

# OUR BANNER.

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## EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FOUR.

BY THE REV. J. C. K. MILLIGAN, NEW YORK.

As we enter a new year, it becomes us to take our bearings, and know if possible, the way over which we are to pass. Issachar was commended because the "men had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do." Since that day the history of the world, and many inspired prophecies have been written, giving us an infinite advantage over them, and increasing our obligations. With the divine assurance, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy," let us study to know our duty and privileges, and to be prepared for them.

The prophet Daniel, outlined the coming of the Messiah hundreds of years before the event, so that interpreted on the year-day theory, (Num. xiv. 34 and Ezek. iv. 6,) "each day for a year," the time and place were accurately known. He has also given two other views, covering the ages from his day until the complete conversion of the world to Christ. Believing that these are as intelligible as the other, let us study them in order to catch some glimpses of the prospects of the Church, and of the time of attaining to them.

In Daniel ii. 19, etc., Nebuchadnezzar's dream is interpreted, and Daniel says: "The great God hath *made known* to the king what shall come to pass hereafter; and the dream is certain and the interpretation thereof sure." Four consecutive world-powers were to arise and prevail for a long time in opposition to true religion; but "a stone cut out of the mountain without hands" should destroy the entire image, and become a mighty kingdom filling the whole earth. Nebuchadnezzar is declared to be the head of gold; he was to be succeeded by an inferior kingdom of silver, this again by one of brass, and that finally by one of iron, which was to deteriorate in strength, unity and honor, until destroyed by the kingdom of the stone. All this was literally fulfilled in the capture of Babylon by the Medo-Persians about B. C. 558, in their overthrow by Alexander about B. C. 325, in the subjugation of the Greeks by the Romans about B. C. 70, and in the degradation of the Roman Empire into the ten kingdoms of Europe,

ever widening and deepening ; on the banks of the gospel river the tree of life will bend with fruit and be ever green with nation-healing leaves ; and from " the temple of God opened in heaven " there comes a sight of " the ark of his Testament," and also " lightnings, voices, thunders, an earthquake, and great hail," a commingling of spiritual, moral and physical instrumentalities.

Glorious beginnings of all this we expect before the present year shall close ; but when and how the perfected glory shall come we dare not assert, but we humbly wait with the assurance that it will surely come and will not tarry, The signs of the " last days " are even now around us on every side : signs in the heavens and in the earth. The secular papers have summed up the events of 1883 as unprecedented in many of its disastrous features, inexplicable in the power of the secret forces that have combined in producing its results, and as ominously burdened with causeless uneasiness and alarm. We see the signals flashing from the throne of our King, the answering signals of his faithful followers, and the signals of the devil and his legions gathering for a yet more desperate effort to perpetuate their power. Let the Church hear the call, " Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Let us all hear the solemn question and answer that come to us on every breeze : " Who is this that cometh . . . with dyed garments, glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength ? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury ; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come."

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### AFTER THE BATTLE.

BY THE REV. F. M. FOSTER, BELIEFONTAINE, OHIO.

The whirlwind of battle ! After its thunder and roar have died away, we hear the groans of the dying and wails of despair. After smoke and dust have lifted, we see torn flesh, and shattered limbs, and streaming tears, and breaking hearts. It is *after the battle* the horrors of war are seen. Its misery, however, is the teacher of important lessons.

The Covenanter Church, in Ohio, has been a battle-field, not where the descendants of Scotland's martyrs have been pitted against the devil with his hoard of thieves, fornicators, adulterers, murderers—such warfare had been glorious ; but where the " father has been divided against the son, and the son against the father, the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother." There seems to have

been fulfilled the words of Christ, "and then shall many be offended and shall betray one another and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall arise and shall deceive many." Upon the Covenanter platform, in full view of Presbyterians, Methodists, Lutherans, nothings, and such like, the sons of the Reformation have been at war. One minister asserts before indiscriminate audiences that it is consistent with Covenanter principle and duty to vote for the Temperance Amendment. Another endeavors to show Covenanters that such voting is inconsistent and wrong. One claims that the deliverances of Synod say vote; another, that these deliverances mean no such thing. While it has been difficult for Covenanters to maintain their line in the face of such fire as comes from an amendment which, *in itself*, is founded upon the immovable rock of divine law, and urged to adoption by ruined fortunes, desolate homes, and gory scaffolds, yet, in this county at least, there is reason for congratulation that the large majority were true to interests dearer than participation in such a political struggle.

It is not the object of this communication to present an argument going to show that it is inconsistent with Covenanter principles and practice to vote, but to state some of the effects of the late election upon Covenanters subjectively and objectively considered:

1. Brethren have had their feelings deeply hurt. They have been wounded. So much so that it was only after earnest persuasion that some of them would commune at the Lord's Table with "voting brethren." For knowledge of God's eternal truth, for fidelity to Covenanter principles, for liberality to the cause of Christ, for true Christian character, the brethren offended present no mean comparison to those that voted. "Woe to that man by whom the offence cometh."

2. In one congregation the brethren that voted were required by Session to make this acknowledgment: "*An expression of sorrow on their part by having in that action, wounded the feelings of their brethren.*" Like Christians, they appeared before Session and gave such expression. In a congregation in the immediate neighborhood, it was publicly proclaimed from the pulpit, and strenuously insisted upon up to the election, that it was the Covenanter's duty to, and a sin not to, vote. Here are opposing forces—war among the same people. "If a house he divided against itself, that house cannot stand."

3. "*Opposing forces*" do not measure the evil. Feeling runs so high that it takes the form of public reproach scattered with lavish hand. Listen to what a brother has written to the STATESMAN of October 18th. We take it that there are none but Covenanters who have not been in the last political campaign, and therefore the statement must have peculiar reference to them: "The Christian minister in this state to-day, who is not laboring for the Second Amendment—and there are some such, but not many—is not regarded with any great degree of respect by the public." Only those that have been on the

battle-field, can understand the arrow and the keenness of its point. That word "minister" is comprehensive. It must also refer to the rank and file of the church that did not assist in this political campaign. Right here figures are in order. The whole number of Covenanters in the county is about three hundred and seventy-five, of which about one hundred and twenty-three are men over twenty-one years old. Of these forty-one voted, which is thirty-three and one third per cent. In Belle Centre, 18; in United Miami, 6; in Rushsylvania, 13; in Bellefontaine, 4. These figures show that it might not be unwise for the brother to step from behind his own artillery. If he is measuring his duty to the nation's King by "*public respect*," we consider it worthy of no further remark. If he believes, as his statement would indicate, that there are but *few* Covenanters who would not rally to the nation's call to come to the polls, and with one sweep of his pen he could spoil their prospects of happiness, a review of the above figures will, perhaps, convince others, if not himself, how much must be allowed for shrinkage. "Sure each man walks in a vain show." We refer to this as an illustration going to show how these "opposing forces" work.

4. Reproach has always attached itself to the Covenanter position. It is reduced to a minimum when there is nothing stirring the nation, roused to its full height in times of intense political excitement. In this last campaign enthusiasm reached its highest mark. Covenanters, if ever, should have been a unit. But by some publicly insisting that it was consistent with Covenanter principles to vote, and that the last two deliverances of Synod say vote—a statement somewhat amusing if not ridiculous—they have *unloaded their burden upon their brethren*, subjecting *them* to the *greater* reproach, which, however, they willingly bear, "rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name."

5. It is public report, believed and scattered by members of other denominations, that *some* of the Covenanters who voted for the Amendment, voted the whole ticket. We do not say they did; such is reported. As the voter was allowed to cast but one ticket upon which were the names of the nominees for office, whose friends were *zealously pressing their election* and the amendment, it is not difficult to see that the enemy has opportunity to bring such accusation. The report is damaging even if it be untrue. In a town of any importance, or city, you have no opportunity for declaring you cast your vote for the Amendment only, *but to all appearances, as far as actions can prove it*, you have cast your ballot just as the infidel or the most zealous advocate of secular government. Listen to what God says of such actions: "For if any man see thee which hast knowledge, sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols?"

6. It is a fact, that the Covenanter who voted has claimed his

place in the government as one of its "qualified electors." How do we know? At the election there were cast 721,464 votes. This is the official count under the declaration of the Secretary of the State, and has no reference to any party or principles. It is made up of Democrats, Republicans, Prohibitionists and Covenanters. These are the "qualified electors" without reference to *what* they voted. It is one and the same if they voted for officers or seven eighths of them put in blank tickets, which is the declaration that *the position of "qualified elector" is maintained*, but there is dissatisfaction with the nominee. The official declaration by the Secretary of State, that this was the number of voters all told, became a necessity to show the Amendment had not the requisite count for adoption. The Covenanter, therefore, is *counted* by the government as a voter—one of the 721,464, as the government makes up the whole number of these "qualified electors," and declares their official standing, they leave out of view altogether the *kind* of ballot cast. If such be not true, Covenanter voters should be counted among the 321,189 Amendment voters only, and disassociated from the 721,464 "qualified electors." To think we can vote a blank ticket, as those did who scratched all the names, and yet not be in the same relation to the government as every other "qualified elector" whose name is entered upon the poll-book, is not complimentary to our knowledge of Republican institutions. Perhaps Covenanters are mistaken as to whether they voted, and perhaps the official declaration that there are 721,464 voters is a mistake. Evidently there is a mistake some place.

7. The glorious opportunity for making our protest against and dissent from the government emphatic, causing the people to see that we mean to have nothing to do with a godless government, one that makes the violation of God's law lawful, has been by some disregarded and the influence of the whole Church weakened. This was the time above all others for Covenanters to have maintained their faith. The sturdiest advocate of Temperance will not maintain that the object of the Amendment was to reflect any honor upon the nation's King and glorious Head. The spiritual thermometer would indicate nothing higher than the "*expediency of 'we, the people.'*" It was to their praise, not Christ's. "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." The Israelite who enacted even a prohibitory temperance law in Absalom's kingdom, was putting that kingdom on a firmer basis and making the dethronement of David the more final.

8. In Debates of Synod of '82, page 43, a brother from Iowa makes this statement: "No one could possibly vote for officers, or on any other question, because no other question is submitted to the people." In Iowa the Amendment was submitted alone. Not so in Ohio; but it was part of a general election. The third resolution as passed by Synod of '82 reads: "In view of the varying conditions

under which constitutional amendments are submitted in different states, we leave it to Presbyteries and Sessions to administer the discipline of the church in harmony with these principles." It is expressed with confidence that the conditions upon which the Ohio Amendment was submitted—at a general election and to "qualified electors" as in Sheriff's proclamation—would cause that Synod to be still more emphatic with reference to the exercise of discipline.

9. It has been strenuously insisted upon that the historical position of the Church is to *vote* for such amendments. It might be asked: How can such a revolution as the figures in this county would go to prove, be accounted for? May be that "historical position" is a figment of the imagination.

10. There are some, more zealous than wise, who imagine these Christian reforms of to-day are to be carried to triumph with a whoop. Working for every reform in line of God's Word is commendable, and the Christian's duty, and gladly should he engage in it. But it is well to take into account the nature of antagonistic forces. The devil with his principles means to die hard. He understands how to control a reform which only skims the surface to his own advantage without betraying his wrath. But let the great plowshare of Divine law, gleaming with every principle of Divine truth—its nature, workings, and consequences, drawn by the irresistible power of Almighty God, plow up this nation, it is then the devil will come down in great wrath and make it boil as a mighty cauldron. The depth of a reform can be measured by its opposition. "If the world has hated me, it will also hate you." The Temperance Amendment was getting humanity but not Christianity before "We, the people;" morality, but not Christ. The devil controlled it easily.

All of which is respectfully submitted, not for argument, but to persuade the few it may influence that the time has certainly arrived for Synod to give a deliverance which cannot be misunderstood. We are persuaded that such is desired by all parties, and is for the good of the cause, the welfare of the Church, and for the honor of the nation's King and glorious Head. And to the "all-wise God our Saviour" be all the glory.

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### COVENANTER MINISTERS OF HALF A CENTURY.

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Below we give a list of the Reformed Presbyterian ministers for the half century beginning August 7, 1833, when for the first time two Reformed Presbyterian Synods were constituted. This occurred in Philadelphia, Pa., where our Synod met in the old Cherry Street church, with a membership of eighteen ministers and eighteen elders regularly certified as delegates; an Elder from Baltimore and one from Conococheague were also present, but having no certificate of delegation they