

'To Colonel Strahan, with the Western Army: These.'

Edinburgh, 25th October, 1650.

SIR,

I have considered of the Letter and the Queries; and, having advised with some Christian friends about the same, think fit to return an Answer as followeth:

'That' we bear unto the Godly of Scotland the same Christian affection we have all along professed in our Papers; being ready, through the grace of God, upon all occasions, to give such proof and testimony thereof as the Divine Providence shall minister opportunity to us to do. That nothing would be more acceptable to us to see than the Lord removing offences, and inclining the hearts of His People in Scotland to meet us with the same affection. That we do verily apprehend, with much comfort, that there is some stirring of your bowels by the Lord; giving some hope of His good pleasure tending hereunto: which we are most willing to comply with, and not to be wanting in anything on our part which may further the same.

And having seen the heads of two Remonstrances, the one of the Ministers of Glasgow, and the other of the Officers and Gentlemen of the West, we do from thence hope that the Lord hath cleared unto you some things which were formerly hidden, and which we hope may lead to a better understanding. Nevertheless, we cannot but take notice, that from some expressions in the same Papers, we have too much cause to note that there is still so great a difference betwixt us as we are looked upon and accounted as Enemies.

And although we hope that the Six Queries, sent by you to us to be answered, were intended to clear doubts and remove the remaining obstructions; which we shall be most ready to do: yet, considering the many misconstructions which may arise from the clearest pen (where men are not all of one mind), and the difficulties at this distance to resolve doubts and rectify mistakes, we conceive our Answer in Writing may not so effectually reach that end, as a Friendly and Christian Conference by equal persons 'might.'

And we doubt not we can, with ingenuity and clearness, give a satisfactory account of those general things held forth in the Letter sent by us to the Committee of Estates, and in our former Declarations and Papers; which we shall be ready to do by a Friendly Debate, -when and where our answer to these particulars may probably tend to the better and more clear understanding betwixt the Godly Party of both Nations.

To speak plainly in a few words: If those who sincerely love and fear the Lord amongst you are sensible that matters have been and are carried by your State so as that therewith God is not well pleased, but the Interest of His People 'is' hazarded, in Scotland and England, to Malignants, to Papists, and to the Profane, -we can, through Grace, be willing to lay our bones in the dust for your sakes; and can, as heretofore we have 'said', still continue to say,

That, not to impose upon you in Religious or Civil Interests, not dominion or any worldly advantage, 'not these,' but the obtaining of a just security to ourselves, were the motives and satisfactions to our consciences, in this Undertaking. 'A just security;' which we believe by this time you may think we had cause to be sensible was more than endangered by the carriage of affairs with your King. And it is not success, and more visible clearness to our consciences arising out of the discoveries God had made of the hypocrisies of men, that hath altered, 'or can alter,' our principles or demands. But we take from thence humble encouragement to follow the Lord's providence in serving His Cause and People: not doubting but He will give such an issue to this Business as will be to His glory and your comfort.

I rest,
Your affectionate friend and servant,
OLIVER CROMWELL.