

T H E

Reformed Presbyterian and Covenanters.

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AFFAIRS IN WASHINGTON.

THE season of want among the colored people in this city is now past. Men, able to work, can now find employment at good wages. There are, however, many women and children, as well as aged and infirm persons, who still need assistance. These, it is hoped, can be supplied from the same channel which in months past conveyed so full a tide of Christian charity and liberality.

The teachers have been able to attend punctually to their duties during the winter, and now, after a short vacation, return to their work with fresh courage and interest. Reinforced by the arrival of Miss Helen Johnston, of Ohio, lately appointed by the Board, they are able in some measure to grade the school, thus insuring greater efficiency.

Very many of the colored people have been provided employment in various parts of the country—among them a number who had been connected with our Mission—but their places have been more than supplied, so that the attendance upon our services has been constantly increasing rather than diminishing. The work set before us here is strictly missionary work. The people are poor, ignorant and degraded. It is not their fault that they are so. A fair proportion of these people have in them all the elements necessary to insure success in whatever they may undertake. There are the usual proportion of gifted persons among them, who would long ago have risen to distinction but for the chains with which they were bound. It is with astonishment and delight that we mark the progress made by some of this class. But, when we speak of progress, let no one fail to reflect, that the starting point is far back. When we say the thermometer has risen twenty degrees, it may be well to consider that the starting point was not zero, but perhaps thirty degrees below it. There is a peculiar satisfaction—a present and precious reward—to those who in any way are enabled to extend aid and encouragement to these poor people in their first endeavors to rise from the estate of ignorance, poverty and degradation in which they have so long been held.

plete. Besides the priest Ruggieri Postiglione, two other priests, a monk, and more than two hundred persons are already incarcerated, and fresh arrests are being constantly made.

These furious votaries of Rome appear to have forgotten that the times had changed. The Government neither will nor dare allow such a massacre to pass unavenged.

ADDRESS TO THE VOTING CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES,

AND TO ALL THOUGHTFUL PERSONS WHO LOVE THEIR COUNTRY.

THE following memorial to Congress has been carefully prepared, and is commended to your serious consideration. Read it, and read what follows it.

To the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress assembled :

We, citizens of the United States, respectfully ask your honorable bodies to adopt measures for amending the Constitution of the United States, so as to read in substance as follows :

We, the people of the United States, [humbly acknowledging Almighty God as the source of all authority and power in civil government, the Lord Jesus Christ as the Ruler among the nations, and His revealed will as of supreme authority, in order to constitute a Christian government, and] in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, [and secure the inalienable rights and blessings of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness to ourselves, our posterity, and all the inhabitants of the land,]—Do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

And we further ask that such changes be introduced into the body of the Constitution, as may be necessary, to give effect to these amendments in the preamble.

The clauses and words within the brackets are the amendments to the Constitution which are asked for.

In making up your judgment upon these proposed amendments, CONSIDER, that the Constitution of the United States is our charter as a nation. It contains all the forms under which our national life shall appear, all the powers which our national government may ever exercise. If this Constitution be sound, we may expect our national life to be healthful and vigorous. If anything goes wrong with the nation, it may fairly be asked whether something be not wrong in the Constitution.

CONSIDER, that the Constitution is as the people make it. Its wisdom is their wisdom. Its goodness is their goodness. It is their creature and mouthpiece and image. Whatever describes it describes the people that made it, and that live under it contentedly. They are responsible for all its contents and all its character.

CONSIDER, that Civil Society and Government is not man's invention, any more than the Family is. Both are natural, both are

necessary, and both are the appointments of Him who made man. The state is God's ordinance.* The people may choose what sort of a state they will have. And it is in this sense and to this extent true that, as our Declaration of Independence has it, "Governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed." But some sort of a state, some sort of a general agency to make, to apply, and to enforce laws of order, right, and peace, men must have. A nation is a kind of public person, which God has created as really as he has created private persons; and government has God appointed to be that public agency for the honor and welfare of the nation. So the Bible teaches us. "There is no power (government) but of God. The powers that be are ordained of God." It is the will of God, no less than the interest of man, that government be honored and obeyed. "Whoso resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation"—that is, condemnation and punishment. God will see to it that bad citizenship, that treason and rebellion shall be requited as they deserve.

But if Civil Government be God's ordinance and creature should not Government acknowledge God? If God upholds Government, should not Government confess its dependence upon God? Both these things are plainly just and right. Both should be done by every state and nation. The government that neglects or refuses to do these things does God a great wrong and dishonor, and shows itself to be both ungrateful, rebellious and proud.

Now the place where our nation should make these acknowledgments, and the only place where we can adequately do it, is in the Preamble and the body of the Constitution. And this is what the foregoing memorial asks should be done. And since the Constitution is as the people make it, since the people are represented in the Constitution and are responsible for it, if the people refuse these amendments they incur great public guilt.

CONSIDER, that at the beginning of our national history God was formally acknowledged. The charters of all the colonies acknowledged him. The Articles of the old Confederation acknowledged him. All the earliest Constitutions of the States acknowledged him. But when the present Constitution of the United States came to be formed the acknowledgment was omitted. The wretched infidelity of France was then abroad on all the air of the world; everything was more or less infected with it; and our statesmen mistook its teachings for the voice of true philosophy and real progress. In their reaction against state churches, state creeds, and priestcraft, they went to the dangerous extreme of ignoring God.

The amendment which is now proposed is no new thing. If it

* This is the reason that patriotism and all good citizenship is a part of religion. It is a duty to God as well as to ourselves, our neighbors and our children. And this is the reason why war may be lawfully undertaken on behalf of one's country. Such a war is as righteous as it is necessary. See Nehemiah 4, 14: "Remember the Lord which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses."

should be made, it will only be the adopting again of what was one of our earliest and most becoming national characteristics.

CONSIDER, that God is not once named in our National Constitution. There is nothing in it which requires an "oath of God," as the Bible styles it (which, after all, is the great bond both of loyalty in the citizen and of fidelity in the magistrate); nothing which requires the observance of the day of rest and of worship, or which respects its sanctity. If we do not have the mails carried and the post offices open on the Sabbath, it is because we happen to have a Postmaster-General who respects the day. If our Supreme Courts are not held, and if Congress does not sit on that day, it is custom and not law that makes it so. Nothing in the Constitution gives Sunday quiet to the Custom House, the Navy Yard, the Barracks, or any of the Departments of Government. The only allusion which it makes to the Sabbath is a single provision leaving it out of the count of the ten days which the President may have for the consideration of a Bill; but that is not because the day is sacred, but because the President may happen to be a Christian and may wish to keep the Sabbath. So also the prayers in our Houses of Congress and the appointment of days for national humiliation or thanksgiving are merely religious customs, warranted by the religious sentiments of the people, but not by the letter of the Constitution. How soon and how sadly might all this be changed were an infidel administration to ride into power!

But besides the Constitution, we have treaties with foreign nations in which our religious position is defined, and which are to be held as of the same dignity and binding force as the Constitution itself. In one of these, which was made by our Government with Tripoli as early as 1797, it is solemnly declared that "the Government of the United States is not in ANY SENSE founded on the Christian religion." If we were not the most thoroughly Christian people in the world, and if ours were not a strictly popular government, we should long since have been demoralized and ruined by such principles as these.

CONSIDER that the Amendments proposed are true, right and proper in themselves considered.

Almighty God is the source of all authority and power in civil government—is he not? If not, WHO is?

The Lord Jesus Christ (aside from all questions as to his divinity, his humanity, or his mission on earth) is the Ruler among the nations—is he not? If not, WHO is?

The revealed will of God is of supreme authority—is it not? If not, WHAT IS OF HIGHER AUTHORITY?

The government of the United States, a Christian people,* should be a Christian government—should it not?

* A Christian people. They show it by their general demand and respect for the institutions of Christianity. They have of their own means provided a church and a minister of religion for every 1000 of the population on an average. Consult the returns of the last census.

The blessings of such a government should be secured to all the inhabitants of the land, black as well as white—should they not?

Think calmly, wisely, justly, and your answer to each of these questions can only be **AYE**.

CONSIDER, that they fairly express the mind of the great body of the American people. This is a Christian people. These Amendments agree with the faith, the feelings and the forms of every Christian church or sect. The Catholic and the Protestant, the Unitarian and the Trinitarian profess and approve all that is here proposed. Why should their wishes not become a law? Why should not the Constitution be made to suit and to represent a constituency so overwhelming in the majority? And let two things more be taken into account. 1st. That no manner of injustice is done to the small minority whose views are opposed to these Amendments. No religious test is to be set up. No establishment of any church is to be attempted. No lessening of the privileges or the immunities of American citizenship is contemplated. And 2d. This great majority is becoming daily more conscious, not only of their rights but of their power. Their number grows and their column becomes more solid. They have quietly, steadily opposed infidelity until it has at least become politically unpopular. They have asserted the rights of man and the rights of the Government until the nation's faith has become measurably fixed and declared on these points. And now that the close of the war gives us occasion to amend our Constitution that it may clearly and fully represent the mind of the people on these points, they feel that it should also be so amended as to recognize *the rights of God in man and in government*. Is it anything but due to their long patience that they be at length allowed to speak out the *great facts and principles which give to all government its dignity, stability and beneficence*? And is it anything but the merest propriety, the simplest and cheapest gratitude, to acknowledge that great God who has brought us so wondrously through the war? He is the author of our generalship, our statemanship, and all that pure and holy purpose that marked "the uprising of a great people." Our soldiers confessed his presence on the battle-field. Our Senate bowed before his inscrutable wisdom and his gracious sovereignty. Our President and all our people in their distress called for his aid, and in their thanksgivings declared "He hath not dealt so with any nation." Let the Constitution say forever with equal earnestness, truth and sincerity, what we have all been saying during the war.

Much more might be said, but these considerations may suffice to show that the amendments to our national Constitution proposed in the foregoing memorial are right, are timely and becoming. An association has been formed for the purpose of bringing them before the people and in due time securing their adoption. Men of high standing, in every walk of life, of every section of the country, and of every shade of political sentiment and religious belief, have concurred in the measure.

WILL YOU CO-OPERATE?

Observe, you are not committed to any precise words of amendment by subscribing to this memorial. You only ask that IN SUBSTANCE the Constitution be so amended. The words may be left to the wisdom of a committee of Congress. Will you co-operate in bringing about any such amendment—that is, any amendment which recognizes God and which intimates that our Government is as much Christian as our people are?

JOHN ALEXANDER, Corresponding Secretary of the National Association, No. 1935 Arch Street, Philadelphia, will furnish you copies of this address and other documents bearing on this measure. Circulate such documents among your neighbors and acquaintances. Attend conventions which may be held for discussing the subject. Join in forming auxiliary associations in your county or district; *sign the memorial of that association*, or any that is near you, that in due time it may be forwarded to Congress through your Representative.

From numerous expressions of approval and sympathy, we select the following:

From Hon. WM. STRONG, of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.

PHILADELPHIA, April 3, 1866.

JOHN ALEXANDER, Esq.—*Dear Sir:*—I have read the address of your Association “to the voting citizens of the United States, and to all thoughtful persons who love their country,” and I entirely concur with the views presented in it. The views are worthy of the attention of all our people, and they are presented in such a manner as to commend them to the considerate reflection of every one.

I am very respectfully, W. STRONG.

From the Rt. Rev. C. P. M'ILVAINE, Bishop of the Diocese of Ohio.

CINCINNATI, March 7th, 1866.

REV. T. P. STEVENSON—*Dear Sir:*—I am very ready to say, that I consider the Constitution as defective to a most important degree, in having no acknowledgment of God, of Christ, or of the Scriptures, in some such way as the language proposed to be inserted, contains. Whether any movement to obtain the insertion of what ought to be there, can succeed, is a question. That it ought to succeed, and that the effort should be made, I am well convinced. If it fail, those who try, will thus far have done their duty, and as citizens, will have held up their testimony before the nation. Therefore, while I do not commit myself to the precise form of words contained in the appeal, understanding that it is intended only to suggest the substance of what should be enacted, I wish to be considered as uniting in the movement.

Yours very truly, CHAS. P. M'ILVAINE,
Bishop Prot. Epis. Church, Diocese of Ohio.

From Rev. J. T. PRESSLY, D. D., U. P. Theological Seminary, Allegheny, Pa.

ALLEGHENY, March 12th, 1866.

Dear Sir:—The Faculty of our Institution most cordially sympathize with this movement, and shall be happy to do what we can in our appropriate place to secure its success.

With great regard, your friend, JOHN T. PRESSLY.

Rev. T. P. STEVENSON.

From Hon. B. GRATZ BROWN, U. S. Senator from Missouri.

ST. LOUIS, November 19, 1864.

**** Let me say that I will gladly help on God's work in the purifying and exalting this nation, and inscribing His Word as its Supreme Law, in any and all ways, and in any and all places. I believe, unless we become in very truth a Christian nation, all other nationality will be ephemeral and delusive. I believe, furthermore, that the world and especially the western world, is awakening from its age of unbelief or spiritual languor, and that we are coming upon periods of active faith, when men will again seize upon, and live or die by religious conviction as in days of old. Let us then by all means, help forward that expression, which shall inscribe as the banner of our people, The Banner of the Lord.

Yours truly,

B. GRATZ BROWN.

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From the Faculties of the Princeton Theological Seminary and the College of New Jersey.

We cordially approve of the object of the foregoing memorial, and desire to do all that we lawfully can to promote it.

CHARLES HODGE,	LYMON H. ATWATER,	JOHN T. DUFFIELD,
ALEX. T. M'GILL,	HENRY C. CAMERON,	JOS. C. MOFFAT,
WM. H. GREEN,	I. H. M'ILVAINE,	C. WISTER HODGE.

We add our cordial concurrence.

M. W. JACOBUS,	D. ELLIOTT,
S. G. WILSON,	A. A. HODGE,

Professors in the Western Theological Seminary, Allegheny, Pa.

From Rev. SAMUEL ROOSEVELT JOHNSON, D. D., Professor in General Theological Seminary (Prot. Ep.) New York.

BURLINGTON, NEW JERSEY, April 2d, 1866.

Dear Sir:—I am desirous to see the recognition of the belief in God, of the belief in Christian faith, in the Constitution, and wherever it can suitably be introduced. I have flattered myself, with Bishop M'Ilvaine's view, that our great nation does substantially and largely declare itself a Christian nation; and also that God does not look so much at paper documents, as he does at the very Christianity which pervades the people. Still, we have been pointed at by many as being not committed to any religion whatsoever. I am one who would gladly relieve enemies of an ungracious opportunity, and friends of an oppressive and anxious thought.

Ever most truly and respectfully,

SAMUEL ROOSEVELT JOHNSON.

From Rev. HENRY SMITH, D. D., Lane Theological Seminary, Cincinnati, Ohio.

CINCINNATI, O., January 29th, 1866.

JOHN ALEXANDER, Esq.—*Dear Sir:*—I have no hesitation in saying, that I regard the object had in view, by the "National Association for the Amendment of the Constitution of the United States," exceedingly important; and the measures proposed, to secure the object, are in my judgment both wise and timely. I shall be glad to co-operate in any way in my power, in securing the end proposed.

I am very truly yours,

HENRY SMITH.

From Rev. FRANCIS VINTON, D. D., Rector of Trinity Church, New York.

TRINITY CHURCH, NEW YORK,

Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, January 25th, 1866.

REV. T. P. STEVENSON, PHILADELPHIA—*My Dear Sir:*—It gives me satisfaction to know of the movement to procure an Amendment of the Constitution of the United States, which shall acknowledge God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

If such a fundamental recognition of HIM should be made by the people of this Country, it would be the token of His Presence, both now and always. It is gratifying to observe the pious acknowledgment of God on the public coins. Let the same acknowledgment find place in our Constitution, and we shall become, in principle, a Christian Nation.

Yours faithfully,

FRANCIS VINTON,

From Rev. H. L. BAUGHER, D. D., Pres. of Pennsylvania College (Lutheran) Gettysburg, Pa.

PENNSYLVANIA COLLEGE, March 8th, 1866.

**** It is strange that the recognition of God the Father Almighty, and Jesus Christ as the Ruler of the universe in this dispensation of mercy, should have been so long overlooked and neglected in the fundamental article of our government.

I rejoice in this movement, and feel that we cannot be safe as a nation, until the name of our God and Saviour is put into our Constitution, and recognized always and every where as the source of our power. Right gladly will I co-operate in this work, and hope and pray that it may meet with complete and abundant success.

Yours respectfully,

H. L. BAUGHER.

We cordially concur in the general views expressed by President Baugher,

M. L. STORVER,	E. A. MUHLENBERG,
ALFRED M. MAYER,	M. JACOBS.

Professors in Pennsylvania College.

OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION.—President—Rev. D. C. Eddy, D. D., Boston, Mass. Vice President—Hon. James Pollock, Philadelphia, Pa. Recording Secretary—Rev. J. G. Butler, D. D., West Philadelphia, Pa. Corresponding Secretary—John Alexander, Esq., 1935 Arch Street, Philadelphia. Treasurer—Samuel Agnew, Esq., 1126 Arch Street, Philadelphia. Executive Committee—Rev. J. Edwards, D. D., 1737 Filbert Street, Philadelphia; Rev. J. H. A. Bomberger, D. D.; Wm. Getty, Esq.; Thomas Watson, Esq.; C. Heiskell, Esq. Committee on Correspondence—Rev. T. P. Stevenson, Philadelphia, Pa.; Rev. W. W. Spear, D. D.; Rev. Prof. Steele.

This address has been on hand for some time, and would have been published but for the conviction that its effect might be injurious. We insert it now, however, with some remarks appended.

We dislike the expression "voting citizens" in the heading. It suggests voting as the chief means for carrying on the proposed reform; certainly not a very safe suggestion to put before our people at the present time. Besides, in the following sentence, the phrase in brackets is a dead fly in the ointment. "The Lord Jesus Christ (aside from all questions as to his divinity, his humanity, or his mission on earth) is the Ruler among the nations." We do not wish any imaginary being not divine, declared to be the king of this nation.

Moreover, the argument beginning with the third *CONSIDER*, is objectionable. It is founded on the false assumption that the Government as now constituted is the ordinance of God. This is directly in the face of our Testimony. The want of the proposed acknowledgments is fatal to the claim of the Government to that high distinction. It is to give it divine ordination and authority that we urge the amendments.

The plane of this movement is too low. Covenanters cannot co-operate on it without leaving their high vantage ground. We are glad to see such strong "expressions of approval and sympathy" as are appended, and only utter our wonder that these friends of the cause have been so long silent on the subject.

T. S.

CHRISTIANS RESPONSIBLE FOR FAITHFUL PREACHING.

MUCH has been said about the duty of ministers to preach the great doctrines of the gospel, and apply them pungently to the consciences of their hearers. Our own columns, at different times, have borne witness to our solemn convictions in regard to this subject. The cross of Christ is the power of God unto salvation; and the truths that cluster about the cross must be pressed on the attention of men, if they are to be saved. The minister who fails here, will make a total failure, so far as the great design of the ministry is concerned; while he who is faithful to his Lord in this regard, will see the fruit of his labors, here or hereafter.

But do the members of the church realize that they are, in a measure, responsible for the correct and faithful presentation of the convicting and humbling truths of the Bible, from week to week, by their ministers? Do they know and feel that it is in their power to incite their pastor to greater fidelity, or to hinder him from making full proof of his ministry?

Preaching is not like delivering lyceum lectures, where all the audience come together to be pleased, and amused with a willingness to take what little instruction may be conveyed to the mind by such a vehicle. It is not like making political speeches to a gathering which meets for the purpose of hearing its opinions ad-