

T H E

Reformed Presbyterian and Covenanters.

VOL. XVI.

APRIL, 1878.

No. 4.

ORIGINAL.

DEATH A CONTINGENCY TO BE CONSIDERED IN OUR BUSINESS.

So far as possible every one should have his worldly affairs in such a condition that if laid on a bed of sickness they would not occasion undue anxiety, or if suddenly called away they could be settled without much delay or serious loss. It is exceedingly unwise in our calculations respecting the future to neglect to take into consideration the contingency of death. Regard for our own peace of mind, for the welfare of our families, and for the interests of those who are associated with us in business, demands that in all our plans this have its proper weight. And yet men act as though they were immortal, plunge into different schemes without reference to the uncertainty of life, and frequently find themselves so involved that they are well aware, if death would soon come, their estate would be bankrupt. It is not well calculated to impart much comfort to one on his death bed, nor to assist in preparation for another world, to know that if soon called away his family must be impoverished, and the interests of friends who had trusted to his wisdom and integrity be compromised, and especially when he remembers that by a little prudence and foresight all this could have been avoided. In nine cases out of ten, in ninety-nine out of a hundred, it could be avoided. Let a man always keep his business under his own control, resolutely refuse to engage in any enterprise, however promising, which is at all likely to command more of his time or capital than he can well afford, or with the details of which he cannot be entirely familiar; be content, if necessary, with less gain rather than run great risks; provide in legal form for all contingencies, and death will, so far as his worldly affairs are concerned, never find him unprepared.

No interests have suffered more by this neglect to give to the contingency of death its proper weight than those of a purely benevolent character. Hundreds of thousands of dollars have in that way been lost to the church. The cases are very numerous. Almost any congregation can furnish instances in which persons to whom God had given abundance of this world's goods had frequently expressed a determination to show their gratitude by making the

[The following letter has been furnished by J. F. Bourns, M. D., of Philadelphia. It is interesting as showing how, even in those days, there were the same complaints in regard to the prevalence of wickedness, &c., as in ours.]

MR. JOHN BOURNS, Antietam :

Very Dear Nephew :—I have nothing new to inform you of unless of ye death of Mrs. Talbot, my wife's sister, who, after five or six months' sore affliction, departed ys transitory life July 7th, was decently interred on ye 9th. Old Robert Ramsey also is deceased since. A new in-comer from Ireland was brought to & lay 10 days in my house, dyed & was buried from it. The Sovereign Lord is exercising various methods of proceedure in his adorable providence; but above all others, irreligion; practical religion almost laid aside. What need there is for each of us to press forward in our closet and family devotion. The rising generation appear to practice as if they did not believe that yr is a God, or that he concerned himself with this world—particularly with his first and noblest creature, man. Eternal things are laid aside. This world & perishing things enhance all our cares—cheating, over-reaching, defrauding & every other wickedness abounding. Our coal-escence with ye Seceders, I apprehend, is almost at an end. Mr. L. can inform you hereof. Was told that ye Covenanters in ye north of Ireland, at a late meeting of yr Presb'y had appointed a minister to come over here. Should divine Providence favor this, I expect ye true Covenanting cause might again lift up ye head in ys western world. I wrote Mr. McMillan at Glasgow ye other week. I had some thoughts about coming back to see you, but fear inability. The Doctor purposeth in a few weeks coming back to see you, &c. Remember me to your spouse, children, Sam & spouse, with other inquiring friends.

Your sincere well-wisher and friend,

JNO. CUTHBERTSON.

OCTORARA, Aug. 19, 1789.

We thus conclude the plain narrative of Mr. Cuthbertson's life. It is our prayer that it may incite some laborer in the Master's vineyard to take new courage and new aspirations. The sketch has been prepared through much labor and research, and amid the busy scenes of the pastorate, yet if it add anything to historical information and the encouragement of any toiling one, the committee will feel amply rewarded. And with thanks to all who have in any measure contributed to its preparation, it is respectfully submitted to the public.

WHAT IS THE WEDDING GARMENT?

As the time is soon coming when we expect the Lord's Supper to be dispensed in each of our congregations, it becomes us to be examining ourselves for the occasion. Previous to the observance of the Passover in the Old Testament dispensation, preparation was to be made four days before the victim was killed. The lamb was to be separated from the flock, as old divines say, that the people might hear the bleating of it to bring their sin to remembrance. In like manner we have some days of this kind before a communion to bring sin to remembrance, and notwithstanding all that has been said to the contrary, we