

the corruptions that are in the world. It is our labor to lead them out of all evil into good and virtuous practices in all things.

Yet, that there are many people out of our Society, who live as pernicious lives as your petitioners have stated, we do not deny ; nor will it be contested by any persons of candor and morality. These characters are plenty enough in this part of the country, to give our youth a fair opportunity to choose whether to follow their example, in a life of drinking, rioting, gambling and other pernicious practices, or to lead a life of piety and steady habits, taught by our Society. Therefore, if a life of piety and steady habits unfit youth and children for becoming useful members of society, it will be no hard task to discover for what society it unfits them. And furthermore, we merely state, that if the education and deportment of our youth and children, were compared with those of the children of some of the aforesaid petitioners, it would at once appear that they were not competent judges how children ought to be educated.

It is alleged in said petition, that we "persuade young people to sign the church covenant," &c

*Answer ;* We deny the allegation. We never persuade any person to sign the covenant ; it must be an act of their own choice ; without being excited by fear or any compulsory means, for no one is permitted to sign it, until they first manifest it to be their own free and voluntary choice, and if any have signed it on any other condition, they have acted the part of a dissembler, and consequently will receive the portion of the hypocrite.

From the aforesaid petition, it appears that if a man receives faith, and joins with a particular religious sect, his wife, children and property, with all his natural and civil rights must be wrested from him, and placed under the civil officers of the town.

*Answer ;* Could there such a law exist in this far famed land for its religious freedom ? That a man must be stripped not only of his wife, children and property, but also of his natural rights, as an equivalent for the privilege of worshipping God agreeable to the dictates of his own conscience ? How would it appear under the Monarchical Government of England, where a man can enjoy the same liberty to worship God, by paying only one tenth of the proceeds of his property ?

Should there be such a law enacted, that would extend