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THE

Reformed Presbyterian

AND

Covenanter.

APRIL,

1889.

J. W. SPROULL,

D. B. WILLSON,

EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

EDITORS' ADDRESS,

ALLEGHENY, PA.

"Whereunto 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 3.

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THE address of Rev. S. J. Crowe is Box 464, Mercer, Pa.

COLLECTION, April, 1st Sabbath, Library Fund; \$1,000.00 asked.

REV. JOHN LYND has received a call from the 2nd Belfast congregation.

THE quarter-centennial anniversary of the National Reform Association will be held in Pittsburgh, April 23, 24, and 25.

JOSEPH BOWES, Esq., of Baltimore, will deliver his lecture on the "Scotch Covenanters," in Wilkinsburg church, April 9th; Beaver Falls, April 11th, and Central Allegheny, April 12th.

CORRESPONDENTS will please direct personal letters to me at No. 2128 Columbia avenue, Philadelphia, Pa., and business letters to Editors of REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN AND COVENANTER, Allegheny, Pa., until further notice.
D. B. WILLSON.

THE New York Mail and Express of Saturday, March 2, contains at length a discourse by Rev. R. M. Sommerville, *America's Hour of Peril*, based on Amos 5: 6: *Seek ye the Lord and ye shall live: lest he break out like fire in the house of Joseph, and devour it, and there be none to quench it in Bethel.* The large collection for National Reform of over \$1,300, given by the Second church, his pastoral charge, shows the deep concern of that people for the nation's welfare, in giving the honor to Christ that belongs to him.

IOWA PRESBYTERY.

THE Session of Morning Sun have arranged the programme for conference at the meeting of Presbytery in Morning Sun, April 9 and 10, as follows:

1. The Book of Psalms the Only Divinely Authorized Book of Praise in the Worship of God. Opened by Rev. T. A. H. Wylie.

2. The Grounds of our Political Dissent, Rev. J. A. Black. Other members are requested to come prepared to make remarks on either subject.
C. D. TRUMBULL.

THE fourth annual meeting of the Women's Missionary Society of Pittsburgh Presbytery of the Reformed Presbyterian church, will be held in the Central R. P. Church, Allegheny, on Thursday, May 16, 1889. The following is the programme: Morning session, 9:30 o'clock.—Devotional exercises, Mrs. E. M. George, Wilkinsburg, 9:30 to 10; roll call; reading of minutes; report of Ex. Committee, corresponding secretary and treasurer; unfinished business; election of officers, 11 o'clock; noontide prayer; recess. Afternoon session, 1:30 o'clock.—Devotional exercises, Mrs. M. J. Campbell, Salem, 1:30 to 2; reports of societies; paper, "Mission Bands," Miss Mary Stevenson, Allegheny; collection for current expenses; miscellaneous business; singing, Ps. 106: 47 and 48 vs.; recess. Evening session, 7:30 o'clock.—Devotional exercises, Mrs. E. J. Pattison, New Castle; paper, "Our Mission," Miss Ella Martin, Pittsburgh; collection for Indian Mission; paper, "Our Trusts and Our Returns," Miss Jennie Slater, Miller's Run; installation of officers; adjourn, singing Ps. 72: 16 vs.

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ORIGINAL.

THE KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE RESURRECTION UNDER THE OLD TESTAMENT.

BY REV. JAMES KENNEDY, OF NEW YORK.

Having, in a former paper, given reasons for supposing that the resurrection was revealed to man immediately after the fall, as one of the provisions and benefits of the covenant of grace, and pointed out clear references to it in the writings of Moses, and traces of it even among heathen tribes and nations, we now state another conclusion as to the knowledge and belief of it under the Old Testament dispensation.

III. That during the period from Moses to the captivity, many passages show it to have been the steady faith of God's people.

It has been well said that, "the infrequency of the mention of the resurrection in the Old Testament arose, not from the doctrine being *unknown*, but from its being *assumed*, the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body always being to the Hebrew mind in close affinity." Something of the same sort may also account for the fact that so little is said in the New Testament about the immortality of the soul and the intermediate state, these being assumed as the faith generally, of all mankind, whereas the resurrection is very often dwelt on because the Gentile world—to which the gospel is now preached—had lost its primitive knowledge of, and faith in, this great truth, and it required line upon line to restore it to its primitive belief. Still the passages in the period from Moses to the captivity are, after all, not so very few, and in them this doctrine is perhaps more clearly and fully expressed than we find in any during the patriarchal period. The first we adduce is that familiar expression (Ps. 16: 10,) "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption." This passage Peter, speaking by the Spirit, directly applies to the resurrection of Christ. "He, (David) seeing this before, spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption;" (Acts 2: 31). But while primarily referring to Christ, "Whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be hold of it," it clearly shows that Old Testament saints were familiar with the idea of a resurrection, and that Messiah was not only to suffer death, but be raised up again, and that his resurrection was somehow connected with our redemption and salvation. Thus their faith was not a "vain faith," as

THE UNION OF THE CHURCHES.

BY PROF. SPROULL.

The subject of uniting in one organization the several religious bodies that hold Jesus Christ as the Head, is now receiving a good deal of attention in the Christian community. That the present state of ecclesiastical affairs is abnormal is generally admitted. That the church should be organically one is by all believed and desired. The invisible church is one, as taught in the Confession of Faith, "consisting of the whole number of the elect that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one under Christ the Head." "The visible church consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, together with their children." The church in this aspect, though one as having a common Head, is nevertheless divided into several denominations, included respectively within boundaries that do not admit of common fellowship.

How is this evil to be remedied, and the church, one in fact, made one in form? is the question to the solution of which many thoughtful minds are directed. Modes of operation have been proposed and tried, but have proved to be failures. Catholic communion, carried out to its full extent, would break down the distinction between the church and the world by allowing every one that sought the opportunity to partake of sealing ordinances. Free communion limits the requirement of membership to the applicant's own declaration, that he is a believer in Christ. This makes the applicant for membership judge in his own case, and opens the door for hypocrites. It dispenses with discipline, and makes a profession of religion a mere name to cover sin and lull the conscience of the sinner. To allow the members in regular standing in one church to commune in other churches would lead to confusion, each church treating as of no account the points on which it differs from others, and make discipline a nullity.

The mode that now seems to be popular is to formulate into a creed all those points in which the churches are agreed, and make this the basis of union. The objection to this is that a basis thus formed requires those who adopt it to leave out of their profession of faith doctrines that they hold as of vital importance. The principles that must be left out of the creed on this plan are the distinctive principles of each denomination, to which they cling with conscientious tenacity. The most that can be said of this is that it is an engagement to agree to disagree. It may be laid down as incontrovertible that the walls of Zion can never be built by sacrificing any scriptural truth. All attempts to unite the church by forming a basis from which must be eliminated any revealed truth must prove abortive.

The question then presents itself: If the church is sinning in remaining in this abnormal state, what is the remedy and how is it to be applied? This enquiry I now propose to answer. The radical mistake in the attempts made to accomplish this object, is to assume that the forming of a basis of union is left for those who are concerned in establishing the unity of the church. To this may be ascribed the failure of all the attempts made. Jesus Christ is dishonored by their rejecting

his plan and substituting for it plans of their own. That he has provided a basis is clearly taught in his word.

In Isaiah 28:16, we find this declaration, "Behold, I have laid in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste." Besides several references to these words in other places, they are in substance quoted in the New Testament twice, and applied to Jesus Christ: Rom. 9:33 and I. Peter 2:6. In the context the people of Israel are reprov'd for rejecting "the word of the Lord" as the standard of duty, and devising ways of their own, strongly expressed by making a covenant with death and being at agreement with hell. They are told of the evil results of their course, and are directed to the divine plan.

The Messiah, the Godman Mediator is the stone laid in Zion for a foundation. There is no reason to doubt that our Lord referred to this declaration by Isaiah in his reply to Peter's confession of his faith, Matt. 16:16-18: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." "On this rock I will build my church." And to it Paul also refers, I. Cor. 3. Having spoken of himself (verse 10) as a wise master builder who laid the foundation, he affirms, (verse 11), "Other foundations can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." And in Eph. 2:20, describing it as the foundation on which apostles and prophets built, he adds: "Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."

The properties of this foundation exhibit Jesus Christ as in every respect fitted to the requirements of the church. It is broad enough to include and strong enough to bear up all believers. "He that believeth shall not make haste." He shall not need to flee from it for safety. As Mediator he is in the possession and exercise of his three offices, of prophet, priest and king. In the execution of these three offices he is designated in the apostolic writings by the compound title, "The Lord Jesus Christ." This occurs about forty times in that part of the New Testament, and in nearly every instance in connection with the exercise of faith either expressed or implied. See Acts 11:17; 16:30; Col. 2:6, *et al.* By the title Lord, his office as king is presented; by the name Jesus, his office as priest, and by Christ the Anointed, his office as prophet. In this threefold relation to his people he exhibited himself to his disciples in his discourse to them shortly before his death. John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father but by me." He is the way as priest, for by his blood he has consecrated "a new and living way into the holiest." Heb. 10:20. He is the truth as prophet, for by the spirit of truth he "will guide us into all truth." John 16:13. He is the life as king, for "as the Father has life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also." John 5:26, 27.

Now as this basis, or to use the modern term, this platform, is of divine authority, we are warranted to maintain that it is neither defective nor redundant; every thing is in it that should be in it, and nothing that should be left out. The peculiar sentiments of any denomination that will not allow those who hold them to join on this basis with those of other creeds should be dropped as unscriptural. With private opinions the basis has nothing to do. Its place is to preserve the whole truth in its purity, and guard the rights of conscience in all against being required either to reject any doctrine believed to be scriptural or

to accept any of which this is not believed. The basis because it is of God is thus a guard against error, and the foundation of truth.

The consideration of the practical working of this mode of securing unity in the church, may aid to a better understanding of it. The three bodies whose distinctive principles stand in the way of union are the Baptist, Episcopalian and Covenanter. The Baptist will not have ecclesiastical fellowship with those who do not accept his views on the subjects and mode of baptism. Now let him be asked to take his position on this scriptural platform. If he refuses because it does not represent his peculiar views, his refusal is an acknowledgment that they have not divine authority, because as we have seen, the basis being of divine appointment has no defects. If he cannot reconcile his sentiments on baptism with the foundation laid in Zion, he cannot, of course, take his stand on that foundation. The same thing is true of those who hold the opposite views. They are not at liberty to put them into the platform and force them on the conscience of those who reject them.

And so also in regard to Episcopalians, who hold to the divine right of bishops and unchurch those who deny this right. If they believe that Jesus Christ as the Head of the church has instituted the form of the government of the church for which they contend, they can have no difficulty in accepting this platform. On the other hand Presbyterians holding to the government of the church by courts composed of elders with a parity of power, find on this foundation authority for their form of church government, and do not need distinct specification of it.

And the same thing is true of Covenanters. Jesus Christ whose right to govern nations they maintain, is the foundation, the stone laid in Zion, the Head of the church, and Head over all things to the church. It is "a tried stone." It has been tried and found all sufficient to bear up and perfect the church. It is "a precious corner stone," binding the walls together as "the head of the corner to be laid on the building "with shoutings of grace, grace unto it." This is the "sure foundation," laid in eternity, of which none who build on it will ever be ashamed of their confidence, and flee from it.

Make this the platform and let believers, whatever may be their name, take their position on it, and let it displace all sects, and denominations; human organizations, the work of men, mere expedients, which they have devised to perpetuate the existence of the church, but which have sadly marred her beauty and impaired her strength. We will then have a united church against which the gates of hell shall not be able to prevail. Ascribing the glory of founding and building up the church to the enthroned Mediator to whom it belongs we may be confident that he will give his Spirit to make the way of doing his will plain. He will own the movement and crown it with success. Then will be sung with the spirit and with the understanding in the fulness of their meaning, the words of the divine song :

God doth build up Jerusalem,
And he it is alone
That the dispersed of Israel
Doth gather into one.