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COVENANTERS AT GETTYSBURG.

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The recent reunion of "the blue and the grey" soldiers at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, upon the twenty-fifth anniversary of the battle, called together from all parts of the country a large number of old warriors. It was, to a large degree, a peace meeting, and an opportunity for previous enemies to shake the friendly hand of reconciliation over the scene of conflict, while they reviewed in word and sight the field of carnage. It was an epoch in the history of armies. Gettysburg is the Waterloo of America. In many respects it was a fiercer battle and a greater display of military prowess than that enacted upon European soil. At Waterloo the British had 72,000 men, 186 cannon, and lost 20,000 soldiers; the French had 80,000 men, 252 cannon, and lost 40,000 soldiers. At Gettysburg, the Confederates had 90,000 men, 200 cannon, and lost 40,000 soldiers; the Federals had 60,000 men, 200 cannon, and lost 24,000 soldiers. Now while war may be regarded as legalized murder, and, therefore, unjustifiable, yet let every American patriot point the finger of pride to the granite of Gettysburg when he remembers the cause and occasion of the war. It was to preserve the integrity of our common country. It was to suppress a rebellious spirit that could not be done in any other way. It was to break the power of that system which made a distinction between the races which God made of one blood, and by the defeat of General Lee the corner-stone of that ghastly slave-power, which the South sought to erect upon human bondage, was crushed to pieces, and the murderous hand which was striking a deadly blow at the heart of our nation was paralyzed.

Looking at the situation in this way, and believing that the Southern Confederacy was not only a breach of the Constitution but a conspiracy against God and humanity, Covenanters felt it their duty to save their country and defend their homes and interests. For this glorious cause they freely gave their lives and sub-

stance. They were to a man loyal to the Union, and not a single member was found upon the wrong side in the day of trial. And there was no more courageous and gallant officer upon the field of Gettysburg than General Samuel Wylie Crawford, now living, the honored son of a Covenanter minister. As one visits that sacred field of conflict, and especially the sadly beautiful soldiers' national cemetery, he must realize that beneath the sod, which so many of the sons of Columbia drenched with their life-blood, peacefully rest the heroes who fought the decisive battle and saved our nation. All honor to the heroes of July 1-3, 1863!

Not only has Gettysburg become classic and the modern Mecca by reason of the important part played in the great drama of 1863, but noted as the site of one of the oldest Covenanter congregations in America. The design of this article is more particularly to present this chapter of unwritten history. The history of the modern Gettysburg is familiar to all; the history of ancient "Rock Creek" is known to but a few.

About the year 1734, a band of heavenly-minded Covenanters settled on the "red lands," and, in 1736, among the hills near the source of Marsh creek, and not far from the present site of Gettysburg. In 1740, others again settled on an immense tract of land comprising about one-fifth of the available land now in Adams county, laid out for the proprietaries' use, and named the "Manor of Maske." These pioneer emigrants were of the better class of peasantry, and brought with them the religious and industrious habits of their native land.

They were frugal, plain and hospitable in their homes. They were men of deep religious convictions, their peculiar principles being so endeared to them by years of fierce struggle and cruel persecution that they were not willing to lay them down at the feet of those who had no regard for them. They were men who prized the legacy of truth so dearly that instead of associating with other denominations in religious worship, they formed themselves into religious societies upon the basis of the Reformation attainments, and thus maintained the cause of true Presbyterianism in the new empire of America. They were men of fearless courage and genuine patriotism, and when the alarm of revolution from a tyrannical government rang throughout the land, it called no truer patriots and braver hearts to the defence of the colonists than those of the Covenanting Presbyterians.

For many years previous to the enjoyment of the services of a settled minister, the Covenanters gathered together in each other's houses for social religious worship, and the children were put through a careful examination in the Psalms and Catechisms. In August, 1751, Rev. John Cuthbertson came from Scotland as the first Covenanter missionary in America. He brought with him a small colony of people, the most distinguished member of which was his brother-in-law, Archibald Bourns, the progenitor of the

Burns family, long connected with the Conococheague congregation. These people settled on "the tract" at the base of the Blue mountains, and connected with the Marsh Creek society, as it was then called. Mr. Cuthbertson began his preaching services here September 1, 1751, when he preached at "the tent," some two miles from the house of David Dinwiddie.

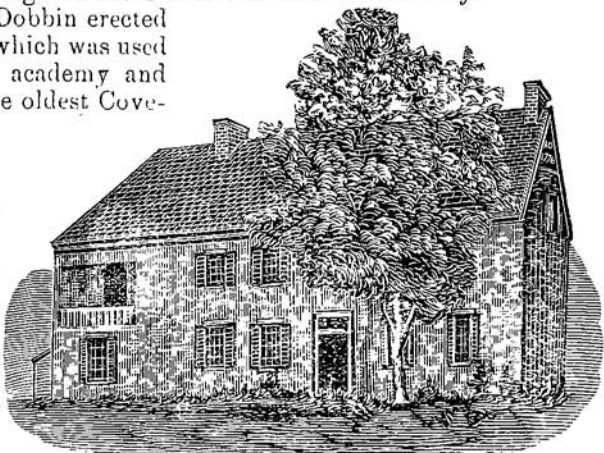
This was the first Covenanter sermon preached in this region, and no doubt a large number of hungry souls gathered in this grove, God's first temple, to hear this apostle to the Covenanters of America. The morning lecture was based on Luke 12: 41-49. After an interval of half an hour, Mr. Cuthbertson baptized Jean, daughter of Thomas Anderson; Isabel, daughter of Robert McCullough; Rose Ann, daughter of Joseph Hutcheson; James, son of Joseph Broomfield; and Mary, daughter of David Dinwiddie. In the afternoon he preached from Gal. 5: 1. After these long but enjoyable services were concluded, the people returned by horseback or on foot to their respective homes, realizing that indeed it had been a refreshing time from the presence of the Lord. The next visit Mr. Cuthbertson made was on December 8, 1751, when there was a great snow on the ground. On November 3, 1752, Mr. Cuthbertson returned and bought one hundred acres of land situated eight miles from Marsh Creek, towards Antietam. He now frequently visited this locality to preach and to look after the interests of his farm. The people had become quite numerous, and a congregation was regularly organized, April 8, 1753, by the ordination of Jeremiah Morrow, father of the late Governor Morrow, of Ohio, and David Dinwiddie, ruling elders. The congregation was now called Rock Creek, as most of the people lived along this stream. No doubt human nature was much the same then as it is to-day, for Mr. Cuthbertson tells us that on September 13, 1754, he held a session meeting ten hours long at Rock Creek, rectifying disorders and removing differences between the brethren. The people soon afterward began the erection of a church-building, which stood about one mile northeast of the present town of Gettysburg. In 1756, the people were terribly annoyed by the ravages of Indians, and some of the Covenanters in Cumberland county were massacred. Many of them fled into York and Lancaster counties where they were safer from the incursions of the savages.

No doubt the great day in the history of the Rock Creek congregation was that upon which they enjoyed the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and united in a call for a pastor. The communion was held on Sabbath, October 11, 1761, on which occasion Mr. Cuthbertson was ably assisted by Rev. Alexander McDowell, of Massachusetts, who had recently connected himself to the Covenanters. On Monday after the communion, the congregation made out a unanimous call for Mr. McDowell, which, however, was declined, and he soon returned to New England. Mr. Cuthbertson continued to visit the congregation, the session of which was

strengthened by the ordination of John Murphy and Andrew Branwood, ruling elders, May 16, 1764. Rev. Daniel McClelland, who had been sent out by the Reformed Presbytery of Ireland, preached here in 1767, but his services were not highly regarded. In December, 1773, Revs. Matthew Linn and Alexander Dobbin arrived from Ireland to assist Mr. Cuthbertson in his arduous duties. Mr. Dobbin came directly to Rock Creek, where he was installed pastor, at a meeting of the Reformed Presbytery, held in this place, May 24, 1774. He soon afterward bought a tract of land comprising three hundred acres, now occupied by the battlefield of Gettysburg and the Soldiers' National Cemetery.

In 1776, Mr. Dobbin erected the stone house which was used for a dwelling, academy and church. It is the oldest Covenanter church

now standing, and was erected while the Declaration of Independence was being signed. No doubt the dedicatory services were held during the meeting of the Reformed Presby-



tery in this place, August 26, 1776, at which time the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was dispensed.

It was with profound interest that the writer visited and thoroughly inspected this ancient structure. It is built substantially of native stone, sixty by thirty-three feet, two stories and a half high, and stands on a large and beautiful triangular plot of ground, now owned by Mr. Henry Heck, occupied as a dwelling by Mrs. Catherine Johns, and is situated at the intersection of the Emmitsburg and Washington turnpikes, now called avenues, in the suburbs of Gettysburg. This engraving is made from a photograph taken expressly for the writer and for this article. The building is remarkably well preserved for one in constant use for one hundred and twelve years. The workmanship is clumsy, of an antique style, constructed of heavy hewn logs for the frame-work, roughly split lath fastened with hand-wrought nails. The interior is divided into spacious rooms, in which may yet be seen the wooden pegs in the walls, the traces of shelves and bookcases in the "library" of Mr. Dobbin, and where the seats were in the "auditorium." Every room has an immense fireplace and a mantel as high as an ordinary person can reach. In some of the walls is made a large cavern,

covered with iron, to keep out the dampness. Attached to the west end is a fireplace as large as a good-sized room, enclosed by wooden doors, and would comfortably seat a half-dozen persons on a cold day. In the cellar is a good spring of water, from which never-failing fountain thousands have quaffed since the days of our colonial fathers. In one of the back window frames a hostile bullet is imbedded, which was intended for a person appearing at the window during the battle of 1863. The west end outside wall is scarred by numerous bullets, and some of the stones at the corners are broken by deadly balls and shells during the battle. At the very point of the outside gable wall on the east are yet plainly preserved the characters: "A. D. 1776." While the mason, who had recently been elected an elder in the congregation, was building this house, he made some remark to Mr. Dobbin about the poor quality of some of the stone; to which Mr. Dobbin assented, with the remark that he would have to do with the stone as the congregation did in making elders—when the best material was all used up they had to take the cobble stones.

Mr. Dobbin conducted a flourishing literary and theological school here for many years. In June, 1780, Gettysburg was laid out by Mr. James Getty. At the formation of the Associate Reformed Church, in 1782, nearly the whole of the Covenanter congregation went with Mr. Dobbin into the union, and, retaining the church property, Covenanterism soon became extinct in that locality. There is one member living there now, Miss McAllister, who belongs to the Conococheague congregation, and lives upon the old homestead. In 1858, the congregation went into the United Presbyterian Church, and there is a small congregation in Gettysburg. In 1791, Mr. Dobbin was made a trustee of Adams county. From a Gettysburg paper of 1804, the following paragraph is taken: "The students of the Rev. Alexander Dobbin hereby solicit the public to favor them with their attendance at the Court House in Gettysburg, where they hope to entertain them with some short discourses upon interesting and amusing subjects."

Some of the early families of Covenanters at Rock Creek previous to 1776, are the following: Archibald Bourns, David and Hugh Dinwiddie, Jeremiah Morrow, John Watt, Thomas Wilson, Joseph Little, Thomas Anderson, Neil McKnight, Robert McCullough, Thomas Neillie, Joseph Hutcheson, Mary Silbuck, Joseph Broomfield, John Murphy, Mary Mair, Robert Stevenson, John Crook, Alexander Patterson, Andrew Branwood, John Finney, James Blackburn, John and William Morton. The elders were, David Dinwiddie, Jeremiah Morrow, John Murphy and Andrew Branwood.

It is a remarkable coincidence that within the bounds of that congregation and around that old building of Covenanters, whose principles were so antagonistic to the system, and their energies directed for the overthrow of the power of human slavery, the

decisive battle was fought. Here liberty and rights were given to an oppressed race, and the old building stands to-day with scars of honor upon it as a trophy to the triumph of true Bible principles. From the beginning Covenanters were abolitionists, and courageously maintained their principles until this evil was banished from the land.

Shall they not maintain their present position, and battle for the right, until the granite of a moral Gettysburg looms up as a symbol of the triumph of King Jesus and his word as supreme in the land? We have a history of which we should be proud, and the more the story of her conquests is told to the young, the more will the principles of the Covenanter Church be appreciated and understood. Let us all improve by the words of the psalmist: "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following."

A PLEA FOR THE CHILDREN.

BY REV. J. C. M'FEETERS.

"Wisdom is the principle thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding."—Prov. 4: 7.

What intense pleading! Who can resist such words all on fire with earnestness! Who can go slow in duty, when urged with such vehemence! And the duty is to educate the mind. The horse prances with animation when the band strikes up its music; and where is the soul that will not leap into new life, as it listens to the music of these stirring verses? Who can read this chapter of Proverbs, and not feel something of the inspirations of an educated religious mind?

We are urged to get wisdom; to get it as the principal thing; to get it whatever else may be gotten, or not gotten, or forgotten. Wisdom is better than an office; better than honor; better than ornaments; better than a crown weighty with gold and flashing with diamonds. Wisdom will win you an office; will bring you to honor; will adorn you with fairest attractions; will place upon your brow what is better than that which rests on the head of emperors. This is not a rocket of rhetoric, exploding with fancy colors to please your eyes; it is the solid truth. You must believe it, if you believe the fourth chapter of the Proverbs of Solomon. Then what is this wisdom?

I. *Wisdom means true religion.* There is not a wise man on earth, who is not truly religious. He may be a scholar and a gentleman, according to the world's opinion; but he is not wise according to God's opinion. Wisdom means religion founded on the gospel of Jesus; religion strong in the truth of God; religion fervent with the fulness of a zealous life; sublime in the use of faith