

THE

Reformed Presbyterian.

WHOLE NUMBER, }
Vol. XXV.—No. 2. }

FEBRUARY, 1861.

NEW SERIES,
Vol. VII.—No. 2.

ORIGINAL.

AGUR AND HIS PUPILS.

[Concluded from last number.]

3. THERE are personal relations in the Divinity that demand the attention of the diligent inquirer after religious truth. To these the interrogations refer, "What is his name? and what is the name of his Son?" The idea of plurality in the Godhead is not less certainly taught in the Scriptures, than is the necessary and essential unity of the divine nature. The name by which God is first made known in his word, is in the plural in the original. The same idea of plurality is contained in the expressions, "Let us make man in our image;" "The man is become as one of us;" "Let us go down and there confound their language." Gen. 1:26; 3:22; 11:7. This great mystery of personal distinctions in the Godhead, was known to the Old Testament church. It must be so, for such are the relations of the divine Persons to one another in the plan of redemption, and such their parts respectively in its procurement and application, that a knowledge of these persons in their essential and voluntary relations precedes and leads to the enjoyment of its blessings. Whatever the church behoved to know at any time, in order to salvation, was revealed to her. This is not a discovery of reason, but a truth supernaturally made known. And such is its importance, that it must have a prominent place in the instructions given to those who are preparing to bear the message of peace from God to men. "What is his name?" and "What is the name of his Son?" are inquiries, the answers to which must be sought only in the oracles of God.

That there is here a distinction of persons, is evident. Father and son are, among men, personal designations, and the analogy as suggested in the inquiries, leads to the conclusion, that in the Godhead there are personal relations. And if not here, yet else-

ance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

MORVEN.

THE PRESENT OF OUR COUNTRY.

WHILE it must be admitted our country has had since the first its difficulties, at no time has it encountered any similar to the present. At no time were there such conflicting views—at no time has the desperation of some and the cowardice of others been so manifest. The advocates of slavery have always been determined to shape and control matters as they wished; hitherto when baffled, they have stood by the country and tried again. They have not till now openly contemned the covenant of brotherhood which binds the States together, and constitutes their nationality. This bond all have been hitherto engaged in lauding; and we have heard from every quarter of the "glorious Union, the honored stars and stripes—the land of the free and the home of the brave." All were engaged in building up the temple of freedom, and unequalled success crowned their labors. State after State joined the original "thirteen," till the number swelled to thirty-three, and the thirty-fourth is waiting for admission.

The southern section of the Union has had slavery from the first as its peculiar institution. The Constitution guaranteed the right of the South to maintain it, and obligates the free States to return fugitives from slavery. Thus by the highest authority known to the country, the South was secure in its possession of "the institution." Yet it was not content. The increase of the States was not the increase of the South. It was evident in the increase of Territories and the admission of free States, the importance and influence of the South was rapidly on the wane, and their insignificance so soon to be apparent, that they must rally and stand by their rights. Whatever they had allowed, or had been forced upon them, restricting the increase of slavery and the enlargement of its territory, they must oppose and remove. What was known as the Missouri Compromise fell before this effort, and the north-western barrier being removed, the most determined attempt was at once begun to introduce and establish slavery in Kansas. That attempt roused the slumbering feelings of humanity in many breasts, and opened many eyes to the inhumanity of Southern aggression.

The triumph of Kansas over tyranny was felt to be a death-blow to the effort of bondage, at least in that direction. An irrepressible spirit of freedom was begotten in the struggle; it resolved to exert itself, and when the time came for the nomination of candidates for the Presidency, it moved in the caucuses, presided over conventions, and named its candidates for the highest honors of

the country. It was not asleep at the time of election, and obtaining its wish in that calm but determined struggle, the opposition viewed its success with indefinable hate, concluding that no more slave territory was possible. They saw that, bound in, and stigmatized as inhuman, slavery must die out of the States where it existed. Then what of Southern wealth, influence, and chivalry! Those who had been accustomed to lord it over their fellows would be brought to an equality with such as they contemned. Could they quietly submit? Could those hearts of stone, and hands accustomed to bind with chains the unoffending, do it?

Present agitations are not because of the success of one political party over another—not because of new restrictions of slave power—not dissatisfaction with personal liberty bills, or unfaithfulness to fugitive slave laws. These may enter into it, and be made the occasion, but are not the cause of the present attempts at disunion. It is the steady advances of the spirit of freedom, and its anticipated encroachments on the domains of bondage—it is the fear of the entire obliteration from the Constitution and laws of the defenses of slavery, and the final extinction of that iniquity, that is the cause.

A grave question demands the investigation of the South: Will their separation from the Union secure the perpetuation of slavery? It is possible, at least, for this and the next generation, if the seceding States could be entirely isolated—if, as in the past, there were no rail roads, steam ships and telegraphs—few outspoken pulpits, printing presses and readers—if the humanizing and equalizing principles of the Gospel could be kept in cloisters, and those who bear the commission of Christ were dumb dogs and hireling shepherds—it might be, if they were increased by the enlargement of territory westward and northward—if Cuba was gained in, and Africa continued in heathendom. But this is not to be. The illuminating and liberating agencies of the Gospel will multiply and not decrease. The kingdoms of the world, all nations, governments and dominions, will be parts of the kingdom of our Lord. We do not mean that he shall descend and assume their government, or that he will appoint a vicegerent to rule them in his stead; but they shall so acknowledge their obligations to him as to take his law, the word of God, as the supreme standard of legislation—they shall no more set up kings whom he approves not, and honor laws he has not sanctioned. The rulers in those days shall be just, ruling in the fear of God, haters of covetousness and liberators of the oppressed. Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands to God—many people shall be called Hephzibah and their land Beulah, for the Lord shall delight in them, and their land shall be married to him.

The present efforts and bruit of oppression may be but an additional instance of the people raging and imagining a vain thing—an instance of “kings setting themselves and rulers taking counsel together, against the Lord and against his Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from

us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure." The best they can do is to "kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and they perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

J. W. SHAW.

COLDENHAM, JANUARY, 1861.

MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.

LETTER FROM REV. R. J. DODDS.

LATAKIYEH, November 16, 1860.

DEAR BRETHREN—You will have observed that my last letter closed somewhat abruptly. The truth is, that when I was folding it up, the wind carried away a leaf of it off the desk, and I did not miss it at the time, but found it afterward when the main part of the letter had taken its initial steps toward America. I send inclosed the truant leaf.

I am thankful to be able to say that we are all well, and that our present missionary prospects are, upon the whole, encouraging. We have now under instruction nine Nusairiyeh boys, and expect soon to have another. I understand that there are several more desirous to come; but any thing that we yet know of the amount of funds available for their especial benefit, will not justify us in increasing their number at present. We go to their boarding-house every morning, to read the Scriptures and pray with them, and they come to us for the same purpose in the evening; and they form the larger part of our congregation on the Sabbath. They mingle in the school with the children of the townspeople, as we do not see any necessity of erecting a separate school for them.

About two weeks ago, we received from Mr. Thomas Lyde, of London, an order for £60, being the amount of his late brother's benefaction to our mission for the current year, accompanied by a promise to exert his influence to raise additional contributions in England for the benefit of the Nusairiyeh, whenever we let him know that the number of applicants for instruction is disproportioned to the amount of funds available for their support. By the way, he is getting his brother's work on the Nusairiyeh published, and I have written to him, asking the name of his publisher, so that I may be able to put our people in the United States in the way of getting a few copies of it among them, as it will, no doubt, possess a peculiar interest to them, on account of the peculiar relation of their Foreign Mission to that singular people.

The clergy of Latakijeh have lately fallen into another paroxysm of hostility to our mission, but without any other success than a temporary suppression of the freedom of the people's intercourse with us, and a moderate diminution of our school. External violence is out of the question in Latakijeh; and they cannot even venture on extreme measures of ecclesiastical opposition. After all, the great enemy of our work is the depraved, unregenerate heart common to those who hate us and those who welcome our coming—an enemy that only the Holy Ghost can subdue. May He soon glorify his power in forming in the hearts of thousands of these poor sinners, Christ, the hope of glory.

R. J. DODDS.