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Reformed Presbyterian
AND
Covenanter.

JANUARY, . . . 1879.

J. W. SPROULL, . . . D. B. WILLSON,
EDITORS AND PROPRIETORS.

"Whereto 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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RECEIPTS crowded out this month will appear in next.

DR. CANNON's address is now Cameron, Mo., instead of, as formerly, Waukesha, Wis.

REV. N. R. JOHNSTON's post office address is changed. His correspondents are requested to direct their letters to No. 320 Sansome street, San Francisco, Cal.

THE collection on the first Sabbath of January is for Church Extension. The amount called for is \$2,000.

THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN is now issued in the form of the *Christian Statesman*, folded, cut, and pasted, being now a sixteen page paper. We are pleased with the change. Many of our readers are already acquainted with the excellencies of this paper, under the editorial charge of Rev. Dr. Kerr. It is a faithful exponent of the principles of the United Presbyterian Church—a warm friend of National Reform. The subscription price is \$2.00 a year, if paid in advance.

An individual by the name of Carlyle, has been visiting different parts of the church, showing what he claims to be letters of recommendation from Rev. R. D. Sproull, of Rochester, and possibly others, and asking for loans of small sums of money. We have been requested to warn our members against him. He is well acquainted with the history of the church and of the ministry. He has been as far north and east as Lisbon, and when last heard from was in the neighborhood of McKeesport, Pa. It is safe, as a rule, to refuse aid to all persons of this description.

THE LONDON QUARTERLY REVIEW for *October*, 1878, contains: John Dryden: Rise of the Modern British Empire; Elephant Catching; Petrarch; Ancient Cyprus; M. Thiers, his life and character; The Lancashire Cotton Strike; Is the Church of England Protestant? The Revival of Turkey. This is a very attractive number. This *Review* is \$4.00 a year. Address L. S. Publishing Co., No. 41 Barclay street, New York.

THE EDINBURGH REVIEW for *October*, 1878, contains: The Copyright Commission; Low's History of the Indian Navy; Gardiner's Government of Charles I; Recent Explorations in Palestine; Who Wrote the Annals of Tacitus? The Jesuit Martyrs; Campion and Walpole; Sir Henry Taylor's Collected Works; The Correspondence of M. de Balzac; England in the Levant.

BLACKWOOD for *November*, 1878, contains: The New Ordeal—the combat; A New Method of Social Evolution; John Caldigate—part 8; Dangerous Shots; The Phœnix of France, Italy and Germany; In Memory of Dona Mercedes, Queen of Spain; India and Afghanistan.

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VOL. XVII.

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No. 1.

ORIGINAL.

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

John 16: 7—"If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."

Acts 3: 21—"Whom the heavens must receive until the times of the restitution of all things."

2 Cor. 5: 16—"Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more."

Heb. 9: 28—"Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

THE subject of the second coming of Jesus Christ to the world is, at the present time, enlisting a good deal of public attention on account, chiefly, of the discussions in the late meeting in New York. That meeting was composed of ministers of various religious denominations who hold the pre-millennial view. Papers were read by men of decided ability, and the sentiments of each one were stated and advocated. It was hoped that there would have been a clear presentation of the doctrine of Christ's pre-millennial advent in its connection with other antecedent and subsequent events, as held by those who composed that assembly. In this expectation the writer of this article must say he has been disappointed. To him, after reading the several addresses in the extra of the New York *Tribune*, the subject seems more confused than before the meeting was held.

Having had, for many years, defined and decided views on the subject indicated in the title of this article, he deems this not an unsuitable time to place them before his Christian friends. He has no foregone conclusion to maintain. "What saith the Scriptures?" Surely, on a subject of so much importance, it may be assumed that they give no uncertain sound. Let us hearken to the voice of God in his word.

The passages of Scripture that are placed at the beginning of this article were selected with a view to their teachings on this subject. Being purely didactic, they address themselves directly to our faith. The truth is not, as in other places, set forth in metaphors and figures. These have their use. The Spirit of God employs them for a wise end, and often, under proper treatment, they shed a flood of light on the didactic teachings of the word of God.

not by sight, having no intercourse, and needing none with him directly "after the flesh." When the whole purposes of God in regard to the human race on earth shall have been completed, and the existence of sin forever blotted out, the Son of God, in our nature, shall come to receive the fulness of glory due to him in the final judgment of men and angels. Then "to those that look for him he shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

It is intended to follow this paper with another to show that, in the special providences of the Mediator, and in the remarkable outpouring of the Spirit that shall precede and usher in the millennium, all the conditions of the pre-millennial coming of Christ, as foretold in the prophecies, shall be fulfilled. T. S.

THE FAITH THAT PLEASURES GOD.

BY REV. J. M. FOSTER.

"Without faith it is impossible to please God." Heb. 11 : 6.

THERE is as great a difference between belief and faith as there is between opinion and character. On April 19, 1775, a rider, on a horse flecked with blood and foam, brought to the city of Worcester the news of the battle of Lexington. All the citizens heard the news of the victory of the American troops over the British, and they all believed the report. Some who heard were disloyal, and some were loyal. Was there any political vice in the belief of the tory? Was there any political virtue in the belief of the patriot? Not at all. But when the tory heard the report of the victory, he was sorry, so sorry that he took up arms against his own people. And when the patriot heard the news, he was glad, so glad that he took up arms against the British. In that attitude of the heart lay the political virtue and the political vice. Just so, in the government of the universe, we all hear that God is our Saviour and Lord, and we all believe, and so do all the devils, and tremble. Some are sorry. Although they assent, they do not consent to God. They take up arms against him. Others are glad. They have both assent and consent. They surrender their souls cheerfully, affectionately, absolutely and irreversibly to Christ, as Saviour and Lord. This is saving faith. This is what theologians call *fides specialis*, special faith. It is that faith of which Christ is the object, which works by love, purifies the heart and overcomes the world. Here is another expression, *fides generalis*, general faith, which signifies a belief in and reliance upon the whole sum of revealed truth. The first will save, the latter is our duty. *It is pleasing to God.*

1. Because it furnishes the highest purpose in life. The Saviour indicated the high purpose of his life when he said, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." The noble words of our Catechism give us the *true* aim of life, "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever." The glory of God is the grand object of creation. From the forests and fields comes the voice, "We glorify God in obeying his laws; what do you do?" As we look

out upon the night, and see the bright procession going down the gleaming arch, a voice comes to us, "We glorify God in obeying his behest; what do you do?" From the beasts of a thousand hills comes the voice, "We glorify God in following blind instinct; what do you do?" From the thrones, and dominions, and principalities and powers in heavenly places, we hear the voice, "The angels delight to do his will; what is your delight?" From the church of the living God, every member of which, by grace, has been brought into right relations to God, to all beings and to all things, comes the voice, "We delight to do thy will, O, our God!" To glorify God is to obey him. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God." "Well," says one, "must we quit our business, shut up our shops, forsake our families, and retire to solitude?" Not so; the soldier is not gaining a victory by running away from the battle. A Christian is not "overcoming the world," by retiring to a convent or nunnery, or some pillar in the wilderness. Jonah was not doing God's will when, instead of going to Nineveh, he fled to Tarshish. Wherever God places us there is our work. He places some in lordly places and some in humble cottages; some upon the throne and some in the workshop; some in the study and some in the field. In our respective places he expects us to serve him. "Act well thy part, there's where the honor lies." Be a Christian at your business, in the social circle, in your family, and at God's house. Everywhere let it be your purpose to glorify God.

2. It furnishes the only perfect rule of life. Before a man can work an example in "partial payments," he must be acquainted with the rule. Before a man can become a good architect, he must know the rules of architecture. Before a man can become a good engineer, he must be acquainted with the laws of that profession. Before we can solve the problem of life, there must be a rule of life. There can be no successful life without a standard. For this reason Solomon earnestly advised, "Take fast hold of instruction, let her not go; keep her; for she is thy life." In the Southern seas, an American vessel was attacked by a wounded whale. The huge monster ran out for the length of a mile from the ship, and then turned around, and with the whole force of its acquired speed, struck the ship, and made it leak at every timber, so as to begin to go down. The sailors got out all their boats, filled them as quickly as they could with the necessaries of life, and began to pull away from the ship. Just then two strong men might be seen leaping into the water, who swam to the vessel, leaped on board, disappeared for a moment, and then came up bringing something in their hands. Just as they sprang into the sea, down went the vessel, and they were carried around in the vortex, but they were observed to be both of them swimming, not as if struggling to get away, but as if looking for something, which at last they both seized and carried to the boats. What was this treasure? It was the ship's compass, which had been left behind, without which they could not have found their way out of those lonely Southern seas into the high road of commerce. That compass was life to them. This infallible word of God is life to

us. We will risk everything rather than give up those eternal principles by which we are saved. Principles are our life. They are the food of our souls. Some men tell us it is no matter what we believe, so our heart and life are all right. Well, I suppose in one sense, that is true. It is no matter if the tree is corrupt, providing the fruit is good. It is no matter if the fountain is corrupt, providing the stream is pure. It is no matter if both compass and sailing chart are wrong, providing the sailing is right. But who ever heard of such a thing? Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? When a man's principles are wrong, his heart and life will be wrong in the same proportion. The Spartans thought it was no harm to steal, providing they did it secretly; and so, that being their belief, they stole. Joseph Smith thought polygamy was right, and so he multiplied wives to himself. The Hindoo widow thought it was her duty to mount the funeral pile to be consumed with her husband, and so, that being her belief, she did it. Simon Magus thought he could purchase the Holy Spirit with money, and that being his belief, he offered the apostles money, and drew down upon his head that searching reproof of Peter. Saul thought it was his duty to persecute the church, and that being his belief, he steeled his otherwise tender heart against the claims of humanity, and imbued his hands in the martyr's blood. When a man's principles are wrong, his heart and life will be wrong in the same proportion. God's truth is our life. God's truth is the church's testimony. The church's testimony is the torment of the world. The church is to overcome the world by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of her testimony. The church is Christ's witness to the truth. The entire canon of revelation has been committed to her custody and guardianship. To the church in old time "were committed the oracles of God." Paul speaks of the church as the "pillar and ground of truth." A noble column, on whose sides the lines of truth are so deeply engraven as to defy the obliterating hand of time, and so highly raised that the mutilating hand of man cannot reach them; while from its lofty summit the heaven-lit lamp of truth sheds afar its cheering and "life giving rays." To us, as a church, is committed the high and responsible duty of maintaining the ancient principles of our fathers unpolluted. Let us be true to the trust. We hear a great deal said now-a-days against having a testimony, "The Bible is my creed," shouts the untutored wordling. Such a principle is false. The Bible is no man's testimony. The Bible is the very truth itself. A man who wishes to study astronomy might as well say, "I discard all text books and all the discoveries of all those who have gone before, the heavens are my text book;" a man who wishes to study geography might as well say, "I discard all text books, and discoveries of travellers, the earth's surface is my text book;" as for a Christian to say, "I discard all creeds and confessions, and all the investigations of former divines, the Bible is my creed." Of course, a text book in astronomy is not to be accepted only in so far as it conforms to the facts as they exist in the heavens, and a text book in geography is not to be accepted only in so far as it conforms to the facts as they exist on the earth's surface; but this,

so far from being an argument against them, is altogether in their favor. So creeds and confessions are to be received only in so far as they conform to the teachings of God's word; but this only proves their utility. Those who reject them pretend to a great range of liberality; but they are virtually bigots. Certainly, so far as error is concerned, they are liberal enough, for men may believe what they please, so far as they are concerned, but so far as the truth is concerned, they are the narrowest and most bigoted of any, for they are determined, so far as in them lies, to break down all distinctions between truth and error. The church's testimony is the bulwark and high tower he has erected in defence of truth, and in beating it down the way is thrown open for the boar of the forest and the wild beast of the field to come in and devour at pleasure this fair garden of the Lord. The church's testimony is the artillery by which she overcomes the world. "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples." "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." "They overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony."

(To be continued.)

SONGS OF INSPIRATION.

BY S. A. STERRETT, M. D.

WHY should the Bible songs be exclusively used in worship?

Answer. 1st. Because they, and they only, are of divine appointment and inspiration. They are the veritable words of Christ. "Let the words of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

2d. None others are needed. These have been suitable to the past ages, and will be suitable to the ages to come, and for all nationalities. Not a situation in life, whether as an individual, a family, church, or a nation, whether in prosperity or in adversity, in health or sickness, life or death, but a psalm is adapted to each case and condition. If so, why should any spurious ones be superadded?

3d. To use any other in worship, would be a sin of presumption. It would be practically saying that man, vain man, knows what is well pleasing in God's praises better than the omniscient God does himself, who has said, "In vain do ye worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

What answer could be given, if God should ask them, "Who hath required this at your hands?" King Saul thought to improve the worship of God, by offering forbidden cattle for sacrifice; but God, by his prophet Samuel, said to him, "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

But are we not commanded to sing hymns and spiritual songs, as well as to sing psalms? Yes, truly we are; but nowhere in Holy Writ are we commanded to *make* or *compose* either psalms, hymns, or spiritual songs for the worship of God. We have them already. We