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Quarter-Centennial

—OF THE—

PITTSBURGH

R. P. Congregation.

1866 to 1891.

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OF THE

COVENANTER CHURCH.

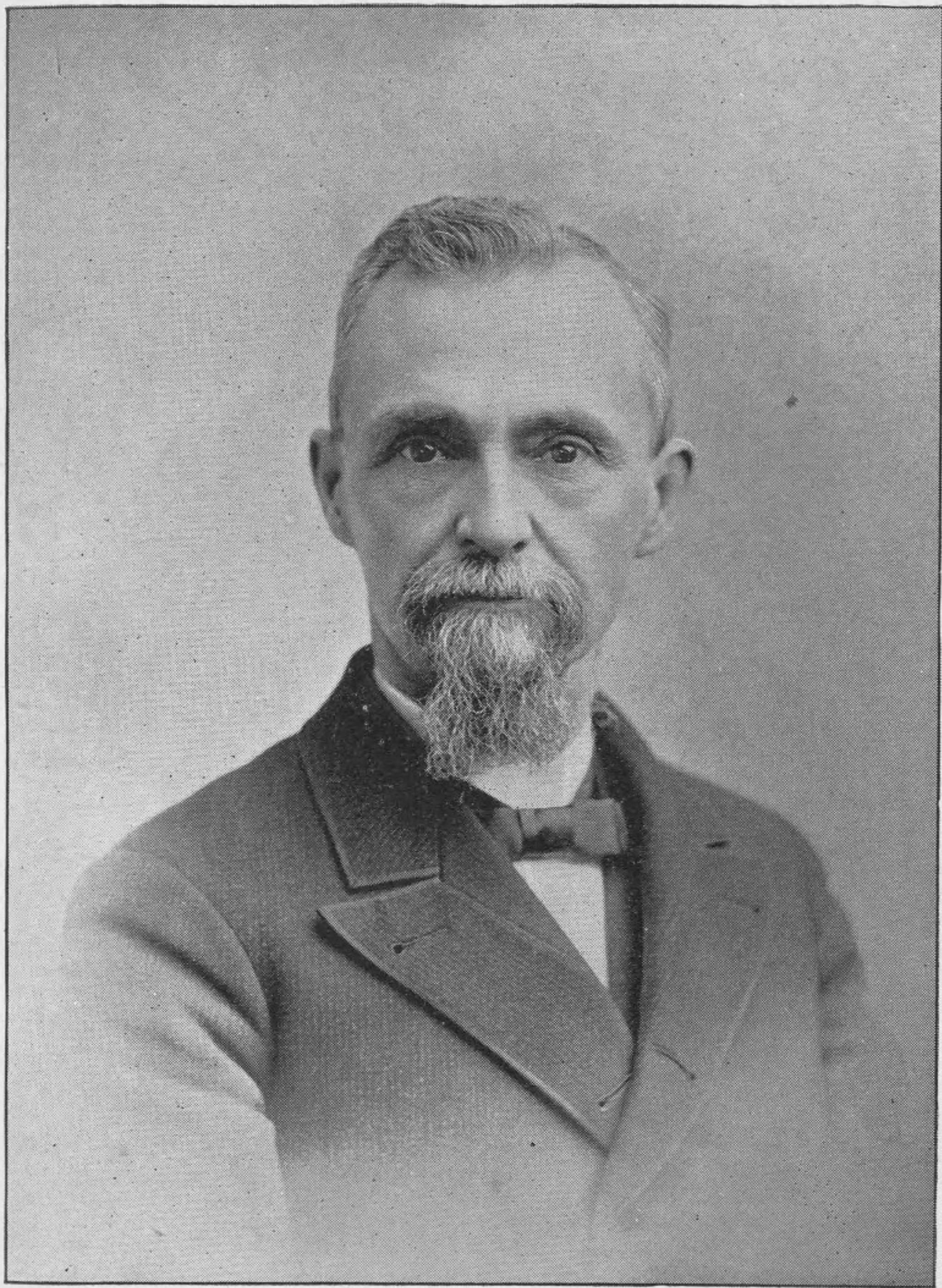
1866 TO 1891.

THE COVENANTER PUBLISHING CO.
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QUARTER CENTENNIAL

—OF—

PITTSBURGH R. P. CONGREGATION.



David McAllister

On Wednesday evening the pastor delivered the following discourse on

THE COVENANTER CHURCH OF PITTSBURGH.

“Shewing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and the wonderful works that he hath done.”—Psalm 78: 4.

This passage of Scripture, like that which was before us on last Sabbath, contains impressive lessons on the duties of each generation to its successors. And as we have been calling to memory what the Covenanter church of America has done, so let us now take a more limited view of the Covenanter church of this city, that we may show “to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and the wonderful works that he hath done” in this part of the church, as we go forward in this celebration. Pittsburgh has been one of the principal centres of Covenanter influence, and thus the history of the Covenanter church of Pittsburgh corresponds in some important matters with the wider range of the subject before us on last Sabbath.

The history of the Covenanter church of Pittsburgh divides itself quite naturally into three periods. Of these, the first period covers about one third of the present century, or from 1800 to 1833; the second period covers another third of the century, or from 1833 to 1866; and the third period, the twenty-five years particularly commemorated in these Quarter-Centennial services, or from 1866 to 1891. Following this division, let us review in the light of broad and general principles the history of Pittsburgh Covenanters. The more minute details of these successive periods will be given in an interesting paper to be read to-morrow evening.

FIRST PERIOD, FROM THE CLOSE OF THE LAST CENTURY TO 1833.

The central figure in this period is the Rev. John Black, D. D.; and the main principle about which the history of the Covenanters of Pittsburgh, and indeed of the whole country, crystalizes during these thirty-three years, is the settlement of the church's testimony to the Kingship of Christ over this nation, and the duty of his loyal followers to dissent from the immoral compact of the constituted government.

Covenanters settled in and around Pittsburgh before the Revolutionary war. Tradition records the visit of the Rev. Alexander Dobbins to this neighborhood, probably before 1780. As early as 1779 the Rev. John Cuthbertson visited Pittsburgh and vicinity on one of his long and arduous journeys among the widely scattered Covenanter families of the colony, evidently with a view to further the union of the Covenanter and Associate churches, which attempt soon afterward resulted in leaving three churches where there had been two. The new organization, the Associate Reformed church, absorbed much of the strength of the two older bodies, which nevertheless, still maintained a distinct though weakened life. From the time of Mr. Cuthbertson's visit in 1779, the number of Covenanter families in this vicinity increased. These families held fast to the great principles of civil government which, after the adoption of the United States Constitution in 1787, demanded more and more pointed and public application in the Testimony of the church.

Not until 1799 did any Covenanter minister again visit this part of the church. At that time John Black, then a licentiate, was assigned to this region. Mr. Black was a native of County Antrim, Ireland. He had graduated at the University of Glasgow, Scotland, in 1790. After a number of years of teaching and study of theology in Ireland, he came to America in 1797. * He taught the classics and continued his studies here, and was licensed by the Reformed Presbytery at Coldenham, N. Y., in June, 1799. At the close of the year 1880 he was installed pastor over what was then called the Ohio congregation, which included all the Covenanters west of the Alleghenies. In 1806 this widely scattered congregation was divided into three, one of which was the Pittsburgh congregation. Of this Mr. Black remained pastor. His fine scholarly attainments soon brought his services as a teacher into demand, and after filling other positions he became in 1820 professor of ancient languages in the Western University of Pennsylvania, at the same time continuing his work as pastor of the Pittsburgh congregation.

Up until within a few years before the division of 1833 Dr. Black had eloquently set forth the sin of the United States government, not only in the enslavement of the negro, but also in its failure to accept the law of Christ as King of kings. Together with other able men like the Rev. James McKinney,

Dr. Alexander McLeod, Dr. S. B. Wylie, and Dr. Gilbert McMaster, Dr. Black helped to set forth with clearness and power the principles of the Covenanter church in reference both to the rights of man, and the rights of God and his Anointed Son.

This was the period of the formulation of the Testimony of the Covenanter church in America. And carefully and admirably did the fathers who framed that Testimony state the harmonious principles of the organic unity of the church, and the kingship of Christ with its consequent position of dissent from all immoral constitutions of civil government. Dr. Black's teachings were strong and full on both these points, though only one of his discourses was published during this period. This was his elaborate discourse on "Church Fellowship," preached at the opening of the Synod of 1816 in Philadelphia, and published at Pittsburgh in 1819, with many scholarly notes, making a volume of 109 pages. One passage may here be quoted as bearing upon the "liberal" view of to-day, that the acknowledged moral and Scriptural duty of dissent should not be made obligatory upon her members by the law of the church: "The church embraces the social principle in its fullest extent. All the obligations to duty, in every relation in which man is found, and all the moral engagements under which the rational family may lay themselves, are homologated by the church. And her members have a fellowship in fulfilling all these obligations and engagements. The rule of the church's conduct, in every respect, is the moral law in the hand of the Mediator. . . . Feeling the force of the sacred obligations under which they are laid, they join hand in hand in the discharge of every duty. Professing the same faith, believing the same testimony, holding the same doctrines, and offering the same prayers, they set to the same seal, and enter into the same vow in the solemn Eucharistic festivity, where in the most intimate communion which is exhibited or enjoyed on this side heaven, they all eat one bread, and are all made to drink into one spirit." (Pages 14, 15.)

The foregoing extract reflects the uniform practice of the Covenanter church until just before the breach of 1833. Here at Pittsburgh, and elsewhere throughout the country, the duty of dissent from the man-enslaving and God-dishonoring compact of the United States constitution, was a duty to which the church herself, in the actual conditions or terms of her com-

munion, set to her seal. And when at length the breach took place, the men who withdrew from the Covenanter body turned their backs upon their own honorable record in establishing that testimony and appointing that law in our Covenanter Israel. During that third of a century they had made it a term of communion that no Covenanter should hold a slave, although the Declaratory Testimony did not write this out as a part of the formulated constitution of the church. At the same time they had also made it a term of communion that no Covenanter should profess or swear allegiance to an immoral constitution of civil government, and this had been written out as a part of the formulated constitution of the church in the Declaratory Testimony of 1806.

In all this we have a fine illustration of the relation of the written constitution of a social organization to its vital or unwritten constitution. Previous to 1806, when her Declaratory Testimony was formulated, we see how rigidly the Covenanter church of America made separation from the sin of slavery an actual term of communion. The Rev. S. B. Wylie was licensed at Coldenham, N. Y., together with John Black, Alexander McLeod and Thomas Donnelly, June 24, 1799. One year later, June 25, 1800, he was ordained in Ryegate, Vermont, not to be the pastor of any congregation, but to go to South Carolina with the Rev. James McKinney, to apply the constitutional law of the church, as she then had it, in freeing the church from all complicity with slavery. This was done by refusing fellowship to any who would persist in holding their fellow men in bondage. Here, then, was a most authoritative term of communion by the unwritten constitution of the church. And even in 1806 this part of the church's unwritten constitution was not translated into legal language to become a part of the written constitution. Not until away on in the second third of the century did it become a part of the written Declaratory Testimony. And then the written constitution simply formulated into legal language, and registered in written fundamental law, what was already in the vital constitution of the church.

The same relation has been illustrated by the laws of the church as to secret orders and intemperance. These provisions of the vital unwritten constitution asserted their authority on the basis of God's Word, in the organic life of the church long before they were written out; and then at length they were

duly authenticated in her written constitution as we have it in her Declaratory Testimony.

But the principle of political dissent was so inherent in the organic life of the Covenanter church from the days of the martyrs down, and had been so prominent in Great Britain before the anti-slavery battle began, and before the temperance movement was dreamed of, and before the birth of the United States, to say nothing of the framing of the written constitution of the nation, that when a Testimony was formulated for the church in this country in 1806, as a matter of course that writing out of the church's constitution gave clear and explicit expression to what had always been her unwritten organic law on this subject of dissent.

To-day we have the "liberal" interpretation of our constitutional law—an interpretation that finds its fitting place in ecclesiastical law beside the "New Light" theory of our national constitution. This interpretation affirms that because the United States constitution is not mentioned in so many words in our Declaratory Testimony, therefore dissent from that particular instrument is not required by the fundamental law of the church.

But the very idea of the constitutional law of the Declaratory Testimony is to lay down principles that would be world-wide in their application. The constitutional principle concerning secret societies, for example, does not name American, or English, or Scotch, or Irish, or Syrian organizations. But it covers all such orders in every land. The constitutional principle of the Sabbath does not mention any Sabbath-breaking corporation in any country. But it forbids membership in any of them, in whatever country they may be found. In like manner the constitutional principle of political dissent, without naming the American, or the British, or the Turkish constitution, requires separation from an immoral constitution of civil government, whether in America, Cyprus, Syria, Asia Minor, or any other part of the world where the church may have her membership.

This, then, was the law and the testimony established and formulated in this first period of Covenanter history of the present century, and this was the position from which our former brethren departed in 1833.

THE PERIOD FROM 1833 TO 1866.

The withdrawal of a part of the Covenanter church, in 1833, from the position of dissent and separation from the immoral compact of the United States constitution, served but to strengthen the loyal and faithful in their testimony against the unjust and Christless instrument throughout the entire church. In Pittsburgh the powerful personal influence of Dr. Black did much toward drawing his people very generally away with him. Only a little handful of thirteen remained steadfast. But they set their faces like flint, not in desperation, but in hope and faith. At their communion in December of that year, there was a rallying both at home and from adjacent places, and one hundred and twenty Covenanters renewed their vows of fidelity to their Lord and King at his holy table in this city.

As Dr. John Black was the central figure of the former period, so Dr. Thomas Sproull is the central figure of this second period of the history of Pittsburgh Covenanters. The standard which Dr. Black abandoned found an unwavering champion in Dr. Sproull. As pastor of the Pittsburgh congregation from May 12, 1834, then as pastor of the Pittsburgh and Allegheny congregation from May, 1836, until the re-organization of the Pittsburgh congregation proper in 1865, and from that time till the present hour, Dr. Sproull never faltered or weakened in the application of the church's testimony against the immoral and godless character of our written constitution.

For nearly thirty years, dating from the opening of the church on Leacock St., Allegheny, in 1836, there was no stated public assembly of Covenanter worshippers in the city of Pittsburgh. Occasional public services were held, however, and sometimes, as in the days of Dr. J. R. Willson, these special services were of deep interest and great power. But whether public services were held in the city or not, sturdy Covenanters with the spirit of Cameron and Hackston were not wanting. Weekly prayer meetings were maintained with scrupulous zeal, and on the Sabbath companies of worshippers crossed the river to the meeting-house for the congregation of Pittsburgh and Allegheny.

This period covers the anti-slavery conflict, even up to the Emancipation Proclamation, and the thirteenth amendment

to the United States constitution. And if Pittsburgh may claim special honor for the strength of her anti-slavery sentiment during that conflict, in the very front rank of her anti-slavery reformers must be placed the members of the Covenanter church. Loyal to the country, and willing to suffer and die in her defense, they would give no oath to the instrument by which their fellow-men had been held in bondage. The Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton, himself a Pittsburgh lawyer, knew Covenanters so well that he fully trusted their loyalty without any oath to the constitution such as other citizens were required to swear. Lincoln and Stanton both knew that the Covenanters who had denounced not only slavery, but the constitution that upheld the iniquity, were the men above all others of whose loyalty, in that crisis of our nation's life, there could be no shadow of doubt. The war to them had a significance and a sacredness unknown to those who were fighting for nothing more than the preservation of the union, irrespective of the great moral issue involved. The very principles and convictions which forbade Covenanters to swear to support the United States constitution, were the principles and convictions that were needed to bear the strain of those terrible days of the battles of the warriors with their "confused noise and garments rolled in blood." The sovereignty of the nation; its moral character and accountability; its sins against the poor negro and against the God of nations; its need of repentance and reformation, and its need of hope in Christ, the only Saviour of both nations and men—these were the truths that Covenanters had proclaimed in the midst of scorn and reproach, for generations past, but that were now commanding attention and respect amid the wasted treasure, the tears and groans, the mutilated bodies, the countless graves, and desolated homes of a stricken people. Never did political and moral principles receive more splendid vindication than did the Covenanter principles of 1833 as to the nature and sovereignty of the nation, and its duty to God and Christ as well as to the oppressed black man, in the civil war with which this period closes.

THE THIRD PERIOD, FROM 1866 TO 1891.

We come now to the third period, which may be dated from May 14, 1866, when the Rev. A. M. Milligan was installed pas-

tor of the Pittsburgh congregation, although the re-organization was effected on October 31, 1865. Mr. Milligan assumed the responsibilities of this important charge at forty-four years of age, when he was in the full vigor of his magnificent physical and mental powers. And he soon found his every power taxed to the utmost. The beginning of his Pittsburgh ministry was co-incident with a grave crisis in the Covenanter church of America. Let us try to estimate the crisis by a comparison with that of 1833.

Looking back to 1833 from our present stand-point, we would naturally suppose that the condition of things in the American government at that time would have rendered Covenanters more steadfast in their position of dissent. Although the importation of slaves had ceased by the limitation of the constitution in 1808, the inter-state slave traffic had become more and more horrible as new slave territory was opened up and the demands for slave labor increased. This ground of the Covenanters' dissent was stronger in 1833 than ever before.

Besides this, the controversy concerning the desecration of the Lord's day by the United States mail service had just culminated in Congressional action that heaped reproach and dishonor upon the law and Lord of the Sabbath. Reports prepared both in the House of Representatives and Senate of the United States by the notorious Col. Richard M. Johnson, of Kentucky, denied that the nation was under any obligation to respect the Fourth Commandment. In adopting these reports in 1829 and 1830 the two branches of the national legislature re-affirmed in substance the declaration of the Tripolitan Treaty, namely, that "the government of the United States is not in any sense founded on the Christian religion."

And yet, while this authoritative assertion of the secular or godless character of our national government was still fresh in the minds of our people, the very men who had written and preached against the nation's dishonoring of Christ and his law were straying farther and farther in theory and practice from the historic position of the church, and in 1833 they ceased to be a part of the Covenanter body. The wonder is how, in the midst of such defiant and aggravated national trampling of man's rights and God's rights under foot, the weakest of covenanted political dissenters could fail to become more

thoroughly rooted and grounded than ever in his position of separation from the sinful government.

But matters were very different in 1865 and 1866. Covenanters had in large numbers fought for the country, as they did in 1812 and in 1776. Many had died on the battle-field, or in hospitals and prisons. Many had returned home crippled for life. To all surviving patriots, and especially to bereaved ones, the nation, for which such sacrifices had been made, was "our beloved country" in a sense which hearts loyal to Christ alone fully understood. And the great national sin of slavery was wiped out. The constitution had been amended, forever forbidding that iniquity. And the United States Senate had been brought by our trials to acknowledge God and Christ. And presidential as well as State fast and thanksgiving proclamations humbly and gratefully acknowledged the hand of the God of nations in all our tribulations and mercies. Why, then, should not Covenanters fall in with the political society which had so fully recognized the rights of men, and which was in so gratifying a manner also acknowledging the rights of God and Christ?

To a degree which the Covenanter church herself hardly understood at the time, this was a critical period in her history. An anxiety, often unexpressed, but nevertheless deeply-seated, was felt as to the near future. Would active anti-slavery men, who had borne the brunt of the conflict before the war, and who had stood right loyally by the nation through all the bloody strife, and who now rejoiced in the glorious triumph of freedom—would they feel that the main issue had been won, and that dissent had accomplished its chief purpose? Would they now be workers for further reform within the political society, or would they stand fast on the old position of dissent till Christ the King and his law should be acknowledged and glorified by the sovereign nation before the world?

To the eternal honor of the leaders and members of the Covenanter church let it be said that the line of battle of the witnesses for Christ never wavered. The great work of National Reform was just then getting fairly under way. The Covenanter church had thrown to the breeze, full in the nation's sight, the banner of the Kingship of Christ, and it steadied her in this crisis like the main sail of a ship under the strong winds of a mid-ocean voyage. And among the very foremost of her

leaders stood the first pastor of this congregation, his great heart overflowing with joy at the emancipation of the slave, but his voice ringing out still in the old trumpet-tones for the honor of the King of kings.

This Quarter-Centennial celebration would be lamentably defective if it did not re-echo the testimony of Dr. Milligan against all who identify with the governing society in our land in their rebellion against the Lord and his Anointed. You who have been members here from the first cannot recall all the many occasions on which that powerful voice thundered out this testimony. This pulpit was never silent. The tongue of that heroic preacher and reformer, on whose mute picture we to-night look, was ever as the pen of a ready writer with its eloquent message concerning the King. Let me quote from one sermon, the type of many others:

“To be effective, this testimony must be consistent. A man may declare from the pulpit or the platform, ‘Your constitution is infidel; the oath of your President is atheistic; the government is virtually in rebellion against the Lord and his Christ;’ but if that man turns around and votes under that constitution, and swears or elects another as his representative to swear that godless oath, where is his testimony? Does he not stultify himself and neutralize his testimony? Hence men who value their consistency are silent, and men who prefer the loaves and fishes to Christ are on the other side. This sort of timid and half-hearted testimony was borne against slavery, and no one cared, till Garrison denounced the constitution as ‘a covenant with death and a league with hell.’ Then slavery began to tremble; and when John Brown went down to Harper’s Ferry, she knew her hour had come. Actions speak louder than words, and deeds bespeak courage and determination, awaken opposition, and lead to victory.”

“I repeat, then, that the part of the church of Christ and His ministers, is to bear testimony and proclaim it, vindicate it, practise it, suffer for it. If need be, seal it with your blood. The more it is assailed, the better. The greater your trials and dangers, the nearer the victory. God never has failed to do his part, and He never will. Just as soon as this Gospel of the kingdom is preached for a testimony to the nation, the end will come. It will repent, fall into line and serve the Master, or perish.

“ This nation is in rebellion against the Lord and His Christ to-day, just as really as the Confederate States were in rebellion against the government eighteen years ago. It has set up a government in the territory of the Lord, and over the subjects of the Lord, without any acknowledgment of His authority. Is that not rebellion? You say the constitution is generally a good one. So was the constitution of the Confederacy not only a good one, but almost a transcript of the United States constitution. It simply failed to recognize the authority of the government in whose territory and over whose people it was set up, and when the nation demanded its submission, it resisted. Could this nation do anything less than reduce it to subjection? Must it not reduce the rebellion or itself cease to be? As President Lincoln said when he started to Washington, ‘ I am going to see whether we have a government or not.’ Is not God saying to us, ‘ Shall I not visit for these things, shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?’ Through our lips as His witnesses He is saying, ‘ Now, therefore, kings, be wise, be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord in fear. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and ye perish when his anger is kindled but a little.’—(Ps. 2: 10-12.)

“ Witnesses for Christ, publish his message. Warn the nation of its sin and danger. Save your country if you can; at least clear your own skirts of its blood. Bear cheerfully whatever odium it may cost. Suffer willingly whatever loss you may sustain. Meet courageously whatever danger you may incur. Dare to do or die, for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus; and ever remember that ‘ the witnesses shall overcome by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony.’ ”

And then, as if in prophetic anticipation of the “ liberal ” plea heard in our church to-day, that our practical protest of political dissent should be left to individual consciences, this witness, faithful and true, thus met what has become so popular an objection :

“ The objection is raised : Why should the Reformed Presbyterian church make the acceptance of this attitude of practical protest a term of communion, and visit with discipline the exercise of the elective franchise? These objectors agree that ‘ our doctrine regarding the constitution is right, but claim

that it ought to be left as a matter of conscience and doctrinal teaching, and not made a term of communion.'

“My answer to this is, that such a course would at once vitiate the whole power of our protest. As a witnessing, protesting church, giving practical effect to our testimony by our action, it must be manifest to all that to be effective it must be consistent. The moral attitude of a church is no higher than the lowest position which she permits any of her members to occupy. If, then, the church should tolerate the exercise of the elective franchise by any of her members, it would be competent to objectors to deny her attitude of practical protest altogether, on the ground that certain members, with her consent, voted and held office. She would no longer be a protesting church, and persons who desired to become protesters would no longer become such by joining her communion. The advantage of being a Covenanter would be lost.

“The object of forming such an association and of joining such an association consists in being indentified with an organization known in the past, and at the present, to occupy the position of protest uniformly and consistently, so that identification with the body at once notifies all cognizant of the fact, what principles you profess and what attitude you occupy.”

I cannot close these extracts from a discourse that could hardly have been more closely adapted to the present circumstances of our church if it had been preached last winter, instead of many years ago, without quoting a passage full of most solemn warning to not a few of the ministers who are still with us. There was no want of charity in the magnanimous heart of the speaker; a heart that never entertained a thought of malice or ill-will toward any brother, whether still with us or gone from us. Love of truth and loyalty to principle and to Christ, and nothing else, prompted these words which cannot fail to reach the conscience. They have a deep significance to-day; they will have more startling significance in days to come.

“Whatever others may fail to speak, or may say in favor of those ministers who, after swearing the covenant of 1871, have turned their backs on the testimony, and on the witnessing band with whom they so solemnly covenanted to stand, I feel bound, in fidelity to the cause, to give a friendly warning to them. It is well for men to understand that when they leave a

church of unquestioned orthodoxy that is small and unpopular, for one that is large and popular, thoughtful persons *will regard with suspicion their plea of 'conscience.'* Men will be constrained to ask: If their consciences are so tender that they can no longer adhere to their covenant engagements to testify to their Redeemer's right to reign over the nations, and to regulate the praises of His church, how will *their consciences* enjoy communion at the Lord's table with Masons, Odd Fellows and Rumsellers—not one of whom is debarred from the communion into which they have made defection. Men who, in the maturity of their powers, and after years of ministerial work in the church, have solemnly sworn their allegiance to its principles and then deserted them, will have no easy task to persuade either those whom they have deserted, or those to whom they have gone, of their honesty, but will learn when it is too late that they are not trusted. The verdict in their case, given by the Spirit of God in the 78th Psalm, is:

‘For though their words were good, their hearts
With him were not sincere;
Unsteadfast and perfidious
They in His Covenant were.’ ”

Thus speaks a Covenanter witness for his Lord and his Lord's truth. No one will ever question his loyalty to the church and her Head. And loyal Covenanter that he was, witnessing in the fullest and most fearless manner, he was also the broadest of citizens, and the freest from prejudice and sectarian bigotry and intolerance, and most ready to co-operate with all Christian brethren and all fellow citizens in every good work. Under the reproach of becoming one with infidels, he stood on the same anti-slavery platform with Phillips and Garrison and Oliver Johnson. He welcomed to the National Reform platform all who would accept its principles, no matter what church they were connected with, or whether they were church members at all, and gladly worked hand in hand with them for the avowed aims and objects of that Association. With a clear and comprehensive view of just and wise distinctions, he was the strictest of Covenanters in his ecclesiastical relations, and ready for co-operation outside of ecclesiastical relations, in temperance, anti-secret, and the Sabbath work, and especially the grand movement of National Reform, with every one who would accept the specific basis on which each of these reforms is

conducted. Let us thank God for such an example of uncompromising fidelity to ecclesiastical covenant obligations combined with the broadest charity and fraternity. This is true liberalism and true conservatism, which are ever one and the same.

And never did a congregation more nobly match a noble leader. With individual exceptions and occasional defections from Covenanter principles, this congregation has stood by the banner for Christ's Crown and Covenant like the heroes of Drumclog. Though the anti-slavery victory was won before your re-organization in 1865, it was the sympathy in that conflict between you who formed the congregation and the minister you called that in large measure brought you together. And in every moral conflict since, you have been doing your part heroically on the high places of the field. You spared your pastor from his place at this sacred desk, and sent him with your financial support and prayers and blessing to labor far and wide in every great reform, and specially to bring our beloved country to Christ. You, too, have shown how a congregation, with the martyr spirit that would not compromise a single claim of truth, or yield a single point in the maintenance of covenant obligations as members of the church, can yet, with freedom from sectarian prejudice and intolerance, join with Christian brethren of every name and with all loyal citizens in every cause that is for the general good and the whole country's welfare.

And these commemorative services, with their reports of labors among the Chinese, first undertaken in this city by yourselves, and among the mutes, and in many mission schools, as well as labors in distant home and foreign fields, are themselves a complete refutation of the charge that Covenanter principles, especially the position of practical dissent, are out of harmony with missionary and evangelistic work. Loyalty to Christ and his kingly claims out of harmony with any cause that glorifies him? Steadfastness in witnessing against dishonor done to our Saviour King a hinderance in any work for the coming of his Kingdom? Let the memories and fruits of the life's work of your sainted pastor, who, though dead yet speaketh, answer the challenge. Let the company of men and women who, steadfast unto death, have gone to glory from your midst, and whose work you now commemorate—let them bear testimony as

in their glorious place among that cloud of witnesses about the throne they look down upon us to-night. May we who remain prove true to their example, and we, too, shall find that the more thoroughly loyal we are to Christ and his truth, and the more completely separated from everything that dishonors him, the more abundant will be our labors for our country's weal, and for the highest material and spiritual good of all our fellow men.

And now, as we close this review of these three periods of Pittsburgh Covenanter history, we can hardly fail to be impressed with the fact that the last third of the century, or the century itself, is not yet rounded out. The close of the first third settled the Covenanter principles of fidelity to human freedom and of loyalty to Christ's crown, with the consequent duty of dissent from the immoral covenant of the constitution. The close of the second third witnessed the triumph of our testimony for the rights of man, with some hopeful tokens for the acknowledgment of the rights of Christ as King. We are still nine years from the completion of the remaining third of this century. What shall the close of this period witness? We are yet in the midst of contendings for the honor of our Saviour's sceptre and law. The warriors whose memory we cherish did not win final victory for us, nor bequeath us peace. They manfully held the ground that had been won before their day, and they made advances which it is now our duty to maintain. Shall we hold every attainment, or shall we basely draw back? Fellow soldiers under the great Captain of our Salvation, I charge you that you yield not an inch of the ground that has been won by heroic sacrifices and by martyr blood. Nay, rather, let us press forward to higher attainments. Many of us will no doubt fall in the struggle, but let us fall, if fall we must, with armor on and sword in hand, as close as possible to the Leader himself. Let not the condemnation be pronounced upon any of us, as upon those of old, who, "being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle." This is not the hour for Covenanters to abandon their strategic position that will sooner or later decide the conflict and win the final victory. I foresee the tremendous and impending crisis. I see the hosts of darkness mustering in all their strength, under the arch enemy who knows his time is short. I foresee

that through his machinations and lies even multitudes of the professed followers of Christ will be more and more deceived and more and more contaminated by the corruptions of the world. It needs no prophetic eye to perceive that the god of this world will rule with more despotic and darker sway; that the fear of God and all religious principle will be more and more banished from business and social and political life; that this nation will be more and more deeply cursed with Sabbath desecration and the saloon and gambling and uncleanness and cheating and robbery and murder, and all other legitimate fruits of utter godlessness and Christlessness, until those who truly fear God and maintain loyalty to Christ will obey the divine call, and will come out and be separate and not touch the unclean thing. As surely as God's Word is true, so surely shall yet come this separation of Christ's loyal followers from the business companies that defy his law and break his Sabbath; from the social orders that dishonor him by their secrecy and their impious oaths; from the political parties that sell themselves for spoil of office to the liquor traffic and Romanism; and from the Christless compact of government that underlies all the rest. Some of us may not live to see this triumph of our principle of dissent and separation from all the unfruitful works of darkness. Some of us are near the end of our battling. One honored father in the eldership, who by the side of his beloved pastor fought so long and so bravely, is even now catching the glories of the celestial realm, and just waiting for the summons to join the triumphant throng. But many of us will see this century close, and with its closing years I am persuaded will come the triumph of the witnesses by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony. Let the time of triumph come when it may, however, it is ours to be steadfast till the Conqueror shall come and take the Kingdom to Himself. "Even so come, Lord Jesus, come quickly."

Thursday, May 14, was observed as the customary sacramental fast-day. The morning service was conducted by the Rev. Dr. R. J. George. The evening was devoted to papers by various members of the congregation, as was also

the following evening. The sermon by Dr. George and the papers of the two evenings are herewith given.

CALLED TO BE SAINTS.

“Called to be saints.”—ROMANS 1: 7.

BY THE REV. DR. R. J. GEORGE.

You have often heard of the import of the names of Jesus. Scarcely less significant are the titles given to his people by the inspired writers. They are called, believers; beloved of God; blessed of the Father; brethren of Christ; children of God; children of the Father; children of the Highest; children of the promise; children of the Kingdom; children of the bridechamber; children of light; children of the resurrection; epistles of Christ; fellow-citizens; fellow-heirs; fellow-servants; heirs of God; heirs of the grace of life; heirs of the promise; heirs of salvation; a holy nation; a holy seed; a holy priesthood. These are a few of the terms used to designate the followers of the Lord Jesus. These are not meaningless, empty titles, but are most significant of the character and destiny of the people of God. I have chosen one of the most instructive and inspiring of these titles as the subject of the morning discourse,

“CALLED TO BE SAINTS.”

Two lines of thought are proposed: a proposition, and an inquiry.

I. The Divine Call is to Sainthood.

II. What is the Sainthood to which we are called.

I. The Divine Call is to Sainthood.

1. *This is the purpose of God in election.*

The term “saints” means holy ones. Hence the call is a call to holiness. That this is the purpose of God in election, many scriptures plainly assert: Rom. 8: 29: “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be conformed to the image of his Son*, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, *them he also called.*” His Son was “holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners.” (Heb. 7: 29.) To be predestinated to be con-