

To the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland; or, in case of their not sitting, To the Commissioners of the Kirk of Scotland: These.

Musselburgh, 3d August, 1650.

SIRS,

Your Answer to the Declaration of the Army we have seen. Some godly Ministers with us did, at Berwick, compose this Reply; which I thought fit to send you.

That you or we, in these great Transactions, answer the will and mind of God, it is only from His grace and mercy to us. And therefore, having said as in our Papers, we commit the issue thereof to Him who disposeth all things, assuring you that we have light and comfort increasing upon us, day by day; and are persuaded that, before it be long, the Lord will manifest His good pleasure so that all shall see Him; and His People shall say, This is the Lord's work, and it is marvellous in our eyes: this is the day that the Lord hath made; we will be glad and rejoice therein.-Only give me leave to say, in a word, 'thus much:'

You take upon you to judge us in the things of our God, though you know us not,-though in the things we have said unto you, in that which is entitled the Army's Declaration, we have spoken our hearts as in the sight of the Lord who hath tried us. And by your hard and subtle words you have begotten prejudice in those who do too much, in matters of conscience,-wherein every soul is to answer for itself to God,-depend upon you. So that some have already followed you, to the breathing-out of their souls: 'and' others continue still in the way wherein they are led by you,-we fear, to their own ruin.

And no marvel if you deal thus with us, when indeed you can find in your hearts to conceal from your own people the Papers we have sent you; who might thereby see and understand the bowels of our affections to them, especially to such among them as fear the Lord. Send as many of your Papers as you please amongst ours; they have a free passage. I fear them not. What is of God in them, would it might be embraced and received!-One of them lately sent, directed To the Under-officers and Soldiers in the English Army, hath begotten from them this enclosed Answer; which they desired me to send to you: not a crafty politic one, but a plain simple spiritual one;-what kind of one it is God knoweth, and God also will in due time make manifest.

And do we multiply these things, as men; or do we them for the Lord Christ and His People's sake? Indeed we are not, through the grace of God, afraid of your numbers, nor confident in ourselves. We could,-I pray God you do not think we boast,-meet your Army, or what you have to bring against us. We have given,-humbly we speak it before our God, in whom all our hope is,-some proof that thoughts of that kind prevail not upon us. The Lord hath not hid His face from us since our approach so near unto you.

Your own guilt is too much for you to bear: bring not therefore upon yourselves the blood of innocent men,-deceived with pretences of King and Covenant; from whose eyes you hid a better knowledge! I am persuaded that divers of you, who lead the People, have laboured to build yourselves in these things; wherein you have censured others, and established yourselves "upon the Word of God." Is it therefore infallibly agreeable to the Word of God, all that you say? I beseech you, in the bowels of Christ, think it possible you may be mistaken. Precept may be upon precept, line may be upon line, and yet the Word of the Lord may be to some a Word of Judgment; that they may fall backward and be broken, and be snared and be taken! There may be a spiritual fulness, which the World may call drunkenness; as in the second Chapter of the Acts. There may be, as well, a carnal confidence upon misunderstood and misapplied precepts, which may be called spiritual drunkenness. There may be a Covenant made with Death and Hell! I will not say yours was so. But judge if such things have a politic aim: To avoid the overflowing scourge; or, To accomplish worldly interests? And if therein we have confederated with wicked and carnal men, and have respect for them, or otherwise 'have drawn them in to associate with us, Whether this be a Covenant of God, and spiritual? Bethink yourselves; we hope we do.

I pray you read the 28th of Isaiah, from the fifth to the fifteenth verse. And do not scorn to know that it is the Spirit that quickens and giveth life.

The Lord give you and us understanding to do that which is well-pleasing in His sight. Committing you to the grace of God, I rest,

Your humble servant,
OLIVER CROMWELL.