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A TRUE REVIVAL OF RELIGION.*

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TEXT: "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."—Acts 2: 33.

The prophet Habakkuk prays: O Lord revive thy work. And it is said of the Saviour: This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Christ was not yet glorified. This does not mean that the Holy Spirit was not given at all before the ascension of Christ, for his operations then, as now, were manifold; but that he was not given in the same degree. Then, as now, the Spirit was the author of all natural life. Gen. 1: 2.—"The Spirit of God moved (brooded) upon the face of the waters." He was then, as now, the author of animal life. Gen. 2: 7.—"He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul." He was also the author of intellectual life. It was the Spirit of God that filled Aholiab and Bezaleel with wisdom to work all kinds of cunning work. And the prophet Isaiah says of the farmer, plowing, sowing, reaping, threshing, grinding, etc., that his God doth instruct him. And if we might venture an opinion we are now just in the midst of a great intellectual out-pouring of the Spirit, in the wonderful advance in this century of science and art. Further, there was then the spirit of prophecy. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Then, as now, the Spirit strove effectually in the regeneration of men. Every regenerated soul was a work of the Spirit. The new heart was a new creation, and the principle of the new life in regeneration, then, as now, was communicated by the Spirit. It was the Spirit's work to revive religion in the

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thine offering, and the converts to the gospel shall spring up as the grass, and as willows by the water courses. And the earth shall speedily be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. Then shall the beacon-lights of the gospel be seen from hill-top to hill-top, from mountain to mountain, and from continent to continent, until the light of the glorious gospel shall surround our world, and the song of the redeemed shall encircle the earth. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.

POLITICAL DISSENT AND NATIONAL PROTEST.

BY THE REV. J. M. FOSTER, CINCINNATI, OHIO.

The Reformed Presbyterian Church is a witnessing body. This is her vocation in the sisterhood of churches. To this God has called her. The old blue banner, "For Christ's Crown and Covenant," was committed to her as a trust in swearing of the "National Covenant of Scotland," in 1638, and from that day to this she has been the standard-bearer in the sacramental host. She must keep this banner displayed because of truth. She must not suffer it to be dragged in the dust. She must act worthy of her high calling. Now, what is her duty in reference to "the powers that be" in this land?

Prof. Jevons, in concluding his discussion of "The State in Relation to Labor," remarks: "The subject is one in which we need above all things—discrimination." "In the beginning and through the middle and at the end of all discussion of the mutual obligations and rights of men in a free state, we shall do well to keep in mind this first need of discrimination." (Andover Review, April, 1885.) In this discussion we must discriminate between the nation and its government, the convention and the congress, constitutional and statutory law. The nation is the principal, the government is its agent. The convention makes the constitution, the congress the statute. But still we raise the questions: What is the nation? What is the government? What is the constitution?

A nation is the creature of God. It is not a human device. It is not of man, neither by the will of man, but of God. It is not made, it is born, *nascor*, born of God's providence. Rome was built by man. It was an empire built up of cities. There was no bond of union. To cities it again returned. (Guizot's History of Civilization, page 47.) England has made herself a great name by conquest and annexation. But the question with her to-day is, Shall it be confederation or disintegration? (Nineteenth Century, March 1885, "Imperial Federation," W. E. Forster.) The real English nation is small. The national spirit is from God, and wherever that national life throbs, there is the nation.

The nation, in the larger and more extended sense, is the whole mass of the people in whose bosoms the national spirit is fervid. This national spirit, which makes the patriot willing to suffer and die for his country, is from God, and may be cultivated until, like the Greek's, no power of invading toe can crush it. Since we come into the world imbued with this national life, it is obvious that we are born into the nation. This spirit is in us by nature. It is there, and we cannot divest ourselves of it. Just as we are members of the family in which we were born, and have in us the spirit of the family life, so we are members of the national body in which we were born and are animated by the national life. The spirit of nationality may be acquired through the process of naturalization by a foreigner. But in the case of a native-born citizen it is in him by nature. By birth he is a member of the nation. This is the national body. It is the sphere of *civil* rights. Every man, woman and child within the national domain has a right to life, liberty and property, to educate and be educated, to buy and sell, to marry and give in marriage, to discuss questions of public interest with tongue or pen, to give and receive title deeds, to pay taxes. The anti-Chinese bill is in contravention of man's inalienable rights. God has ordained that every human being shall enjoy his civil rights in all places of the earth. The national body is an institution of civil rights.

But the body of the man *alone* is not the man. Within the body resides the soul. The soul makes man an intelligent, responsible agent. Intelligence is the ground of personality. The personality of the man resides in the soul. Within the mass of people occupying the national domain there is the "voting body." That "voting body" represents the intelligence of the nation. The personality of the nation resides in it. It is not a voluntary body. All who are native-born or naturalized, whether male or female, who have intelligence, (*i. e.*, not demented) and who have come to years when that intelligence is available, (*i. e.*, who are over twenty-one years old) are members of it. It is the nation in the narrower and more limited sense. It is the sphere of sovereignty. (*See Mulford, The Nation*, page 211, 212.) Just as the soul, in which resides the human personality, is the sovereign of the body, so the "voting body," in which resides the national personality, is the sovereign of the mass of the people. The soul is responsible for the acts of the man, whether physical, mental, or both. The "voting body" is responsible for the acts of the whole people. The punishment of the mind may fall upon the body, or mind, or both. The punishment of the nation may fall upon the mass in physical judgments, or upon the "voting body" in "blindness of mind, strong delusions," etc. The "voting body" is the soul of the nation. It thinks for the nation. The Lord Jesus Christ, the "King of Kings," proposes His law to this sovereign "voting body" for their acceptance. They receive it. That moment it becomes a national covenant between them

and "the Governor of the nations." It is their constitution. A constitution is simply the moral law translated into the forms of national life. The sovereign body is bound by it, and has no right to reject, alter or amend it except in accordance with the mind and will of the "Prince of the kings of the earth." But when this sovereign "voting body" accepts of the constitution and acts under it, it becomes a "political body." It is constituted of the same voters, but they are now acting in subjection to the constitution. This "political body" is the sphere of political rights. In it the members have a right to vote and hold office, and direct the political life of the nation. All who exercise their political rights in it are reckoned as accepting the constitution and taking oath to support it. It is the "governing body" of the land. It is the political sovereign. The constitution is a political covenant between the "national body" and the "governing body." The government in the larger sense means the whole system of offices, including the executive, legislative and judicial departments, in which civil authority is exercised, as we speak of the republic of the United States or the limited monarchy of England. In the narrower sense it signifies the administration. When the Ferry ministry fell, March 30, 1885, it was said France has had thirteen governments in ten years. When the Beaconsfield ministry was displaced by Gladstone's in 1880, England had had nineteen governments since 1827. When the Arthur administration went out and the Cleveland came in, March 4, 1885, there was a change of government. In either case the government is under oath to carry out the constitution. The government applies the constitution to the individual citizen through the statutes. The individual citizen is subject to the statute in the hands of the government, the government to the constitution in the hands of the "governing body," the "political body" to the constitution in the hands of the "national body," the "national body" to the moral law in the hands of Christ, and Christ to the moral law in the hands of God, who is all in all. But it is the same law throughout. Statutory law is constitutional law unraveled, constitutional law is the moral law unraveled, the moral law is Jesus Christ translated into life, and Christ the revelation of God.

Now the "sovereign body" breaks this chain which connects the nation with the Mediatorial throne. It rejects Christ and will not accept of His law. On the contrary it adopts a compact of political atheism. The Christian citizen cannot accept this instrument. He cannot swear to support it. He cannot accept any office in the government, for all civil officers are sworn to support the constitution. He cannot vote with the "political body" under the constitution, for all the members of that body are directly or impliedly bound to support that instrument. He must step outside of the "political body" and refuse to exercise his political privileges under the constitution. That is a *political dissent*. That frees him from responsibility for this po-

litical rebellion against the "King of Kings." But the "sovereign body" has rebelled against Him in their *national* capacity. How will this Christian citizen free himself from responsibility for that? I answer, by entering his protest in the national convention that framed the instrument, affirming that they have no right to submit to the sovereign "voting body" a constitution which ignores the nation's God and the supremacy of his law, publicly disavowing all responsibility for this great wickedness, and declaring that he will not exercise his national sovereignty in either voting for or against it. So long as they reject "the Prince," he will not act with them in the exercise of national sovereignty. That is "bolting the convention," if you please. It is entering a *national protest* against gross national rebellion. Should he not do this, but content himself with simply voting against the instrument when submitted to the "national body," that would be virtually saying, "I agree to abide by the will of the majority. I accept it, if they adopt it." But by making his *national protest* beforehand, and refusing to act with them, he absolves himself from all obligation for the national sin. So long as his national protest stands he cannot exercise his national sovereignty. It his duty to preach and pray, and write and pray, for national reformation. But until the nation returns to its "King," and accepts of His law, it cannot be lifted. So long as this fundamental reform has not been secured, his national protest must stand, and he cannot exercise his national sovereignty.

But voting for a temperance amendment is an act of national sovereignty. The national protestor cannot do it: I. *Because putting such an amendment in an infidel constitution is only gilded rebellion against God.* The old divines used to say that the good deeds of an unregenerate man were only "splendid sins." This would be a splendid sin. It would be the sovereign "voting body" saying to God: "We have not accepted Thee as our Lawgiver. We do not propose to acknowledge Thee. We are our own. No one is Lord over us. But we intend taking one of Thy laws and adopting it, not because it is divine, but because we can better succeed in the end we have in view." But God says: "Who hath required this at your hands? Do you reject Me, but adopt My law because it is expedient? I will not bless such procedure" And the national protestor, who, at the first, took his stand on the Lord's side, must not be a party to this gilded rebellion.

II. *Because the infidel system of government gives character to the amendment and vitiates it.* A Christian man is a member of a worldly family. That family adopts Baal worship as its religion. The Christian is still a member of the family. His father is still the man who begat him, his mother the woman who conceived him, his brothers and sisters are still his brothers and sisters. To relieve himself of the responsibility for this family apostacy, he makes a vigorous protest, denounces the sin and calls upon them to repent. They seem

to repent, and they propose to adopt the Lord's Prayer as a part of the homage they pay to Baal, and ask him to unite with them in voting it in, lest a majority of the family should reject it, without his help. But the Christian says: "No. That would not be honoring God. It would be dishonoring God to honor Baal. It would be prostituting an ordinance of God to the worship of an idol. I cannot, I will not do it." Covenanters in America are members of this national family. The national family sets up a political Baal, "We, the people," and makes it an object of national homage. Native American Covenanters are still members of the national body. They enter their *national protest*. The national family propose to incorporate one of God's laws in their system and make it a part of the national homage they pay to this political Baal, and they ask these protesting Covenanters to help vote it in, but without their votes the requisite majority would not be obtained. The covenanting protestor says: "No. That would be prostituting a divine ordinance to the service of His rival. It is doubly dishonoring to God. It is robbing Him of His homage. It is giving His honor to another. I cannot, I will not do it."

III. *Because voting for such an amendment is virtually voting for the whole constitution as amended.* An objectionable resolution is offered in Synod. Three amendments are proposed and each of them good. I vote for these, but vote against the whole paper as amended. Up to this point the "action of Synod" was in process of formulation and voting for separate parts involved no responsibility for the rest. But now the paper, as a whole, is adopted. I enter my dissent. Subsequently an amendment is offered to this paper. Now a vote on that amendment would not only mean a vote on the amendment, but a vote on the whole paper as amended. That is true, because the paper *as amended* is not submitted to vote as in the former case. Voting for an amendment before the paper, as a whole, has been adopted is one thing. Voting for an amendment after the paper, as a whole, has been adopted is another. In the former case there is no acceptance of the whole as amended. In the latter case the whole, as amended, is accepted. So voting for an amendment to the constitution already adopted by the national body, is not only accepting the amendment, but the constitution as amended. This Covenanters are pledged not to do. If a bridge is rotten at the foundation and entirely unsafe, and I assist in putting new planks upon the roadway, that is proclaiming that the bridge is secure, and I am justly held responsible for any casualties that may follow. The constitution is fatally defective, by amending it in minor particulars, I proclaim it to be an instrument under which civil authority may be safely exercised.

III. *Because in voting for an amendment we declare ourselves a party with the national body in the sin of making an immoral constitution.* Some of our brethren reason thus: "The nation is the creature of God. The government is the agent of the nation, set up to

carry out its will. The constitution is the letter of instruction from the nation to the government. Our dissent is not from the nation, but the government. We are still members of the nation. We refuse to go into the government. It belongs to the nation to amend. Therefore we can vote for amendments." The distinction between the nation and government is correct, but the use made of it is not. The principle is: "I must dissent from the agent, but not from the principal. And hence I can unite with the principal in planning what I cannot unite with the agent in carrying out." That is certainly a dangerous position. If I must dissent from an agent in carrying out a wicked compact, then I must dissent from the principal for making it. And if I dissent from and protest against the nation for making an immoral constitution, I cannot act with her in amending that instrument until that sin is put away.

Again we are told! "The national body, in its sovereign capacity, as superior to and independent of the constitution, amends; but the political body, having accepted authority under the constitution, elects officers, etc. Hence we can do the one, but not the other." Here the fundamental principle is, that the sovereign body is *independent* of, *i. e.*, does not *accept* the constitution either directly or indirectly. It is certainly a strange doctrine that a body of men can frame and adopt by their votes a constitution of government, and yet be independent of it, or be said not to *accept it*. That assumption involves two false principles. 1. That any person, either individual or corporate or national, can be independent of his own act. Every person is responsible for his own action. When the national body frames and adopts a constitution, that compact is the work of the sovereign body, and that body is responsible for it. If that body is independent of it, then there is no vice in adopting an immoral constitution, and no virtue in adopting the divine law. The sovereign body can neither do right nor wrong in the matter. 2. That relation does not involve mutual rights and reciprocal duties; No one can say to another, "I am free, but you are bound." Each has peculiar rights, each peculiar duties. The child has rights as well as the parent, the servant as well as the master, the wife as the husband, the subject as the magistrate. The parent has duties as well as the child, the master as the servant, the husband as the wife, the magistrate as the subject. Now the "sovereign body" and "political body" are related as principal and agent. Out of that relation arises their mutual rights and reciprocal duties. If the agent is bound, so is the principal. If the principal has claims upon the agent, the agent has claims upon the principal—claims equally sacred and cogent. If the agent has duties, so has the principal. And if the constitution is God's law to the "political body" as agent, it is God's law to the "sovereign body" as principal. The "sovereign body" is not and cannot be independent of the constitution. Ex-President Monroe, in his work, "The People the Sovereign," defines the consti-

tution as an instrument "to which the whole people are parties, and by which *their duties in the capacity of the sovereign power*—shall be specially and distinctly defined," (pages 231, 232.) Mulford, in *The Nation*, says, "The constitution is the law which is regulative of the normal action of the nation." "It has the authority of law, and there is the defence of the whole from arbitrary action." The "sovereign body" is not independent of, but responsible for the constitution. And when we vote for an amendment we become a party to their sin in adopting it.

IV. *Because in voting for an amendment we forfeit our national protest.* Political dissent involves the refusal to exercise political rights in the political body. And that is forfeited when we do exercise our political rights. National protest involves the refusal to exercise sovereign rights in the "sovereign body." And that is forfeited when we exercise our sovereign rights. Therefore we separate from the political body and protest against the sovereign body, and voluntarily take position with unnaturalized foreigners in this land, like them only exercising our *civil rights*. I think we are all agreed that a Union man, living in the South during the Rebellion, and wishing to establish his loyalty to the North, would, necessarily, enter his political dissent and lift up his national protest against this treasonable procedure, and while continuing to enjoy his civil rights, would refuse to exercise his political privileges or sovereign rights among them. Thus he would indicate his loyalty to the United States government. This government is in rebellion against Christ. It has no more right to a national existence apart from His throne than the Southern Confederacy had apart from the United States government. Dissenting and protesting Covenanters will be innocent of this rebellion and prove their loyalty to Christ by refusing to exercise their political privileges or sovereign rights in this land, until the rebellion ceases.

REMARKS.

It is needless to follow the Brother's argument. We briefly notice the fallacy in each.

1. It is true that reform, if not radical, only makes a whited sepulchre; yet this is no argument against reform effort, but against ceasing too soon. The Brother teaches Chinamen and properly labors on to save them, though he aggravates their damnation if they are not regenerated. So we seek the full Christian Amendment, and must not murmur at small results. Isa. xlix. 4, 5.

2. Of course the Lord's prayer in Baal worship would be desecration; but this is no parallel to the Temperance Amendment. Some do seek Prohibition as a mere moral reform without reference to God; but it is not in honor of a false God, it is good in itself, and it is a means to and a part of the gospel of salvation. We still labor to re-