

Reformed Presbyterian and Covenanters.

VOL. XXV.

JANUARY, 1887.

No. 1.

ORIGINAL.

FUTURE HAPPINESS.

BY JOHN BROWN, A. M., CASCADE, IOWA.

Man consists of two parts—a body and a soul. The body is material, and must die; the soul is immortal, and shall live after the body is dead. “Then shall the earth return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.” Eccl. 12 : 7.

Moses informs us “Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” Gen. 2 : 7. In these words the distinction between the body and soul is clearly marked. The body was made of the dust of the ground; the soul proceeded immediately from the inspiration of God. In allusion to this fact, Paul represents the human body by a figure of speech as an “earthly house,” because it is made of earthly materials (2 Cor. 5 : 1), and Eliphaz says, “We dwell in houses of clay, and have our foundation in the dust.” Job, 4 : 19. In all these passages the distinction between the soul and the body is as clearly marked as the distinction between a house and the person who dwells in the house.

In the moment of death the union between the soul and the body is dissolved, and the soul of the believer, being made perfect in holiness, immediately passes into glory. Paul not only distinguishes between the soul and the body, but assures us that it is a fact well known to Christians that, just as certainly as the occupant of an old house removes into a new one; just so certainly does the immortal spirit of the true believer, in the moment of death, leave the frail, earthly tenement of this tabernacle, and enter a heavenly habitation: “For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. . . . Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. . . . We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be

evening when the word Jerusalem occurred in a verse he read, I asked him what it was. He replied, "I don't know; is it a man's name?" He had heard of Jesus and his death, but he did not know where it occurred.

Ju Guy, our native helper, is making steady progress in his studies. I hear him recite every day. One of his studies is—shall I call it theology? The text book is the *Testimony*. For a Chinaman I guess it is as good as Hodge. I hope, however, that the theological professors will not be jealous. I do not think of setting up a rival theological seminary on the Pacific, but I hope that when the Board of Foreign Missions is ready to send out missionaries to China—and I see no reason for long delay—Ju Guy will be ready to accompany them as a native helper. We will try to find some one to take his place here. Whether or not, we will be glad to give him up, provided he should be needed as a helper for those whom, I devoutly hope, the board will soon send out to the foreign field where the laborers are so few and the need so pressing.

N. R. JOHNSTON.

OAKLAND, CAL., September 2, 1886.

WE NOTICE in the Presbyterian papers an item that Mr. Henry Martin of our Cincinnati Church has pledged himself for \$25,000 towards the Christian College in China, for which Rev. Dr. Happer is laboring so zealously.

ECCLESIASTICAL.

SKETCHES OF THE MINISTRY OF THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA.

W. M. GLASGOW, BALTIMORE, MD.

NUMBER FOUR.

ALEXANDER DOBBIN,

Son of a pious sailor, was born of Scotch parents in Londonderry, Ireland, February 4, 1742. He studied the classics in his native city and entered the University of Glasgow, Scotland, where he graduated in 1768. He studied theology in Glasgow and Edinburgh, and was licensed by the Reformed Presbytery of Scotland, April 4, 1773, and was ordained *sine titulo* by the same court, May 8, 1773, to accompany Rev. Matthew Lind as a missionary to America. He landed at New Castle, Delaware, December 13, 1773, and with Revs. John Cuthbertson and Matthew Lind organized the Reformed Presbytery of America, at Paxtang, Dauphin county, Pennsylvania, March 10, 1774. He was then assigned to the Rock Creek (Gettysburg,) congregation in Adams county. He took a prominent part in the formation of the Associate Reformed Church, June 13, 1782, in which he was an active and influential minister. He continued in charge of the Rock Creek congregation and was also installed for half time in the Marsh Creek congregation, September 9, 1785, and thus continued to divide his time until his death. In October, 1808, while on his way to church in Gettysburg, he ruptured a blood vessel by coughing, and became unable to preach. His disease settled into a quick consumption, from which he died at his home in Gettysburg, Adams county, Pennsylvania, June 1, 1809, and was buried in the Marsh Creek graveyard. He was an interesting and instructive preacher of the extemporaneous style. He was a distinguished linguist, especially in Hebrew, and established the first classical school west of the Susquehanna river, in his own house. More than sixty of his pupils became professional men, and not less than twenty-five entered the ministry. Before the establishment of the Theological Seminary of the Associate Reformed Church, he was the preceptor for many years, and his services were of great value. He was remarkably punctual at church courts where his opinion was of great weight, and he was honored with the moderatorship several times. He was a small man, with a bright, black eye, a large, pointed nose, and was by no means imposing in his appearance. He had a strong and sonorous voice, but his gestures in the pulpit were often ungraceful. He dressed in knee-pants and wore the wig. He was

a very sociable man, cheerful in his disposition, his countenance constantly wearing a loving smile. He was agreeable in all company, to which he adapted himself, and his social intercourse was much enjoyed for his wit and good humor. Being asked by his hostess upon one occasion how many children he had, he respectfully replied, "Madam, I have seven sons and every one of them has a sister." He had seven sons and one daughter. The house in which he lived and conducted his school is still standing in the outskirts of Gettysburg. It is a substantial stone building, two stories high, and has a spring of excellent water in the basement. While the mason, who was an elder in his 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 they did in making elders—when the best material was all used up they had to take the cobble stones. His farm comprised three hundred acres, and is now occupied principally by the National Cemetery and the National Orphans' Homestead. He established that church in 1774, and one of his grand principles was the abolition of slavery, which the Covenanter Church has practically maintained since 1800, and around that very old church the battle of Gettysburg was fought, which resulted in the emancipation of the slave in 1865, and the ground of this pioneer abolitionist is now occupied by the Nation as a home for the children of those loyal soldiers who gave their lives in defence of this principle.

JAMES REID,

Was born in the parish of Shotts, Scotland, August 12, 1759. He was early given to God and directed to the gospel ministry by a pious parentage. He received the rudiments of an education in the schools of his native parish, and graduated from Edinburgh College in 1776. He studied theology in the Stirling Seminary, and was licensed by the Reformed Presbytery of Scotland, April 27, 1780. After filling vacancies for three years, he was ordained by the same court and installed pastor of the united congregations of Wigtown and Kirkcudbright, Scotland, July 10, 1783. It was during this period that the few faithful Covenanters of America were deprived of all their ministry, and made urgent application to the Reformed Presbytery of Scotland for ministerial assistance, which was not granted for some time. Finally, after much serious deliberation, Mr. Reid accepted the appointment to visit the societies in America, and left Scotland, August 4, 1789. He visited all the Covenanter societies from New York to the Carolinas, organized many congregations and returned to Scotland, July 16, 1790. He resumed his labors with renewed diligence, although his field of labor was soon after reduced by the organization of a new congregation, and he continued in charge of what became the congregation of Newton—Stewart and Withorn. In 1825, in consequence of a decision of the Synod to erase the particular mention of the Auchensnaugh renovation of the Covenants from the terms of communion, he regarded it a departure from the testimony, and withdrew, with a few followers, from the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and maintained a separate standing. In 1828 he removed to the city of Glasgow, where he resided with his daughter, Mrs. Stewart, and continued to preach to a few people until old age caused his strength to fail, and where he died of a severe illness November 4, 1837. He was a good man, full of the Holy Ghost and of faith. He was distinguished for his gravity, kindness of manner, and regularity in the performance of all Christian duties. During his last days his eyesight failed him, yet he desired to have his books beside him, from which others read to him, imparting subjects for meditation and prayer. Among his works extant are "The Fives of the Westminster Divines," in two volumes, and a sermon on "The Divinity of Christ."

BROOKLAND COMMISSION.

The commission to unite the Brookland congregation to the East Branch of Manchester and Parnassus congregation met on November 16, 1886, in the Brookland Church, Rev. John Galbraith, Chairman. After expressions of readiness to unite from both parties had been heard, and objections called for from any one present and no one presenting any objections, the Commission ordered that the Brookland Branch of the Brookland congregation be united to the East