

COMBINED SERIES.

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THE
Reformed Presbyterian
AND
Covenanter.

NOVEMBER, 1865.

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THOMAS SPROULL,
JAS. M. WILLSON,

EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

"Whereof we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing."—*Phil.* 3:16.

"Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." *Jude.*

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T H E

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"THE POWERS THAT BE."

COMMENTATORS with scarcely an exception expound the first seven verses of the thirteenth chapter of Romans, as prescribing the duty of Christians to the Roman Government. "The powers that be," were the existing civil authorities, to which, irrespective of their moral character, every soul was commanded to be subject. There never was a worse government than that under which those lived to whom the epistle was addressed. Nevertheless, because it was an existing power ordained of God, they must obey it for conscience sake. To resist it would be to resist the ordinance of God, and they who would do so should receive to themselves damnation. It necessarily follows that the existence of a government, and not its moral character, is that which gives it a claim on the allegiance of Christians.

The view taken of this subject by Reformed Presbyterians, is that a civil government must have the moral qualifications laid down in the Scriptures, in order to be recognized as of divine ordination. They have shown on critical and exegetical grounds, that the passage referred to above, demands a very different interpretation—that the moral character of governments to which subjection is to be given, is defined, and that those that are without that character are not ordained of God. "Let every soul be subject to higher powers; for it is not a power if not from God, and those that are powers are ordained of God—for the rulers are not a terror to the good works, but to the evil." ver. 1, 3.*

It is not our design in this paper to reproduce and elaborate the arguments by which this exposition is supported. We propose, however, to subject the principle involved in the common interpre-

* We have rendered this passage literally, omitting the article before "higher powers," and restoring it before "rulers." This leaves without support the sentiment that by the "higher powers" and "rulers," the Roman Government is meant.

REMINISCENCE OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN.

SOME time last winter two men connected with the Reformed Presbyterian Church were in Washington City, and called at the President's house. While in the room that is always open to visitors, the President came in, and got into a conversation with them, in the course of which mention was made of the Covenanters. The name seemed to arrest his attention, and he remarked: "I know something about these people—they want the Constitution amended by putting slavery out of it, and by putting a recognition of God in it." To this they assented, and he proceeded to speak in kind and earnest terms of the brethren who had been with him urging the amendments. He added that they had obtained one object of their mission during his first term in office, and he hoped they would obtain the other before the end of his second term.

We have given as accurately as we could the substance of the conversation. It deepened in our mind the conviction that the death of President Lincoln was a great national calamity.

T. S.

RESOLUTION OF EAST CRAFTSBURY CONGREGATION.

At a stated meeting of the congregation, the following resolution was unanimously passed, and afterward was by the Session also approved and adopted:

Being fully impressed with the importance of a living ministry, and believing it to be one of the ascension gifts of Christ to his church for the promotion of his glory in the conversion of sinners, and the perfecting of saints, we are sensible of, and deeply feel our loss in the removal of the Rev. J. M. Armour from the pastorate of this congregation, for his labor here has not been in vain in the Lord. We rejoice to be able to say that his goings out and in among us have been of such a character that even the wish of the cold and luke-warm has been rebuked and put to silence. And although we acquiesce in the action of the Board of Domestic Missions in calling him to an important work at Washington, we regret that the appointment was not given to another. And believing also that God in his providence is calling him by his fitness for this work, we therefore feel it our duty to submit, hoping that he will be made eminently useful in raising up the victims of a cruel oppression from the degradation to which they have been brought by their oppressors. And with much sorrow for our loss, we pray that God will sustain and uphold him in all his ways, direct him in the path of duty, and bestow upon him many tokens of his favor and loving kindness.

STEPHEN BABCOCK, *Chm. Com.*

Oct. 5th, 1865.

Clerk of Session.