

# Reformed Presbyterian and Covenanter.

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## ORIGINAL.

### THE PROSPECTIVE CHURCH UNION.

BY REV. J. C. M'FEETERS.

The "union" committee of the Reformed Presbyterian Synod may congratulate themselves on walking in the golden path, since the strokes of criticism are coming in from both extremes. They met with their brethren of the United Presbyterian assembly, to consider the grand work of uniting the two churches. We are in favor of union. Nothing would delight us more than seeing the people of these denominations joined together by the bonds of sacramental communion. We have much in common; our ancestry is the same; our early history is the same; our system of faith is the same; our inspired psalmody is the same; we dwell in the same localities, serve the same Lord, travel to the same heaven. How desirable an organic union!

There is but one thing that separates; and that is the hardest thing to get over in the world:—a firm conviction of duty, leading in opposite directions. This is in relation to our political responsibilities. The United Presbyterians believe it their duty to meet at the polls, and cast their ballot for civil rulers, under the present constitution of government; their practice is almost uniform; they are in harmony with the masses of Christians; they defend their action with earnestness and argument. And while under this conviction we cannot ask them, we cannot expect them to defile their conscience, by abandoning what they regard as duty of high importance. Union at such a cost would be too expensive to them.

And the Reformed Presbyterians believe that they are required by all the sacredness of their covenants and allegiance to Christ, to withhold their ballot, while the government of this nation is operated on an infidel basis, as it is at the present time, the federal constitution acknowledging no power above the will of the people, nor any standard of right higher than the national compact. They claim to be citizens, but dissent from the action of the people, which adopted a constitution for the nation with no reference to

Pharisaism of those who "say and do not," and condemns the *professed* Covenanter who votes and holds office, or allows another to do so without rebuke. Yours in covenant bonds,  
J. C. K. MILLIGAN.

THE following account of the conversion of a mother, who has gone to her rest many years ago, will be read with interest by our readers:

In the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and one, I being eighteen years of age, about the first Friday of January, in the afternoon whilst alone, a child came in from school and threw down its book, which I took up and on reading the following lines in it, particularly the first two:

"How fast my childhood runs to waste,  
My sins, how great the sum,  
Lord give me pardon for the past,  
And strength for days to come."

I was struck with dreadful awe and terror at viewing the multiplicity and greatness of my sins, especially my original guilt, although I had been kept from open violations of the *divine* law, yea, I was very attentive and conscientious to the letter of the law, to ordinances, secret, private and public. I viewed myself, indeed, the chief of sinners, and wished there was no God because I thought I was lost for ever, and that I had never seen nor heard of the Bible because I thought it would be a swift witness against me.

I continued thus in great horror of conscience for several days. I then betook myself much to secret prayer and reading the Bible. On that night week, after these impressions was first wrought in my mind, whilst at secret prayer in the evening, these words in the thirteenth verse of the third chapter of Galatians came into my mind: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us," and caused me to experience great joy and peace in believing, so that I might say with Erskine, I was made joyful in a flood of tears. From that time I was made to eye God in his word and ordinances, in his Sabbath and likewise in his providences towards myself and others whereas formerly I only viewed self in all and rested satisfied there.

CHRISTIAN COWAN WALLACE.

## MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.

### THE SOUTHERN FIELD.

The great problem before the educators of the South is, how shall the masses be elevated? Most of the cities and towns have moderately good schools. Where the A. M. A. has schools they are *good*; but most of the rural districts are yet without good schools, and in many places there are none at all. Where there are country schools, in most places, they continue only three months. What can a child learn when he is in school three months and out nine? And, as a rule, during these three

months they are under teachers of the most inferior sort. They are not only uneducated, but are often very immoral in their lives: such as no child ought to be placed under for instruction of any kind. The reason why such teachers are accepted is because of the unprincipled township superintendents that are found almost everywhere in the rural districts of the South. They compel those who teach to give them a part of their salary; usually five or ten dollars a month. They can get none but inferior and unprincipled teachers that will agree to do this, and to this class they will always give the schools. Good teachers leave, or are thrust out. In many places the parents refuse to send their children to such teachers, preferring to have them remain at home and work, or hire out, than go to an unworthy teacher. The superintendent, who is always a white man, prefer these illiterate teachers for two reasons: First, because he can make a gain off them; and second, because the colored people can make but little or no progress under such a teacher. To my personal knowledge this state of things prevails to a large extent throughout the State of Alabama, and I learn that it is much the same in other southern States, especially the gulf States.

Now, when the poor Negro is robbed on the farm and denied education, when and how can he ever rise in the world? As a class, the ex-slaveholders are opposed to Negro education. They do no more for it than that which they cannot avoid doing. The fact that the Blair bill has received its most strenuous opposition from the senator of this State, is a straw which shows which way the wind is blowing. It is known that if that bill passes it will largely benefit the Negroes, as the greatest illiteracy is among them. Further, it is well known that if the Negro is educated his condition will be changed, and it will not then be possible to wrong him and defraud him, as is now the case everywhere. It is to the southern people's temporal advantage to keep the colored people ignorant and poor. They know this and act accordingly.

As respects the colored people, the South is yet in a deplorable condition. Nearly a million children are growing up in ignorance, whose condition is a little better than that in which their parents grew up. The last report of the Commissioner of Education states that the school population of the colored people of the southern States is 2,020,219, while the school enrollment is 1,048,659. Many children are kept at home because of the absolute poverty of their parents. In the cities there are but few parents who cannot clothe their children sufficiently well to send them to school, but in the country it is different. The colored people in the country are yet to a large extent under the control of the white man,—are subject to his bidding. No provision is, therefore, made for the education of the children; as soon as they are large enough they must go to the field to work. There is little hope of a change in this state of things until the colored people can get hold of the soil and become land-owners. But when they are bought out in debt every year, and are constantly kept in a tread-mill, the outlook is gloomy. There must be either foreign aid, or some divine providence that is yet unseen, to relieve their lamentable situation. But we believe that God will bring relief as he did to Israel in days of old. He is the same God. Brethren, pray for this people.

*Selma, March 8, 1888.*

G. M. ELLIOTT.