding: "out of every Presbytery, three Covenanting ministers with two or three ruling elders pledged to vote for the Covenanting cause". (247). Hamilton in his final speech to the Assembly accused the Covenanters even of acting contrary to the Book of Discipline, therefore there were more lay elders giving votes at every one of the elections. He even produced the evidence that Lanark had only eight ministers to eighteen or nineteen lay elders. This method of appointment had been happening throughout the Presbyteries. He referred to Chirnside, Linlithgow and Aberdeen where there had been disagreement between the ministers and elders on this very question. But the elders by reason of their numbers had got their way. It appears that a kind of wanton means of choice had been resorted to even to the extent of bringing in those who had never been ruling elders before, and others who resided outwith the bounds of the Presbytery they represented, and of course an obvious preference for young noblemen whose intelligence and social status could be reasonably looked upon as conferring an advantage to serving the cause.

It has to be admitted that the selective action of the "Tables" which turned its attention to the "well-favoured" in all respects was of paramount importance because it was expected that issues would arise which would demand the Assembly's judgment on matters

(247) Spalding Vol.1, p.81.

of heresy and even points of Arminian doctrine. And while Burnet's caustic remark that of the 260 Commissioners present many could neither read or write had much truth in it, yet there was a large section who were prepared to enter into matters of discussion to be presented to the Assembly on the question of the Liturgy and Presbyterianism. (248) .

The result was that every attempt to question the validity of the elections by Hamilton proved unsuccessful, and the accusation that the elections of the Commissioners were designed in favour of the supplicants was ipso facto rejected. (249). Mathieson described the Assembly as "a Convention of Laymen" - that it was "packed" with laymen and ministers, elected by laymen who had avowed themselves enemies of Episcopal rule. (250).

When the Assembly began Wariston had brought in a device for voting which greatly simplified the procedure, although Baillie did not approve of the expedient. The vote on all issues was anent "abjured and removed" - taken together. Row has shown how merciless the condemnation of the bishops had become when the Assembly brought in its "Bill of Complaint", listing twenty three gross points in which they had violated the "Acts of Assemblies", while "accuseing them of twenty three severall gross poynts meriting deprivation"(251) During the Assembly Baillie appears to have given not a little thought to the "abjuracy" of Episcopacy and the Five Articles as his

(248) Spalding Vol.1, p.82. see also Foster, The Church before the Covenants, p.198.
(249) Row, p. 543.
(250) Politics and Religion, Vol. 1, p. 407.
(251) Row, p. 502.

letters to Spang indicate. He shows unsparing criticism of Laud and the King's advisers, and has nothing but contempt for the "Large Declaration", which he described as "a number of sillie fables, invented for our disgrace". (252). Yet it was his hope that less haste might have brought a better temper and a more satisfactory result than the sudden demolition of Episcopacy. That at least seems to be the trend of his thoughts in a letter to Wariston dated 20th December, 1638, but the Glasgow Assembly peremptorily rejected Episcopacy as "unlawful", having concluded that it was abjured by the King's Confession of 1581. It of course was patently unreasonable to argue that Episcopacy and the Perth Articles were "abjured by our Kirk at the first forming of her short Confession of Faith". (253).

Bishops could be regarded just as "lawful" as Knox's Superintendents. What had been deemed expedient in any other Church or at any other time carried no weight in the atmosphere of the Glasgow Assembly. That the 1581 Confession was open to different interpretations seems to be suggested by the fact that many ministers regarded the "changes" made at the Glasgow Assembly as going much further than had been intended nine months before. (254). It needs to be recalled that care had been taken by Henderson and Wariston in framing the Covenant to repel no one. By the time that the Glasgow Assembly had got underway new forces were evidently at work, and the Covenanters had grown decidedly less flexible. There were undoubtedly certain new developments which had contributed to this change of attitude. Distrust of Charles' intentions doubtless

(252) Letters 1., p.176.
(253) Letters 1., p.183.
(254) Stevenson, p.215.

played no small part. But of greater importance was the steady growth of their conviction that the Covenant was their sure bulwark against "the King's supremacie over the Kirk". (255). And in addition, the nationwide response evoked by the Covenant, together with the distinguished leadership of noblemen, like Rothes and Argyll, had the result of giving the proceedings a degree of credibility which did much to overcome what doubts there were. Indeed it was no exaggeration when it was said that the Assembly had interchanged the domination of nobles and lairds for that of king and bishops. We have no way of telling if that thought was ever seriously entertained by the Commissioners. What we do know is that there was a general acquiesence in the conviction that the Assembly could do no wrong. Even "the cause of [Hamilton's] deserting them was not in the Assemblie". (256). It was confidently held that the Commissioners at Glasgow represented as near as possible, the consensus of opinion held throughout the nation. This knowledge played an important part in moulding Covenanting intransigence during the Assembly and afterwards. That in part at least explains the widening of the scope of the matters dealt with. Moreover the sweeping nature of the reforms carried through had much to do with the domination of the lay members of the Assembly. Even Baillie apparently succumbed to their influence. Baillie, as we have noted, had entertained the hope that a better temper would prevail. In his letters to his cousin (257) he had judged that "Episcopacie as used and taken in the Church of Scotland, I thought to be removed...but Episcopacie simpliciter,

(255) Row, p. 503.
(256) Row, p. 503.
(257) Letters 1., pp. 158,168.

such as was in the ancient Church, and in our Church during Knox's dayes, in the person of the Superintendents, it was for many reasons to be removed, but not abjured in our Confession of Faith". When Episcopacy was finally "abjured and removed" and fourteen Archbishops and bishops along with seven ministers were deposed (although a chance was given for them to repent) we find Baillie giving thanks to God that justice had been done. "My heart was filled with admiration at the power and justice of God, who can bring down the highest, and pour shame on them, even in the world, suddenlie,... who will sin against Him proudlie with uplifted hands ...". However in fairness to Baillie he seems to have been in favour of a modified Episcopacy, but not the Diocesan type. (258). At Glasgow positive and unanimous conclusions, seen as the will of God, became the tide of opinion that swept all before it. Baillie apparently had joined the ranks of the "abjurers" to save him from further trouble. (259). Row makes it clear that by this time the Covenanters had reached a point when they had assumed control of both the ecclesiastic and civil. To them the sweeping reforms carried through at Glasgow are to be taken as confirmation that politics and religion were inseparable. This of course was in line with the whole trend of Scottish Reformation history.

Looked at retrospectively the achievements of the Glasgow Assembly were the climax to two generations of conflict between the Kirk and the Crown. In spite of James VI's Episcopal episode, the Presbyterian struggle had never been abandoned. The "liturgy Imbroglio" would never have happened otherwise under Charles. However necessary

(258) Letters 1., p.158.
c.f. McCoy, "Robert Baillie and the Second Scots Reformation". pp. 25, 31. 37.

(259) Letters, 1., p.171, "If I had been within, I could not have repeated my contradiction to the Acts of Episcopacie and Perth Articles, to no purpose, bot my own trouble.

the bishops had been at one time, they had grown more and more resented as the agents of the royal prerogative, although they had never been openly persecuted by the Scottish people. The two systems of Church government had worked with comparative acceptance up to 1638. It was when Charles and Laud determined to impose the New Liturgy and Canons on the Scottish Church that the stage was set for revolution. Nothing is clearer than that the sweeping Acts passed at Glasgow show the Covenanters' determination to restore the authority of the Kirk: "the Assemblie onlie desyred to give to Christ the Son of God the first place, by whom Kings dce reigne". (260).

By the time that the Glasgow Assembly opened it was obvious that an irreconcilable situation had emerged. Hamilton arrived with such strictures laid upon him by Charles and Laud that any hope of compromise became remote indeed. The Covenanters were clearly committed to confirm the ideals enshrined in the Covenant, not merely as a matter affecting their own consciences, but as a mandate from the entire nation. The Covenant had now assumed the signifance of a sure bulwark against all Popish Innovations. The choice had become quite sharply defined in the minds of the leaders that they either "had to oppose or yield all". Charles' disposition to unreasonableness made their choice inevitable in the end. The Assembly quickly showed that where "the King's supremacie over the Kirk" was con - cerned ..."It was answered,That was granted to the King in corrupt tynes; they would refuse Caesar nothing but what was God's". (260a) They believed that a regnant Presbyterianism could only be safeguarded if every vestige of Prelacy were removed. There is no doubt that it was such a conviction which made the handling of the Assembly's business so specific. No other explanation fits the facts.

(260) Row, p.504.
(260a) Row, p. 503.

They accordingly proceeded to declare the six General Assemblies held between 1606-1618 to be unlawful. (that was when James' Episcopacy had reached its peak). "We voyced with one consent the Nullitie of all these Assemblies ... Alwayes we cleared the minds of all about the nature of the Books and High Commission, and encourage them with one mouth to make the four sharp decrees, which ye see in print, against the Service Book, the booke of Canons and Ordination, and High Commission".(261). They also had an Act passed anent the civil power of Churchmen and their place in Parliament, and it was finally decreed that the Kirk was to be governed henceforth by Kirk Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods and General Assemblies. Annual meetings of Assemblies were fixed and the next to take place in Edinburgh on July,17th, 1639. The Commissioners therefore knew what they wanted and had made up their minds to "conclude all" before departing. (262) They further took the step of making clear to the nation what had been left vague nine months before by issuing the "Glasgow Declaration" along with instructions with demands for the renewing of the National Covenant. This spelt the final removal of Episcopacy and the setting up of the Presbyterian system of Church government in Scotland. (263).

All that can be said is that if the King's Confession of 1581 had left the question of bishops vague, it was vague no longer. Perhaps the Commissioners in 1638 were compelled towards a definite conclusion by the constraint of events which began to develop at the instance of Charles' attempt to divide the Assembly by seeking to impose the King's Confession as a substitute for the National Covenant. Obviously it was this action on the King's part which made the "Glasgow Declaration" so urgent. The Assembly therefore attempted to put an end

(261) Letters 1., p.152153; c.f. McCoy, R.Baillie and the Second Scots Reformation, p.59.

(262) Row, p. 506.

(263) D.Stevenson, pp. 125f.

to all previous vagueness, and had relegated to itself the sovereignty of Parliament. (264). Henderson's decision not to dissolve the Glasgow Assembly was tantamount to a declaration of war. Such a desperate remedy to the Covenanters' grievances became more and more inevitable. But hope was not annihilated. The series of events which had crowded the stage during the past nine months since the signing of the Covenant and the end of the Glasgow Assembly had greatly enhanced the prestige of the Covenanters. They were determined to have their Acts ratified. But the King was equally determined, although he had made concessions at first, to relinquish no vestige of his royal prerogative. Meanwhile rumours that Charles was gathering an army in England had inclined the Covenanters to increase their vigilance, although they were opposed to violence. But even as early as 1637 a clash of arms had not been ruled out. Baillie had expressed fear of a "bloudie Civil war", (265) and had even undertaken to write articles to satisfy objectors. But it was equally true that neither side had any inclination to decide their differences by the arbitrament of arms. The great hope was that reason would prevail and the conflict be ended, that God would "give to our laws and Parliaments the old and full authority and liberty and truth, to joyne the heart of the King and his subjects faster in love than ever". (266). A hope more forlorn could hardly have been conceived in circumstances where Charles' advisers were keeping him ignorant of the reality of the situation in Scotland. Indeed Charles was inclined to entertain a view that the actions of the Covenanters at Glasgow were no more portentous than the antagonism which the majority of the ruling Scots

(264) R.L.Orr, Alexander Henderson, p.182.
(265) Letters 1., P.25.
(266) Petters 1., pp. 48-49.

nobility had always shown towards him. The antagonism of the nobles combined with Presbyterian resentment at Charles' policies had always constituted a potential danger. And at the close of the Glasgow Assembly Charles was easily persuaded by his advisers that the Scots intended to "shake off the yoke of authoritie". (267) Apparently he forgot the apprehension he had expressed in July, 1638, on the question of "ane sufficient party in the countrey", to oppose the Covenant subscribers, (268) and resorted to arms to quell the Scottish rebellion.

Charles was at a disadvantage on two counts: the Covenanters were better equipped with trained officers and Scots soldiers returned from fighting in Germany and the Netherlands. An equally damaging factor was the strained relations between the King and the English Parliament which reduced enthusiasism for war with the Scots. Moreover the safety of religion and liberty in English minds was fast becoming identified with the situation in Scotland. These factors diminished optimism in Charles' hopes of success. But the Scots could never be sure what to expect on the English side. Baillie makes it clear that in spite of their feeling of military superiority, supported by their belief in the Divine Right of their cause, yet the Covenanters expressed no eagerness to run into "such acts of hostilitie, if they be not forced on them". (269).

Covenanting prestige showed no signs of being irresponsible. They took care to make clear their intentions to the English Parliament by drawing up what is referred to as "The Information". It

(267) Row, p.508.
(268) Letters 1., p. 73.
(269) Letters 1., p.82.

was designed to allay all fears of invasion, while they emphasised that their grievances were against the "Novations", and their adherence to their "great solemn National Oath". This simply meant that the Covenanters would not be satisfied until they had thrown off royal authority. And they ended by exhorting the English Protestants to be on their guard against the Papists and Prelates in their own country."If Papists got charge of an armie, as we hear they are intrusted with the chief places therein, let the Protestants in England look to themselves and regard us their brethren". (270). At this juncture we may date the beginning of an identity of interests between the two Kingdoms which finally issued in the Solemn League of 1643. But it must be recalled that the issuing of "The Information" did not mean that the Covenanters had abandoned all hope of a change of heart in their King. They could still refer to themselves as "the humble supplicants of our gracious Sovereign". (271). And Hamilton himself was so moved by their supplications that he sought to impress Charles that "the sight of a whole countrey so earnestly and humbly crying for safety to their liberties and religion", ought not to be dismissed without due thought. (272). This knowledge must have intensified Charles' dilemma. Henderson's "sheets" had emphasised the reality of the Covenanters' avowal of "dutiful obedience" to their Prince". (273). But Charles found it very difficult to adopt an attitude of conciliation because of his obsession with the

270) Row, p.509; Letters 1., p.188. "our first care was to send a true information to England of all our purposes."
(271) Row, p. 509.
(272) Letters, 1., p. 84.
(273) Letters 1., p. 189.

conviction that the Covenanters were ranged against constitutional authority and therefore needed an army to support its claims. (274)

Baillie was proved wrong in his prediction that the Prince would act according to the Constitution in the end, that he would "not faill to doe justice upon all who countenances such tenets". (275). Instead Charles had acted hastily and foolishly. He chose to depend on the power of his own weak arm instead of putting the matter into the hands of his Parliament which would have greatly increased a much needed confidence in the Crown. Already a lack of confidence in Charles' rule was undermining the security of the Kingdom. England at the time lacked the religious and political coherence which the Covenant had given to Scotland. After Glasgow the Estates had made the Covenant compulsory and had appointed a permanent Committee to act when Parliament was not sitting. So provided, the security of the Northern Kingdom depended, in the last resort, on the people's ability to prevent the King from destroying the liberties and religion of the land. That was the burden of their "Supplications", and also the core of the message contained in "The Remonstrance" which they presented to the English Parliament. In other words they wanted it to be clearly understood that their intention was in defence of "their religion, liberties, and lives; and when the sword shall be in one hand, their Supplication to the King's Majestie shall be in the other".(276).

A set of circumstances began to emerge which left Charles very little room for manoeuvre. He failed to convince the English that the Scots were bent on rebellion. Indeed the influence of the "Information"

(274) Terry, A History of Scotland, p. 341.
(275) Letters 1., pp. 190f.
(276) See Row, pp. 510-511.

followed by the "Remonstrance", had worked so favourably on the English minds that they confessed themselves committed in a Common Bond with the Scots to oppose absolutism. And this identity began to transfer the struggle for the Covenant from Edinburgh to London, thus converting a Scottish into an Anglo-Scottish question. Charles however acted on the assumption that the Scots army was bent on reconciliation. He expected to find behind a rebellious nobility, devoted royal subjects. In any case the bishops had led Charles to believe that he would need no foreign forces to master the Scots. This was by no means a groundless prediction, as Baillie concedes, "our dangers were greater than we might let our people conceave" . Nevertheless Charles still held to his view that his presence on the Scottish Border would work a miracle, and that there would be "intestine" troubles; "Only bot let him show himself on our Borders, we should of our own accord run to confusion, or intestine force should crush his opposits with a small help, and it were bot of his royall countenance afarr off". (277). But things went wrong for Charles from the beginning. Huntly's failure in the North East, put Leslie and the Covenanters on the offensive. They invested the Border stronghold and waited to face Essex and Charles near Berwick. The Irish help turned out to be a farce: "in the King's great need, all that the Irish could send him, and that too late also, was bot a matter of fifteen hundred ragged Arabians". (278). On the other hand, the Covenanters' strategic positioning of their armies near

(277) Letters 1., p.194.
(278) Letters 1., p.199.

Berwick blocked the available routes into Scotland. Baillie's was no idle boast when he wrote, "Thus in a short time... we cut the maine sinewes of the adversar's hopes. All the strengths of our land came in our hands ... and the whole countrie was put in such an order and magnanimitie that we fand sensiblie the hand of God in everie thing". (279)

The solidarity of the Scottish opposition caused Charles to hesitate. Leslie's forces blocked the way to the North and Argyll straddled the field of Scottish politics like a "Colossus". Behind him stood the solid support of the nobility and Kirkmen - all of them firmly opposed to Charles' despotism, all of them united in their hatred of Laud and Strafford, and all of them determined to deliver the Kingdom from the "Popish Innovations".

It was not for reasons of military prestige that the Covenanters turned their thoughts to peace. The resort to force of arms had not been of their own seeking, and they had fears lest the military path might lead to disaster. Accordingly this "pause" at Berwick was regarded as the intervention of Providence. The Estates hastened to assure Essex about their intention: "it was thought fit by the Tables, that a letter should be directed to his Excellence, showing that we intended no harm to England, and that he, as a generous nobleman, would not invade Scotland, till he were fullie informed of the trueth of all the bussines". (280). Moreover their intelligence service had not been very effective. Baillie disclosed that it was only when negotiations began at York (July 1639) connected with the Pacification

(279) Letters 1., pp. 197-198.
(280) Row, p. 517.

of Berwick that the Covenanters got a real insight into the state of affairs in England. The impression had gained ground in Scotland that the whole South was arming against the North. "We heard of nought bot of all England's arming, at least of the readyness of six or seven thousand great horse, and thirty thousand brave foot; however we were nought afrayed, after our experience of God's assistance, and full persuasion of the justice of our cause, though all Europe had been on our Border". (281). If that had been true then these fears of catastrophe would not have been irrational. This explains the Covenanters' apparent lack of scruples in accepting the Articles of Pacification froma discredited King. Military uncertainties existed in the minds of the Covenanters, but it was doubtless their sincere desire to settle their grievances by constitutional means that made negotiation so agreeable. They were more than grateful that the King had agreed to the calling of a free Parliament, offering to grant the conditions proposed in the Glasgow Assembly, and promising the withdrawal of the threat of treason and rebellion. Baillie joyfully admitted, "This style did please us well. It was the first blew bore that did appear in our cloudie sky: we took it for a beginning of a reall change in the King's councills". (282). No doubt the advice to which Charles was listening focussed attention on peace. Montrose , at last, was pleading with Charles to satisfy his subjects "in point of religion and liberties ... to practise temporate government and to avoid Absoluteness". (283.)

(281) Row, p.517.
(282) Letters 1., pp. 207-208.
(283) Terry, A History of Scotland, p. 357.

The Articles of Pacification, however, did not make the issue of peace inevitable (11-18thJanuary, 1640). The Covenanters' hopes were clouded by the refusal of the King to ratify, what he referred to as, the "pretended Assembly at Glasgow". When the Covenanters wanted specific answers Charles would only give verbal assurances. While he agreed to the appointment of a free Assembly and Parliament, their powers had been left undefined. The whole business only increased the Covenanters' distrust in Charles' honesty. Thus the occasion which some had "thought that God had sent us a tollerable peace in a verie fitt tyme", hardly promised fulfilment. (284). The short interlude of relaxation came quickly to an end. The Covenanters were not to be easily diverted from what constituted for them a true basis of peace. They immediately issued a "short Information" setting forth their demands, to be read in every Parish Church. In this "Information" they had made it plain that they stood by their Covenant; "yet leist it should be conceaved, that in our capitulation we had past from our Assemblie or Covenant, we thought meit to cause Cassilis read ane short Information of that our mind, and take instruments thereupon". (285). By the time of the meeting of the Assembly and Parliament at Edinburgh (Aug.- Nov.1639), Charles' pretence deceived no one. The Glasgow Acts had excluded the presence of the bishops at the Assembly. By Charles' Proclamation they were invited to take their place. Laud had made it clear that Charles had only given "way for the present to what would be prejudicial to Church and government with the intention of setting it right in the future". (286).

(284) Letters 1., pp. 219-220.
(285) Letters 1., p. 220
(286) Burnet, p. 154.

Nothing was more irritating to the Covenanters than that those very issues which were vital to the Acts of the Glasgow Assembly and the Oath of the Covenant should be subjected to such vague interpretations which did nothing to allay either the feelings of suspicion or the sense of insecurity. And it soon became clear that the Parliament at Edinburgh had no intention of settling the present distractions in Scotland on any other premise. The difference between the Parliaments of 1633 and 1639 was the unmistakable evidence that constitutional changes had taken place which took control entirely out of the King's hands by electing Lords of the Articles who were no longer the masters of Parliament but its servants. And equally important the events at Edinburgh demonstrated that the Church was playing the foremost part. Leading Churchmen had become by force of circumstances the leaders also in affairs of State. In effect a "Revolution" had taken place which had radically altered the royal prerogative. The lawfulness of the Glasgow Assembly was ratified and the unlawfulness of Episcopacy was confirmed.

It actually made little difference when Charles refused to ratify the Acts of the Edinburgh Parliament and Assembly of 1639, because he was now virtually powerless to suppress the Covenanters and their cause. It required no legal approval so long as it was defended by the majority of the people. The reality of a democratic principle of government is not necessarily justified by this procedure because the Covenanters after Glasgow had adopted measures to coerce signatures to the Covenant. What can be justly claimed at the time was their unity of aims and tenacity of purpose in the ranks of both

laity and clergy. And this Scottish example doubtless influenced Pym at a later date when he carried "The Grand Remonstrance" in the English Parliament. (1642).

There are fairly good reasons to believe that if Charles had accepted the terms of the Pacification of Berwick, and had made peace with the Church, he might have received the support of a strong party among the Covenanters, and possibly the neutrality of the Scots in the coming struggle with the English Parliament. But he threw away his last chance of coming to terms with the new situation when he refused to acknowledge the Acts of the Edinburgh Parliament and resolved to take up arms again against the Scots. The English counterpart had learned something from the failure of Charles' first foray against the Scots which gave them courage. The developing situation in England made things far less congenial to Charles' second attempt against the Covenanters because there was emerging a strong party in England far more in sympathy with the Scots than ever. Baillie who went with the Covenanting army into England dismisses the episode in two sentences: the Covenanting army crossed the Tweed "to forme fyve miles above the towne, at Newburne... To morrow their Canon and musket plaid among us; bot it pleased God wonderfullie to assist us... To morrow Newcastle was rendered to us: the souldiers and chief citizens had fled out of it in great haste..." (287). This was a matter for much thanksgiving. The Second Bishop's war accordingly ended as the First with the Treaty of Ripon (Nov. 1640) with hardly a drop of blood being spilt on either side. Leslie wisely decided

(287) Letters 1., pp. 256, 257.

to wait south of Newcastle in case the presence of the Scots army on English soil stirred up opposition. It was a strategic move because he threatened to block the supply routes bringing coal to the south. He adopted a similar strategy after Duns Law to block the advance routes to the north. Having advanced thus far, the Covenanters were again in a quandary what to do. But they waited on English soil , "fortifying our winter quarters at Newcastle", and endeavoured to end the strife and bring about peace. "We went on notwithstanding, as we might, with our affaires in England". (288).

In the negotiations over the Articles of Ripon the Covenanters decided to adopt a different strategy. Instead of treating with the King as they had done at Berwick they took the step of dealing with the English Parliament directly. Charles' shiftiness had destroyed all confidence in his word. They refused to entertain his proposal to "build on the Treaty of Berwick". Instead they drew up the Treaty of London with the deliberate intention of making the English Parliament party to it. Charles at first had adopted a surly attitude to the victorious rebels. But in the face of a dominant Parliament who were on the point of indicting Wentworth and Laud, and filled with uneasiness on account of the rising tide of clamour on the part of the "separatists" to root out Episcopacy, and realising the futility of trying to introduce amendments, Charles finally gave in and signed the Acts of Parliament in December, 1640 "to settle a perfect agreement, with their consent and approbation". (289). What the Articles of London ratified were substantially the same as those set forth in

(288) Letters 1., pp.260, 261.
(289) Letters 1., pp. 273-278.

the Treaty of Berwick with two additions, a demand for uniformity of Church government between the two Kingdoms, and a promise for the financial support of the Scots army while it remained on English soil. The latter expediency was designed to make Charles temporarily dependent on Parliament. Charles kept up the pretence that his agreement was whole-hearted. Baillie observed that Charles was in a better frame of mind: "The King, in his first speech, did call us rebels; bot much murmuring being at that style he thought good, two dayes thereafter, to make a speech to excuse that phrase, and to acknowledge us his subjects, to whom he has sent his Great Seall, and with whom he was in treatie, to settle a perfect agreement, with their consent and approbation". (290). The changes proposed would have met the primary demands of the Covenanters, especially if they had resulted in the ratification of the Acts of the Assemblies held between 1638-39, and had provided for Triennial Parliaments free from the control of the Lords of the Articles, with no bishops or officers of State. And not least, since oaths against the Covenant were declared illegal and all those wrongly imprisoned were to be set free. Baillie saw in these concessions reason for thanksgiving. "Our Treaty goes well", he wrote to his wife, "we hope to bring with us a happy and solid peace". That was at the beginning of December,1640; but by the end of December, Baillie's optimism had become somewhat clouded. In the interval the grounds of a solid peace had become extended to include the "overthrow of Episcopacie and ... the settleing of a new

(290) Letters 1, p. 273.

government in the church, the putting down of a world of grievances public..." (291). The trouble was that the English Parliament was not in favour of the complete overthrow of Episcopacy to please the Scots. And while the Covenanters went on "dreaming of nothing but a perfect obtaining of all their desires without difficulty", Baillie expressed himself less optimistically to the Presbytery of Irvine. He held that to secure a solid peace, and "the satisfying of infinite private complaints", along with the "overthrow of Episcopacie and the settleing of a new government in the Church... a long tyme is requyrit".(292)

It came as a shock to the Covenanters that their common cause did not include a united Church government between the two Kingdoms, after the Presbyterian type. The mistake the Scots made was to put this plea forward in the interest of peace. It was true that a considerable number in the Lower House was in favour of a change of Church government. But the English had not united with the Scots for the overthrow of Episcopacy. Their primary objectives were the establishment of Constitutional government and deliverance from the common oppressor. Scots Presbyterianism was not much favoured among the Puritans.

The victorious Scots were far too rash in demanding the "erection of Presbyterianism in all the land". Their demand constitued a threat not just to Scottish Presbyterianism but to the nation as a whole. Baillie himself was uncertain about the outcome of negotiations for "ane absolute and independent Church, over which Presbyteries and General Assemblies have no power of censure, bot onlie of charitable admonition, my witt sees not how incontinent a National

(291). Letters, 1, pp.285-287. See also McCoy, R.Baillie and the Second Scots Reformation, pp. 84-88.
(292) Letters 1, pp. 285-306.

Church should not fall into unspeakable confusions, as I am confident the goodness of God will never permit so gracious men to be the occasions of, let be the authors". (293). But the Covenanters were determined to press beyond the redress of their grievances and the settlement of a firm peace through Parliament to the establishment of Presbyterianism in England against the trend of public opinion.

In point of fact, except in the case of a number of militant nonconformists, the majority of the Parliamentarians after 1642 had no intention of substituting one tyranny for another. The agitation for uniformity of religion between the two countries was pursued with a fanatical zeal by the Hildebrandine Presbyterians who felt called by God to give their form of Church government to the world. Moreover their sense of mission had received a fresh fillip as the result of their victory over the "Prerogative" and Episcopacy at the Glasgow Assembly. There is little doubt that the Covenanters' confidence rode high, so that Henderson had already drawn a scheme involving a Confession of Faith, Catechism and Directory for Public Worship. In addition much thought had been given to a frame-work of government which would be agreeable to both Kingdoms. (294).

It was not surprising however that the Scottish leaders should have fixed exclusively on Presbyterianism as the chief unifying factor, because it had long been held that the Reformation in England had not been satisfactory. Knox himself had popularized the notion that

(293) Letters 1, p. 311. see also Letters 11, p.90. "...The English were for keeping a door open for Independency. Against this we were peremptory".

(294) Letters 11, p.2.

the doctrines of the Church of Scotland were indeed purer than those of other Reformed nations. This formed part of the reasons, at least, why the idea of common consent entered so little into their thoughts. It appears that Baillie's reference to "common consent" applied only to non-essentials. It was finally the military situation which brought the discussion about Uniformity to a head.

In 1642 when the Royalists' successes began to heighten Parliamentary fears, Pym had moved for a Bond similar to the Covenant, and the Scots were invited to move into England. But at this point in time it was the reciprocal aspects of the military agreement which were specifically stated - a Scots army for England, and, if needed, an English one for Scotland. At the same time Scottish reluctance was overcome by the Irish news, and apprehensions grew steadily over the number of Catholics who were rallying to the King's standard. The alarm spread that the country was in greater danger from Papists than it had been since the days of the Armada.

This situation demanded that the Conservators of the Peace who had been appointed to provide closer links between the two Parliaments, should act with haste. The proposal was for "A Solemn League and Covenant" which for the Scots would not only affect their religious interest, but also the civil. However the strong Kirk Party in Scotland had no intention of countenancing any proposal which weakened their demand for religious uniformity. They were the triumphant men of the Covenant who regarded Prelacy as "the mountain that lay in the way of the advancement of religion, which must first be removed before the Church and the work of God could be established..

who were prepared to die in defence of the Covenant". Accordingly in the urgency of the situation, the English agreed to a civil and religious league, yet were careful to keep the door open for independency". (295).

There was undoubtedly an air of pretence about the whole business, because careful observers on both sides must have seen the demands of the League and Covenant as irreconcilable. The Independents who represented a conglomeration of Conventiclers, Close Brethern, and other religious renegades, regarded Presbyterianism, according to Robert Baillie, as "a strange monster". And it was only too clear that so far as the Scots Kirk Party was concerned, it was an undisguised Presbyterian crusade to foist the Church of Scotland system upon the Anglican Church, just as they in 1638 had attempted to do in Scotland.

It is possible that the Article on the question of Uniformity would never have been agreed, if Sir Henry Vane had not saved the Treaty by an impromptu suggestion which altered the phrase in the First Article which had read: "according to the same Holy Word and the example of the best reformed Churches", to read instead: "according to the Word of God".

Was the League and Covenant of 1643 merely a defensive measure? It is argued that the English had never agreed to set up Presbyterianism after the Scottish model. But in the circumstances it can be argued also that the Covenanters were not entertaining irrational hopes, that if the King was defeated by their help, the promise made

(295) Burnet, pp. 251, 271, 304. "They wanted a 'lame Erastian Presbytery'. They did not favour a rigidly stratified system of Church courts". Baillie, Letters 11, pp. 168, 139, 211.

by Parliament to reform religion in England "according to the Word of God" would be taken up and pursued with greater sympathy and understanding. For one thing, the differences between the two Kingdoms were too great both in law and religion to admit of such optimism. Both policies, that of the Stuart Kings and that of the Kirkmen, were singularly ill-conceived. And, for another thing, the English had never taken seriously the binding nature of the League and Covenant, while the Scottish leaders were confident that it was the very cause of God. "During the war they believed that God would give their arms victory, and when things went wrong the Covenanters said that God had withdrawn His favour from Covenant-breaking Englishmen who had never intended to carry out the terms of the League and Covenant.(296).

Where uniformity of religion was concerned, the Kirkmen's hopes remained frustrated. The Liturgy, which Baillie described as "the great idol of England" remained. If there had existed a greater willingness to compromise, it is most unlikely that a different result would have come about.

The aftermath was to become far more serious for the Church and for Scotland than anyone could have predicted at the time. Cromwell's victories threatened the very existence of Scotland as a sovereign, independent state. The initial hopes associated with the Solemn League and Covenant became a ghost. The movement towards uniformity came to an end. A period of "wrangling" ensued which rent the Church in two. But the splendour of the Covenanters was that they tried. The tragedy was not that they failed. Failure was inevitable. Even

(296) A.S.Burrell, Apocalyptic Vision of the Early Covenanters, pp. 22-25.

those who opposed them, as Lord Macaulay remarked, must have been impressed by the "audacity of their despair". (297).

The search for a unifying principle in the confusion of the period 1560-1638 is not to be found outside the Covenant concept and its development. It was to become the coherent expression of the Scottish Nation's will and purpose. This explains the nation-wide appeal of the National Covenant in 1638, and the emergence of the Solemn League and Covenant of 1643 flowed from the same source. Again the Scottish "Reformation Tradition" had its beginnings in Knox's "league and Covenant twixt God and the people of Scotland".[a] Subsequent covenant preachers expanded and deepened the covenant concept in the minds of the people, until it infused a sense of "valorization status" and "destiny". It was the Covenant idea which enshrined the spirit of liberty (which was Bible liberty) and became the motivating force which moulded opposition to Stuart absolutism. Allegiance to the Covenant oath too became the reconciling principle between the conflicting national interests during the 16th and 17th centuries. It fostered a quite remarkable unity of aims between the nobility, the kirkmen and the people. The question of a "Second Scottish Reformation" during the 1630s, perhaps lacks convincing evidence, but what is certain is that the Covenant and Presbyterianism had become fused in the minds of the people , almost from the start, and to such a degree that in one sense it becomes a misnomer to refer to "the Church before the Covenants". We cannot adequately investigate the development of Reformed doctrine and Church Polity in

(297). Lord Macaulay, History of England, Vol.1, p. 139.

a. An inference from various references to 'league' as e.g. Works III. pp191f; p143.

isolation from the Covenant influence. It is true that the search for an authentic Scottish Reformation Tradition can hardly fail to take some account of the emerging patterns of Church government in Protestant Europe, nevertheless the Scottish "settlement" combined elements that did not appear elsewhere. The combination of Kirk Sessions, Presbytery and Bishops were a Scottish discovery.

It has been doubted if the Scottish Kirk's involvement in politics was good for the Kirk. However the peculiar circumstances of the Reformation in Scotland brought Kirk and State together in a way that made their future interaction inevitable. The Reformation in Scotland was not merely the birth and development of the Reformed Church. In 17th century Scotland "politics was religion", so that the religious and political ends became identified. But in the end the Church was to emerge victorious from the vortex of the political conflicts of the Age. The continuity of the National Church drew its strength from a deeper current of thought and feeling than that which was characterized by its opposition to Prerogative or Bishop or the Innovations. As Mathieson observes, "The destiny of the Church of Scotland was not determined by the influence of the Laudians or Knox or Melville. It was determined by those who were neither bound by Episcopacy or Presbyterianism, but who believed that Christianity had no vital connection with its outward forms". And he concludes in the words of Archbishop Leighton "The mode of the Church government is immaterial, but peace and concord and goodwill are indispensable". (298).

(298). Politics and Religion, Vol.1, p.332.

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