

"BE THOU FOR THE PEOPLE TO GODWARD."

EXODUS. 18-19.

Christian Nation

A JOURNAL OF ENLIGHTENED STATESMANSHIP,
SOUND PUBLIC MORALS, CHOICE LITERATURE & GENERAL INFORMATION.

Conducted by JOHN W. PRITCHARD, Tribune Building, N. Y.

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THE THIRD PARTY.

A minister of Pittsburgh took occasion recently to preach against the third party—Prohibition movement—and was reported with commendation by the *Commercial-Gazette* of that city. From the published report we quote the following statement, not because it is anything remarkable in these days, but because, on the contrary, it is a fair expression of the belief which prevails with a very large class of people, and of the arguments which we read in the newspapers and meet on the street to show that Temperance people should hold a fast allegiance to the old political parties:

"While the founders of our Government did not anticipate the splitting up of the people into two great political parties, yet such division followed its organization, and has been ever since regarded as essential to the purity of the body politic. I will not pause to argue that this state of affairs has been brought about by the wise orderings of Providence, though I believe such to be the fact. But this I do know, every attempt at further division, no matter how well-meant the intention, has proved abortive. All experience has shown that it is infinitely easier to change the principles and policy of either of the political parties while continuing to act with them than it is to form a new party with any rational hope of success."

This minister does not, as we might have expected, raise the question as to whether it is *right* at the present to accept a platform and candidates that are not opposed to the whiskey traffic, but rather whether it is *expedient* to seek a new organization with a new purpose. It is true, he does seem to think that to break from either the Republican or Democratic parties would be a flying in the face of Providence, but he does not urge this point. What he does urge is the argument from history. He argues that since the founding of the Republic "two great political parties," the parties we have presumably, "have been regarded as essential to the purity of the body politic," that he does "know" that a third party, however well-meant, has always proved abortive; and that "all experience" has shown that it is easier to secure reform inside than outside of the great parties. Since the appeal concerning these things is to history, to history let us go.

In 1840 the great moral question of slavery,

pro and anti, came into American politics to stay until it was settled. The two great political parties were then called Whig and Democratic, and held then the same positions with regard to slavery that the Republican and Democratic parties now hold toward that second great moral question of our political history, intemperance. The Whig party platforms up to 1852 were "silent" on the subject of slavery, while the Democratic platform of 1840, in a section which was reaffirmed in '44, '48, '52, and '56, declared that "all efforts by Abolitionists, and others, made to induce Congress to interfere with the question of slavery, or to take incipient steps in relation thereto, are calculated to lead to the most alarming and dangerous consequences," etc. In that year the anti-slavery movement organized for political action into the "Liberty party," on a platform favoring "the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia and in the Territories, of the inter-state slave trade, and a general opposition to slavery to the full extent of constitutional power." Their candidate was James G. Birney, who received 7,059 votes. These were doubtless drawn chiefly from the Whig party.

In 1844 the relation of the two great parties to the question of slavery remained the same, the Whig candidate being Henry Clay, himself a slave-holder of a mild type. The Liberty party reaffirmed their principles and renominated Birney, who received 62,300 votes.

In 1848 the old parties still held the same position, the Liberty party platform declaring that the nomination by the Whig and Democratic parties of Taylor and Cass, was "under slave-holding dictation," and that neither "could be supported by the opponents of slavery extension without a sacrifice of consistency, duty and self respect." Martin Van Buren, who had joined the party more perhaps through personal feeling than conviction, was nominated and received 291,263 votes.

In 1852 the Whig party showed what its previous "silence" meant by endorsing the Fugitive Slave Law and deprecating the further discussion of the slavery question, and presented General Scott as its candidate, who was opposed and defeated by Franklin Pierce.

The "Free-Soilers" met that year in Lafay-

ette Hall, Pittsburgh, and having adopted the most radical anti-slavery platform that they ever stood on, declaring that "slavery is a sin against God and a crime against man, which no human enactment or usage can make right, and that Christianity, humanity and patriotism alike demand its abolition," nominated John P. Hale, who received 156,149 votes. This Convention has been called the birth-place of the Republican party, but a good and sufficient reason for that conclusion does not seem warranted by the circumstances. The principles of the Pittsburgh Convention were the same as those of the preceding Liberty party conventions. Hale was on the same line as Birney and the party secured but a little more than half the support of four years before. There was no new departure in principles, men or management. The party was born in 1840, twelve years before.

In 1856 the Liberty party, or Free-Soilers, took the title of "Republican," and in a convention held in Philadelphia, and on a platform which reaffirmed in a moderate way the principles of preceding platforms, nominated John C. Fremont, who received 1,341,264 votes. The third party, while it was defeated by the Democratic candidate, James Buchanan, completely broke the power of the old Whig party, which voted for Millard Fillmore. That party was now peculiarly called the "American," although they retained the Whig name in their party platform. The third party now became one of "the two great political parties."

The story of 1860 is fresh in every mind, and needs no comment. From this sketch of political history, we draw an inference or two with regard to the statement which we have quoted:

1st. The only time in our history, before the present Prohibition movement, that a great moral question arose in our politics, "the two great political parties" refused to come out for truth and righteousness, one of them directly favoring the evil and the other being "silent."

2d. When the Whig party finally broke its "silence" on the subject of slavery, it was led, under the guidance of such talented an

isters or servants, and all his works in all places of his dominion, to which we cannot have access. It is probable, however, that by these different expressions the Spirit means only God's rational, intelligent and obedient subjects, because there is only one word for praise used in this whole psalm, namely, "bless," and in another psalm (145:10) it is said: "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord, and thy saints shall bless thee." This seems to imply that, while all his works show forth his praise, his saints, or holy ones, including angels and sanctified human beings, alone can praise him with that joy, gladness, sympathy and delight implied in the word "bless." But our call upon the other works of God to join us in praise no doubt also means that, in offering our praise, we feel that all creatures, of every kind and degree, according to their powers and capacities, are under obligation to glorify God, and that such will be ultimately realized, when "God shall rejoice in all his works." But especially it means that often in offering praise, the soul, lifted up and enraptured in the contemplation and enjoyment of God, not only vividly realizes the great end for which all things were made, but enters into conscious union and communion with the whole family in Heaven and earth, of which Christ is the head. And, therefore, both in the Old Testament and the New, we are represented in our worship as identified with all that has been put under Christ. And as realizing our oneness with them in adoring our common Lord. It is, no doubt, in this sense that Paul says: "Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born, whose names are written in heaven." And that John declares: "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea and all that are in them, heard I saying, blessing and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever." And in proportion as we realize the full tide of such a feeling will we understand the closing words of the Lesson, "Bless the Lord, O my soul."

ITS TRUE NATURE.

Dr. Lyman Beecher said in 1831 concerning the liquor traffic: "The dealers in ardent spirits may be compared to men who should advertise for sale consumptions, fevers, rheumatisms, palsies and apoplexies. Would our public authorities permit such a traffic? No; the public voice would be heard at once demanding the punishment of such enemies of our race; and the rulers that would not take speedy vengeance would be execrated and removed. But now the men who deal out this slow poison are licensed by law; and they talk about their constitutional rights and plead that they are pursuing their lawful callings. These traffickers in the blood of men tell us that this work of death is their living; their means of supporting their families. But where lies the difference in criminality between the dram-seller, who for gain administers in slow but certain death, and public murderers? The former is licensed in his wickedness by law; the latter must be hanged."

THE ETERNAL KING.

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God breath'd but a thought, and the universe came,
And our earth was set forth in it's star-jewel'd frame,
The moon shed her lustre, and angels could see,
The pow'r of His word in eternity

To light the dark earth came the sun strong and grand,
God drew the great waters apart from the land;
The mountains in grandeur arose from the sea,
How strangely they looked in eternity!

But nature now painted with snow, frost and rain
The mountain and meadow, sloping hillside and plain.
Planting the forest, animating the sea,
And Time was conceived in eternity.

God look'd down with pleasure on beasts and on flow'rs,
And the birds trill'd his praises from green leafy bow'rs;
But none of those joys a companion could be—
They could not exist through eternity.

So he breath'd into man a soul—free from stain—
And enthron'd him the king of all creatures, to reign,
But man in obedience, God's subject must be,
For Christ rules supreme through eternity.

Man sinn'd against God, and rebell'd at his pow'r,
And his sorrow and death were entail'd from that hour;
And nations, though great, whose own sovereign would be,
To oblivion were doom'd through eternity.

The Syrians refus'd God the valleys below;
Goliath relied on the strength of his bow;
But David chose rather God's subject to be,
And was crown'd a great king through eternity.

As queen of our nation, Columbia now stands,
The keys of her strongholds she clasps in her hands,
Though crown'd with great goodness, her safety must be,
Allegiance to Christ through eternity.

There's a wave on the sea, it breaks on the shore:—
Christ's kingdom is growing—it will spread the earth o'er;
And angels rejoicing our nation will see
Crown Jesus her King through eternity.

BIBLE READING.

NECESSARY QUALIFICATIONS OF CIVIL RULERS.

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The question is often asked, "Do rulers in a nation need any other qualification for filling positions of honor and trust than their mental ability and fitness?" In other words, "Is that quality which we call enlightened statesmanship necessary in a civil magistrate?" Most emphatically do we answer, YES. We would in all cases apply the test which is made by the Spirit of God: "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of the Lord" (2 Sam. 23:3).

Civil government had its birth and origin in God. He is the creator of nations as well as of individuals. He is the source of all power and authority; Jesus Christ has been appointed by him as the King of kings and Lord of lords; and the Bible is the foundation of all law, civil and ecclesiastical, and it is the standard by which the conduct of men is to be governed. When we admit these facts, as every true Christian must, we see that other qualifications than that of mental ability are necessary in the aspirant for office. "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of the Lord."

1st. Because he is not a true and divinely appointed ruler unless he has this qualification, and consequently has no right to rule. "There is no power but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God." While the officer may be elected by the people, still this does not clothe him with power supreme. This is the great fault of American politics, it is "we the people" against the God of the universe. The civil magistrate is a minister of God (Rom. 13:4), and no man can be a minister unless he knows and understands the laws of that power by

which he is sent. The Government would not think of sending an envoy to a foreign court who was not versed in American politics, laws and institutions; so no one should assume the responsibility of national affairs unless he is acquainted with the Great King and understands divine law. Suppose this test should be applied in our national capital to-day. Suppose this was made a qualification of the rulers of our land, as it should be, would there not be a great thinning out of the ranks at Washington? But as some one has suggested, American politics have been resolved into

"Who shall win,
To turn the inside rascals out,
And the outside rascals in."

2d. Because a man, unless he is a Christian, is not capable of administering justice. Unless he fears God he has not a true idea of justice. It is true he is able to distinguish between right and wrong, but only in an abstract sense, for unless the conscience is enlightened by the Spirit of God, the tendency of the heart is to evil and that continually. For instance, to enforce the Sabbath laws a man must be a true follower of Christ in order to rightly appreciate the benefits following from their observance, and the same with the other laws which a ruler is compelled in his official capacity to enforce. If a man fears not God, he can have no true conception of the value of human life, and hence is not qualified to administer justice to the murderer. "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of the Lord."

3d. Because it is an injury to the best interests of the people to place a man in power who has not this qualification. "When the wicked beareth rule the people mourn," Prov. 29:2. "As a roaring lion, and ranging bear, so is a wicked ruler over the poor people," Prov. 28:15. In another part of the Bible the devil is compared to a roaring lion (1 Pet. 5:8); thus a ruler who fears not God is an instrument of the evil one for carrying out his designs. Not only does the Spirit of God teach that the interests of the community are injured by the wicked bearing rule, but history confirms it. As we read the history of the ancient monarchies, Nineveh, Babylon, etc., and even of Israel, God's chosen people, we find that the inhabitants of the land were—under the wicked rulers—in a bondage worse than that of Egypt. They would not recognize the claims of the Most High God, and God always visits such rebellious nations with his judgments, and they are strewn like wrecks upon the shores of time, warning us of the rocks and quick-sands which lie beneath, and which will certainly cast up our frail bark if we have not the King as our guide, and do not follow the divine chart. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter; fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man," Eccl. 12:13. Yes! this is man's duty individually and officially. "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him," Psalm 2:10-12.