

## ARTICLE VI.

CHURCH AND STATE IN THEIR RECIPROCAL RELATIONS AND FUNDAMENTAL CONTRAST.<sup>1</sup>

Appearing before you in accordance with long standing custom and by your express appointment, to pronounce a discourse as part of the formalities of my induction into the Chair of Ecclesiastical History and Church Policy, I venture to present for your consideration: *Church and State, in their reciprocal relations and fundamental contrast.*

The theme is especially suited to the occasion, because it draws largely upon the two allied branches of study which you have confided to me in this Seminary. A complete handling of it, indeed, would involve a critical examination of fifteen centuries of Church History, as well as the polemical treatises of such disputants as Calvin, Bellarmine, Erasmus, Hooker, and Gillespie, in the past. Nor is the debate by any means finished. It is among the living questions of the time, employing the pen of Mr. Gladstone and taxing the deep policy of Prince Bismarck. It meets us in the Encyclicals of the Pope, in the enactments of the French Parliament, the decisions of English tribunals, and the "deliverances" of Presbyterial Assemblies. Churches whose boast is that they hold fast to the Westminster Standards, (some of them, of course, in an amended form,) are not more widely separated by the Atlantic than they are divided in opinion and in practice as to this question. And it is a fact which must serve to invest the subject, as far as we are concerned, with an imperishable interest, that our own Church, the youngest in the Presbyterian sisterhood, owes her separate existence to fundamental differences between ourselves and our former associates (now composing that great body which is commonly called the Northern Presbyterian Church) as to the respective spheres of Church

<sup>1</sup>Inaugural Address delivered on September 19, 1883, before the Board of Directors of Columbia Seminary, by Rev. Wm. E. Boggs, D. D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Policy, and published at the request of the Board.

and State. A different explanation of our separation from them has, indeed, been insisted upon by persons outside of our communion. But we have always declared such explanations, however they might have been designed, to be in fact injurious and offensive breaches of Christian charity. They plainly contradict the solemn testimony of our Church herself, speaking through her first Assembly at Augusta in 1861, and reiterated again and again from that day to this. For, in her "Address to all the Churches of Jesus Christ throughout the earth," our Church solemnly testified that we did not separate from our brethren because of the war between the States, but because of the political action of the Assembly at Philadelphia in 1861—action which was there protested against by Dr. Charles Hodge and sixty members of the Assembly, on the ground that it was necessarily political in its nature, and therefore unscriptural and unconstitutional. These political "deliverances" have been reaffirmed year after year by that Assembly, and now seem to constitute an impassable bar to our reunion with them, unless indeed we are prepared to abandon our principles and accept their policy. With these reasons for a deep personal interest in this question, let us consider it in a twofold aspect—*First*, from the standing point of History, let us take a brief survey of opinions; and *secondly*, in the light of Scripture, let us endeavor to ascertain the *right* and the *truth* as regards these conflicting opinions.

I. It is well known that the event which first originated the question was the conversion, or the alleged conversion, of Constantine about the year 323 A. D. I say *alleged* conversion; for it is of no consequence whatever so far as this discussion, or the evidences of Christianity, or indeed anything or any body, save Constantine, are concerned, whether the Roman Emperor ever experienced a real change or not. That he retained the old heathen title of Pontifex Maximus, held by all preceding Emperors from the time of Julius Cæsar, that he was not baptized until near his death in 337, that in the meantime his life had been out of harmony with Scripture, are all facts which no one now cares to dispute. But it was the adoption by Constantine of Christianity as the *State religion*, rather than as his own creed,

which introduced the question now under discussion. This is a significant fact, that for more than three hundred years such discussion would have been wholly foreign to the thoughts of men. Till then the kingdom which is "not of this world" had been an object of suspicion, fear, and persecution to the heathen State religion. Now, however, a great change takes place. The Emperor undertakes to provide from the imperial treasury the cost of public worship, the maintenance of the clergy, the repair and construction of churches. The rights of asylum are transferred from the heathen temples to Christian sanctuaries. The worship of "heretics" is forbidden; their churches closed; their leaders punished by confiscation and banishment. The clergy were erected into a privileged class by being exempted from civil trials in certain causes. Bishops are made legal arbiters in law suits between the brethren, in accordance, as was claimed, with I Cor. vi. 1-6, though bishops are not named in the text. A distinctive dress, too, was prescribed for the ministers of the State Church—which was similar to that worn by Constantine's soldiers—habilliments that are, by many who ought to know better, deemed essential to the decorum of worship, and even to the validity of New Testament ordinances. This great revolution in the religion of his empire, Constantine himself is said to have indicated in some general way by words addressed to his bishops: "You," he said, "are bishops as to things within the Church; I, as to things without."<sup>1</sup> The purport of these words seems to have been rendered by the famous law phrase: "*Jus in sacris; jus circa sacra.*" The paraphrase, if such it may be termed, is sufficiently indefinite and flexible to render it capable of doing service on both sides of nearly every controversy. Ultramontanist, Gallican, Anglican, and Presbyterian, have in turn first construed, and then approved it. Even Cunningham and Bannerman, the champions in our day of the Scottish Establishment, seem not unwilling to accept it, as Gillespie had in the days of the Westminster Assembly. These last, however, we may shrewdly suspect, with a construction of their own, which might have excited

<sup>1</sup> Ὑμῖς μὲν ἐπίσκοποι τῶν εἰσὼ ἐκκλησιῶν· ἐγὼ δὲ τῶν ἐκτὸς.

the amazement of George Gillespie, and surely would have provoked the sword of Constantine or the Long Parliament.

However, the change was too grateful to the persecuted Christians contemporary with Constantine to awaken criticism on their part. One thing more the first of Christian emperors did, the consequences of which even his keen eye could not foresee. For political reasons, he removed the seat of empire from the banks of the Tiber to the shores of the Hellespont, thereby unconsciously paving the way by which the Bishop of Rome was in due time to become *the first citizen of the Eternal City, the first of Italy*—and then *the first in all Christendom*. A revolution had been effected, in no wise inferior to that which occurred under Augustus. A revolution, the full development of which would require a thousand years, and how much more is known to God alone.

The wheels of time roll swiftly onward. The feeble progeny of the mighty Constantine are swept from his throne. Heathenism under Julian puts forth one convulsive effort, and then acknowledges itself to be vanquished. Dynasty succeeds to dynasty. And anon the vast empire, the product of a thousand years of conquest, riven by dissensions and undermined by decay, falls with a resounding crash beneath the battle axes of Northern barbarians. But even in its dissolution, the spirit of Roman order and the spell of Roman glory subdue the awe-struck children of the North. Foremost in the work stand the bishops and priests. Among these contending tribes the valiant Franks rise to superiority and hold dominion from the heart of Germany to the frontiers of Spain. Chlovis, (the first of many kings of France bearing the name of Louis,) hardly pressed in battle, vows to serve the God of Queen Chlotilda, if only he will give him the victory over the Allemanni. The prayer was hardly an orthodox one; but Chlovis conquers, and keeps his vow. His hardy warriors follow their chief to baptism as to battle. They are brethren, doubtless, whom the Apostle would have styled "weak in the faith." But they were strong in fight, and they had one virtue which, in the judgment of the clergy of that day, atoned for all faults. As heathen they had paid reverence which was but little short of divine worship to their priesthood, who were for them the

only means of appeasing the wrath of their deities and of holding communication with the mysterious powers of the unseen world. All this reverence the Franks transferred to the ministers of their new faith. Years pass away, and a "sluggard king" sits upon the throne of Chlovis, while Pepin, *le Bref*, as Mayor of the Palace, administers the government and leads the Franks to battle. The question of dethroning Childeric and crowning Pepin divides the nation and threatens civil war. But the expedient of arbitration is suggested. And the chief bishop of the Church is chosen the referee. He decides the case of conscience in favor of Pepin, and thereby gains for the Holy See a powerful friend. The Frankish warriors receive with shouts of approval this solution. And Pepin, after being elevated on the shield, after the Frankish custom, is anointed and crowned by "Saint" Boniface, after the Hebrew manner, taking an oath to rule justly and to defend the Church. Meanwhile Italy groans under the oppression of the Lombards, and Pope Stephen goes in person to implore of Pepin help for the Church. At the head of a Frankish army Pepin descends from the Alps and forces the Lombards to relax their grasp upon central Italy and the city of Rome. And from this conquered territory he donates certain territories to St. Peter. Thus in the year 754 the Pope becomes a temporal prince, subordinate of course to the King of the Franks. Pepin *le Bref* dies, and the Lombards again oppress the Romans. Again the Pope calls in the name of all for help, and Charles, known in history as the Great, bursts like an avalanche upon the Lombards, effectually subdues them, and annexes their domain to his sway. Constantinople cannot protect the West; why not have a sovereign who can, and will? Such is the feeling among the Romans. And so at Christmas in the year 800, Leo, bishop of Rome, by common consent, places the imperial crown upon the worthy brow of Charlemagne. It was done as if by sudden impulse, during the solemnities of public worship, but there was doubtless an understanding between the parties beforehand. The bishop of Rome swears allegiance to Charlemagne as his lord. But suggestions have been made which will bear fruit by and by. The Pope will argue that, as he transferred the imperial crown

from the Byzantine to the Frankish dynasty, he has authority from God to demand obedience from temporal princes—to depose the disobedient and refractory.

Meanwhile an idea begins to take shape in the minds of men. At first vague and changeful as the morning cloud, it seems to melt into air. But it reforms and reappears. It is the idea which ultimately finds expression in the words "The Holy Roman Empire." They are understood as intimating the changes wrought by Constantine's conversion and the relations of the civil to the ecclesiastical in mediæval society. This conception embodies a twofold representation of God's dominion: the State symbolising God's rule in this world; the Church representing his dominion in heaven. At the head of one is a world-monarch; at the head of the other a world-priest. The two are necessarily harmonious and equally divine, but the spiritual is the nobler.<sup>1</sup> The idea shapes itself into a forgery, the most potent of all "pious frauds"—the "Decretals of Isidore." The emperor Constantine, (so the story ran,) being marvellously recovered from leprosy, removed to Byzantium and left the West to the Pope! . . . Three centuries roll by. The mighty emperor has long slept in his tomb at Aix-la-Chapelle, the crown still upon his brow, the globe and sceptre in his nerveless grasp. His degenerate race have been swept from the throne to make room for Saxon and Franconian dynasties. It is midwinter in the year of grace 1077. A pilgrim thinly clad, bare-headed and bare-footed, stands for three days in the court-yard of Canossa, humbly suing for pardon. Within sits his inexorable judge who long refuses to see him. That pilgrim is Henry IV. of Germany, the successor of Charlemagne, and within the castle sits Hildebrand, the successor of that Leo who had knelt in the church at the Christmas festival and sworn allegiance to Charlemagne. The development has reached a crisis. The temporal power, long regarded by most men as inferior, had asserted itself against the spiritual, and the error must be expiated.

A discussion of the conduct and character of this wonderful

<sup>1</sup> Bryce's "Holy Roman Empire," Chap. VII.

man, personally the greatest of all the Popes, is beside the purpose of this paper. Suffice it to say that, all things considered, Neander's estimate is to be preferred to the severe condemnation of Hallam, or even the cooler criticism of Gieseler. The philo-sophic historian cites the letters of Hildebrand written, many of them, under conditions which preclude concealment. He also analyses the conflicting judgments of contemporaries, noting the fact that the best men of that day were generally with the Pope, as were the common people also. Those who opposed were priests and politicians who were not disinterested.<sup>1</sup>

"Gregory," says a judicious writer of our time,<sup>2</sup> "was not the inventor nor the first propounder of these doctrines; they had been long before a part of mediæval Christianity, interwoven with its most vital doctrines. But he was the first who dared to apply them to the world as he found it. His was that rarest and grandest of gifts, an intellectual courage and power of imaginative belief which, when once it has convinced itself of aught, accepts it fully with all its consequences, and shrinks not from acting at once upon it. A perilous gift, as the melancholy end of his own career proved, for men were found less ready than he had thought them to follow out with unswerving consistency like his the principles which all acknowledged."

The great Pope erred fearfully because the law, which he so vigorously enforced was not the law of God, and the creed which, in common with his enemies, he believed, was not the gospel of Christ. A temporary reaction swept him from power, and he died at Salerno, grandly exclaiming: "*Amari, justitiam, odi iniquitatem, ergo in exilio morior.*" Had his Christianity been of the true apostolic type, the words would have been worthy of Paul himself.

The Pope dies, but the Papacy lives. A century rolls by, and Lothario of Anagni, as Innocent III., ascends the throne of St. Peter to reap the harvest which Hildebrand had sown in tears. He can muster the whole chivalry of Europe under Frederick of Germany, Philip Augustus of France, and the lion-hearted

<sup>1</sup> Neander, Vol. VII., pp. 112-139.

<sup>2</sup> Prof. Bryce's Holy Roman Empire, pp. 160-1.

Richard, to hurl it upon the dominions of Saladin. He secures the crown of Germany for Otho. The mighty kings of France and of England sheathe their swords at his command—even Richard foregoing his coveted pleasure of war and plunder. The crowns of Aragon, of Portugal, and of England under John Plantagenet, are actually held as fiefs dependent on the Holy See. And overawed by his anathema Philip Augustus, the ablest prince of the age—brave, victorious, and haughty—takes back his repudiated queen, Ingeburgis. The temporal supremacy had reached its climax. Europe was a theocracy, and the Pope was autocrat of all.

The limits of this paper will not suffer us to follow closely the Papacy into its decline and "Babylonish Captivity" at Avignon. Nor can we criticise the efforts of Councils at Constance and at Basle, to reform the Church as they said "in its head and in its members." Such efforts, when made on Romish principles, were fore-doomed to failure. Relief came at last according to the ancient formula, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." The word of the Lord, so long concealed from the world, flashes out once more, and the Protestant Reformation sets in like a flood, with Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin, as God-appointed leaders. In this recoil from Papal absolutism history discovers two elements which make common cause against a common foe. Oppressed nationalities struggle desperately to shake off an incubus which is stifling their breath. And the restored gospel of the Son of God starts forth afresh upon its merciful mission to the children of a lost and ruined race. It was but natural that amid the agony and darkness of that conflict powers, separate in their nature, but having a common peril, should become more or less identified in men's thoughts. Indeed, we may well doubt whether anything short of a new dispensation of supernatural inspiration could have drawn again at once the line of separation between things secular and things spiritual. However, the great confessions of the Reformation era, one and all, exhibit traces of this confusion—the Augsburg Confession, perhaps, strangely enough when we recall the history of religion in Germany, least of all; the Anglican most; and the Westminster with

abundant demonstration, Cunningham and Bannerman to the contrary notwithstanding.

II. But it is time that we devote ourselves to the other aspect of the subject, that we may consider Church and State in their mutual relations and fundamental contrast from the view-point of right and duty, testing conflicting theories by the unerring standard of God's word.

I. And here we encounter, first of all, as a fully developed dogma, the Roman doctrine which in Europe bears the name of *Ultramontanism*.<sup>1</sup> "Let the secular powers, whatsoever offices they may hold," (so speaks the Church of Rome through the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215,) "be induced, and admonished, and, if need be, compelled by ecclesiastical censure—that as they desire to be accounted faithful, they should, for the defence of the faith, publicly set forth an oath that, to the utmost of their power, they will strive to exterminate from the lands under their jurisdiction all heretics who shall be denounced by the Church. . . . But if any temporal lord, being required and admonished by the Church, shall neglect to cleanse his lands of this heretical filth, let him be bound with the chain of excommunication by the metropolitan and the other co-provincial bishops. And if he shall scorn to make satisfaction within a year, let this be signified to the Supreme Pontiff, that thenceforth he may declare his vassals absolved from their allegiance to him, and may expose his land to be occupied by the Catholics, who, having exterminated the heretics, may without contradiction possess it, and preserve it in purity of faith."<sup>2</sup>

This is official. Rome herself speaks these words by her Council in the palmy days of Innocent III. Individual members of her communion have repudiated the claim here advanced by their Church. But she, whose boast it is that she alone is immutable amid all the fluctuations of human opinion, has never retracted the words which, through her so called "Œumenical"

<sup>1</sup> *Ultra Montane*—over the mountains, beyond the Alps, *i. e.*, Italian or Roman.

<sup>2</sup> Cited in the Latin and translated into English by Dr. Bannerman, "Church of Christ," Vol. I., p. 104.

Council, she uttered more than six centuries ago. They are entirely consistent with the "Syllabus of Errors" issued in 1864 by Pius IX.<sup>1</sup>

To the definition and defence of this far-reaching power, Bellarmine, more than three centuries afterwards, devotes all the resources of his controversial genius, in the fifth book of his famous treatise, "De Romano Pontifice." Into the details of this discussion it is impossible to enter because of the limits of this paper, but the core of his argument must be criticised with some care.

In nothing is the skill of the practised debater more apparent than in his definition of the Papal doctrine. Three opinions are presented, one embodying the extreme doctrine that the Pope is *jure divino* the lord of all the earth, being endowed with all political power immediately. This is the form in which Boniface VIII. held it when he displayed himself to the vast concourse of Jubilee pilgrims, bearing two swords and exclaiming, "I am Cæsar! I am emperor!"—thereby betraying that he was a blunderer in priestcraft. But of this little *contretemps* Bellarmine, of course, has nothing to say. The other extreme is that of the heretics that the Pope, as such, has no temporal power whatever. While as the golden mean, remains the true Catholic doctrine: "*Pontificem, ut Pontificem, non habere directe et immediate ullam temporalem potestatem, sed solum spirituales; tamen ratione spiritualis habere saltem indirecte potestatem quantumdam, eamque summam, in temporalibus.*"<sup>2</sup> (That the Pontiff, as Pontiff, has not directly and immediately any temporal power, but spiritual only; nevertheless by reason of the spiritual he has, yet indirectly, certain power, and that the highest, in temporal matters.) The distinction is taken with a care which comports with its value; for while it veils from the jealous eyes of princes the full import of the Pope's claim, it puts no real limitation upon

<sup>1</sup> Cited by Dr. Schaff, "Creeds of Christendom," Vol. I., p. 128.

<sup>2</sup> *Disputationum Roberti Bellarmini*, Tom. I., pag. 1062. The edition cited from is the elegant one of Sartorius, Ingolstadt, 1601, in 4 vols. folio. It forms part of the collection of rare and costly books on the Roman Controversy bequeathed to the Columbia Seminary by the venerable Dr. Howe.

his authority, since he is left sole judge as to when and how spiritual interests may demand his intervention. This definition Bellarmine expands in succeeding chapters, winding it all up by citing the words of Innocent III., the mightiest of the Popes: "The Pontiff exercises temporal jurisdiction incidentally only" (*solum casualiter*.) Then in Chap. VII. he proceeds to establish "by reasons the opinion of the theologians." It is here that the champion of Rome lays out his strength. If he fails here, his cause is lost. His reasons are five in number, and the first is paramount in importance, so much so that the others would hardly stand without it. Let it therefore be given in his own words:<sup>1</sup>

"Prima ratio est ejusmodi: Potestas civilis subjecta est potestati spirituali, quando utraque pars est ejusdem Reipublice Christiane, ergo potest Princeps spiritualis imperare Principibus spiritualibus, et disponere de temporalibus rebus in ordine ad bonum spirituale. Omnis enim Superior imperare potest inferiori suo.

"Quod autem potestas politica non solum ut Christiana, sed etiam ut politica, sit subjecta ecclesiastica, ut talis: *Primo*, demonstratur ex finibus utriusque. Nam finis temporalis subordinatur fini spirituali ut patet: quia felicitas temporalis non est absolute ultimus finis et ideo refertur debet in felicitatem aeternam: constat autem ex Aristotele, lib. I., *Ethic.*, Cap. I. ita subordinari facultates, ut subordinantur fines. *Secundo*, Reges et Pontifices, Clerici et Laici, non faciunt duas Respublicas, sed unam, id est, unam Ecclesiam. Sumus enim omnes unum corpus, Roman. 12 et 1 Corinth. 12. At in omni corpore membra sunt connexa, et dependentia, unum ab alio: non autem recte asseritur, spiritualia pendere a temporalibus, ergo temporalia a spiritualibus pendent, illisque subjiciuntur. *Tertio*, si temporalis administratio impedit spirituale bonum, omnium iudicio tenetur Princeps temporalis mutare illum modum administrandi,<sup>2</sup> etiam cum detrimento temporalis boni; ergo signum est subiectam esse temporalem potestatem spirituali."<sup>3</sup>

Such is Bellarmine's argument, first in importance as in place, if one may judge by the space it fills and by the care with which it is elaborated. It is characteristically destitute of a scriptural basis. A reference is lugged in, but without the least regard for the meaning of the passages as they stand in Paul's letters. More of prominence indeed is given to Aristotle. The whole structure

<sup>1</sup>Disp. Ro. Bellar., Tom. I., pag. 1081.

<sup>2</sup>Debet to be supplied, being probably omitted by printer.

<sup>3</sup>Disput. Rob. Bellarmini, Tom. I., pag. 1082.

rests upon the assumed coalescence of the civil and the spiritual in the "Respublica Christiana" (Christian commonwealth). Having made this assumption, he is very careful to show how the civil must thereupon be subordinated to the spiritual—(1) Because the end contemplated by the temporal power being inferior to that of the spiritual power, the first must itself be subordinate to the last according to Aristotle's canon.

(2) Inasmuch as kings and pontiffs, clergy and laity, constitute, not two, but one commonwealth or Church, there must be connexion and mutual dependence of the members; but to make the spiritual dependent on temporal is inadmissible. Therefore, the temporal is subordinate to spiritual.

(3) All parties being agreed that a temporal administration impeding a spiritual good must be abated, even at a sacrifice of the temporal, this presupposes the subordination of the temporal.

Each of these points is open to a ruinous criticism, but inasmuch as they all stand or fall with the main principle, we may save time by examining that. It is not clear from Bellarmine's language whether he means us to take "Christian commonwealth" as a metaphysical entity or as a logical genus. We will view it in each of these aspects and test his argument. *First*, then, regarding it as a logical genus, State and Church (proper) are the two species under it. But it is necessary, in this case, that the genus as the essence be contained in each of the species. Thus, when "Pachydermata" is the genus with "Elephas" and "Rhinoceros" as the species, then the whole of "Pachydermata" must be found in "Elephas" and also in "Rhinoceros." The whole, therefore, of "Christian commonwealth" must be in its two species "State" and "Church (proper)." There cannot, then, be a "State" which does not contain the genus "Christian commonwealth." But this is contradicted by the fact, which Bellarmine himself admits, that there are lawful governments among the heathen!

So much for the concrete case. Now, if Bellarmine be understood as arguing concerning the abstract conceptions "spiritual power," "temporal power," he would then assume "ecclesiastical

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pag. 1065.

power" as the proximate genus having these under it as species. But when we come to examine the concepts "spiritual power" and "temporal power," the specific differentia are evidently "spiritual" and "temporal." The true genus therefore is formed by omitting the specific differentia, leaving not "ecclesiastical power," as Bellarmine assumes, but "power." And this, of course, is of no value to the Pope. The vice in this classification is in either alternative that of assuming a species which is really coördinate with the alleged genus.

Metaphysically regarded the argument stands or falls with the legitimacy of the assumed entity "Christian commonwealth" endowed with its two kinds of power "temporal" and "spiritual." For the existence of such an entity or being, the Cardinal offers no proof whatever. He evidently argues on the assumption that we will concede the fact without question. And in so doing he only avails himself of the mediæval myth expressed in the words "The Holy Roman Empire"—terms which were supposed to intimate to some degree the change in civil and ecclesiastical government that necessarily grew out of the general acceptance of Christianity instead of the old Paganism.

How and when such a conception originated it is not easy to say, further than that it was gradually evolved from the condition of things introduced by Constantine. But when the conception is challenged, Bellarmine offers no proof whatever of its reality. So far, therefore, as he is concerned, we are fully justified in applying the canon of logic—"De non apparentibus et non existentibus eadem est ratio."<sup>1</sup> And thus the great myth upon which the temporal supremacy of the Pope is based vanishes into air.

Bellarmino's second argument need not detain us so long. "The ecclesiastical commonwealth," he says, "ought to be perfect and self-sufficient as a means to its proper end. For such are all well-ordered commonwealths. Therefore, it must have all power necessary to the attainment of its own end. But the power

<sup>1</sup> That is, concerning things which are not made apparent (by evidence) and things not existent the same rule of procedure applies—they cannot be used as media of proof.

of using and disposing of temporal things is necessary to the spiritual end. For otherwise wicked princes would be able to cherish heretics, and so overturn religion. Therefore it has this power also."<sup>1</sup>

The reply is plain. Bellarmine assumes that there is but one method of inducing princes not to cherish heretics, but he does not prove it. The Church may be endowed with the necessary means for overcoming opposition, and yet may not be armed with a sword. His argument is a flagrant *petitio principii*. We read (but not in Bellarmine) of "weapons not carnal, but mighty through God in the pulling down of the strongholds of Satan." True enough, sometimes these weapons of the Church seem inefficient. But it is not different with other weapons. "All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." The Church did not use the sword in her contest with heathen Rome, yet she conquered.

His third argument is: "It is not allowed to Christians to tolerate an infidel or an heretical king, if he endeavor to lead away his subjects to his heresy or infidelity. But to judge whether or not a king may seduce to heresy pertains unto the Pontiff, to whom is committed the care of religion; therefore it pertains to the Pontiff to judge that the king is to be deposed or not deposed." Here we have several instances of the fallacy of "begging the question." The Pope is to take care of religion. Very well, for argument's sake, we will grant it. But is he the only one who is to do this? Bellarmine's argument assumes it. But at the same time it denies it; for he, not being Pope, is engaged hereby in taking care of religion. It is "begging the question" to assume that to the Pope alone belongs this judgment. Besides, he "begs the question" in adducing Deut. xvii. That proves, indeed, that it was sin in the Jews to elect an heretical king, but it does not prove that when elected he must be deposed, nor by whom. Elijah lived under Ahab without rebuke. Moreover, he "begs the question" in adducing the example of the early Christians under Nero. They did not depose, but they would have done it if they could, because, says Bellarmine, the apostle in 1 Cor. vi. ordered them to appoint new judges! The apostle himself says simply

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, p. 1084.

that Christian brethren must not have unseemly law-suits. He orders them, however, to obey Nero for conscience sake.

His fourth argument is: "When kings and princes come to the Church that they may become Christians, they are received with the stipulation, expressed or understood, that they subject their sceptres to Christ, and promise that they will preserve and defend the faith of Christ, even under penalty of losing their realms. Hence, when they become heretical, or oppose religion, they may be by the Church judged, and even deposed from their chief-taincy; nor is any wrong done them, if they are deposed." This, again, is "begging the question," because it assumes without proof that allegiance to Christ is the same in all cases as allegiance to the Church, and that the Church can do all that it is right for Christ to do. It may be, for aught that appears to the contrary, that subjecting one's sceptre (or anything else he may possess) to Christ, is quite different from surrendering it to the Pope. Doubtless a Christian might forfeit to Christ his realm (or other possessions), by failing to use it for his Lord's service, and Christ may deprive him thereof, as he did David for a time, but without calling into use the censures of the Church.

Lastly, the Cardinal argues that the command to Peter, "Feed my sheep," necessarily involves the temporal power, for only thus can he discharge the threefold office of shepherd as it pertains to wolves, to rams who wound the flock, and to the other sheep. This is again assuming the point under discussion—and that, too, in the face of the well-known fact that the true Peter lived, labored, and died without a particle of temporal power. He was commanded to put up his sword into its sheath, but was endowed, as Romanists delight to be for ever telling us, with the *keys* instead. With these keys he could shut out wolves and exclude contentious rams also. And this was the extent of his commission.<sup>1</sup>

It is not worth while to follow Bellarmine into the long list of examples adduced in Chap. VIII., to confirm his position. Ten of these are from ecclesiastical history, and two only from the Bible. Those of them which are pertinent are all instances of "begging the question." The very point to be proved is, whether

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1085.

Popes have acted rightly in assuming authority to depose princes. And it is not legitimate to adduce as evidence of the right the fact that they did depose this or that king. Others are not to the point at all, as Ambrose's excommunication of Theodosius, which was legitimately excluding from the ordinances of the Church a member who had grievously sinned. His worldly rank had nothing to do with it. Other instances are apocryphal, as the alleged transfer by the Popes of the empire from the Romans to the Franks. The biblical "examples" are not to the point, and his argument is as to them an *ignoratio elenchi*. He cites the case of Uzziah resisted by the priests in his wicked attempt to officiate at the altar, and of Athaliah, slain by command of Jehoiada, the high priest. Now, not to raise in this place the question, how far the legal authority of priests under the theocracy may or may not be given to ministers of the gospel (imagining, if we can, for the time, that the Pope were one), it is obvious to remark that Uzziah's political rights were not affected by the conduct of the priests, but by the act of God in sending leprosy upon him. Nor does it appear that Jehoiada was acting in his sacerdotal capacity at all, when he ordered the death of the usurping idolater and murderer. He was a man, a Jewish citizen, as well as a priest. And besides, he was the guardian of the lawful heir. He may have acted in that capacity. Or his deed may be ranked with Moses slaying the Egyptian, and Samuel heaving Agag in pieces. The Mosaic ritual does not set down the deposing power as among the duties of high priest.

Thus crumble like a rope of sand the mighty pretensions of Rome to be a species of theocracy. And the Ajax of Roman champions utterly fails to maintain his cause.

2 The next theory of the relations between Church and State which we shall consider is that propounded by Erastus. And in doing this, we disregard the order of time, inasmuch as Erastianism is the opposite-extreme from the Papal supremacy, both in the conduct of the argument and in the results to which it leads.

Erastus bases his argument entirely upon an alleged exposition of Scripture. It is, therefore, in this respect, thoroughly Protestant. He proves from Scripture that civil magistrates are

recognised as clothed with authority to punish evil doers. He shows that under the Jewish theocracy, kings and judges, by immediate authority from God, punished idolatry, blasphemy, Sabbath-breaking, and many other spiritual offences. And from this induction of particulars, he infers that God designs that civil rulers continue to the end of the world to punish flagrant sins against his law. Filled with this prepossession, he fails to discern the natural and necessary import of the many passages in the New Testament, which teach a total change of administration, by revealing a system of spiritual laws, to be administered by spiritual officers in the name of Christ, by means of spiritual censure, and not by physical force.

The refutation of Erastus is simple enough. His narrow and defective exegesis is to be opposed and upset by one that is wider and deeper—one that takes account of all the facts recorded in Scripture. This has been done many times, and the best of these refutations is the one furnished in the Book of Church Order, with which your office, my brethren, requires that you be familiar.

It is rare in the history of letters that such results are produced as followed the publication of the seventy-five brief propositions which Erastus designated "Theses on Excommunication." The world was soon filled with the controversy, and the invalid physician of Heidelberg has attained immortality of fame. Personally, Erastus seems to have been a man of pious and pure life. His purpose seems to have been good. He wished to set free religion and the ministry from all questions involving strife and the employment of force. His method is clear, his meaning transparent, his spirit earnest. But there is neither eminent ability nor wide scholarship in his little book. The cause of its mighty influence is rather to be sought in the circumstances of the age. The world in which he lived still shuddered at the horrors of the Inquisition, and was startled by the suggestion of priestly dominion. The princes of Europe were eagerly reaching after the power which had lifted the throne of St. Peter above every crowned head in Christendom.

3. We come next to consider the State-Churches as embodying more or less perfectly that very unity which is asserted from different view-points by Erastus and by Rome.

It would doubtless be a study as instructive as it would be saddening, to take a comprehensive survey of the whole history of State-Churches in Germany, France, Switzerland, Holland, and Great Britain. We should see everywhere the deplorable consequences of making religion and the Church a part of the machinery of civil government. We should find Romanism allied in France with the tyranny of the Bourbons, till at last human patience is exhausted, and the French people, frenzied by intolerable wrongs, rise in their restless might, to overwhelm in one indiscriminate ruin the throne and the altar. On the other hand, we should see the Church of the Huguenots, the Church of Calvin, of Coligny, of Claude, alternately drenched in the blood of her martyrs, and then smothered by State protection, like the Roman maiden under the glittering ornaments which had tempted her cupidity. In Germany, we should see the effects of religious tests which prohibited men from holding any office, civil or military, until they had produced evidence of having taken the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Hypocrisy begets infidelity. David Frederick Strauss can hold up his head among honest men, though as a minister—of what? Shall I say, of the gospel? No; but of the State-Church. And Hegel is provoked into uttering the shocking sentiment: "The Church is but the crutch of the State."

However, the limits of this paper require that the discussion be limited to the principles embodied in the religious establishments in Great Britain. Here the free constitution of Anglo-Saxon institutions affords the best field for critical inquiry. And the results in the mother country more nearly concern us.

The great Anglican communion takes especial pride in the presentation of its case by "the judicious Hooker." His famous argument is compendiously stated in the eighth Book of his Ecclesiastical Polity. Recurring to the typical case of the Church in the time of Constantine, he argues: "But when whole Rome became Christian, where they all embraced the gospel, and made laws in defence thereof, if it be held that the Church and common weal of Rome did then remain as before, there is no way how this could be possible, save only one, and that is, they must

restrain the name of a Church in a Christian common weal to the clergy, excluding all the rest of believers, both prince and people. For if all that believe are contained in the name of the Church, how should the Church remain by personal subsistence divided from the common weal, when the whole common weal doth believe? The Church and the common weal are in this case, therefore, personally one society, which society being termed a common weal, as it liveth under whatsoever form of civil law; a Church, as it liveth under the spiritual law of Christ."

To this argument the reply has been pertinently urged that it is mere hypothesis, the fact being that neither "whole Rome," in the days of Constantine, nor all of England in Hooker's, was ever "Christian" in his sense of the term, or, indeed, in any other true sense. There were many millions of heathen, and many Christian sects, in Rome, under the Christian emperors, as there were many Jews, Infidels, Romanists, and Non-conformists, in England. The two societies were therefore never one by "personal subsistence;" that is, in plain English, by being composed of exactly the same members.

This criticism suggests serious difficulties as to the practical value of Hooker's much-lauded argument; for if it be alleged that, neither in the Roman commonwealth under Constantine, nor in the England of the Elizabethan age, were the facts as he represents them, then granting the formal validity of the argument, the conclusion would only be an hypothesis awaiting its realisation in the future. *What proportion of the population must be Christian? And in what sense Christian?* are questions which Hooker may not cover up under the vague phraseology, "whole Rome," which he could not have intended literally.

But allowing that these difficulties were removed, is the argument, as to its form, valid? The *cardo præcipuus* of Hooker is evidently identical with that of his subtle contemporary, Bellarmine—the coalescence of the two societies, Church and State, among a Christian population, so-called, into one society with two names. Hooker, however, ventures to attempt the proof of his major premise—whether the Anglican or the Jesuit be in this the more "judicious," will appear from the sequel. His

argument assumes the shape of a dilemma, thus: "When the two societies, which are, *ex hypothesi*, originally distinct, attain that point in their development when they are composed of the same human units, then they mutually merge into each other and become one society, having, however, two names expressive of the two relations in which it may be regarded; or else, if this be denied, then some of these human units must be excluded from one of the societies; *i. e.*, the name of a Church must be restrained to the clergy, which no Protestant will allow." That is, the identity of societies among men consists solely in the human units composing the membership, and has no reference that is essential to the purposes for which the society may be formed. This is evidently a fair and just interpretation of Hooker, for he offers no proof whatever to restrict his principle to the two forms of association among men commonly termed Church and State. So far as he avers, it is a universal characteristic of all societies—identity of membership is identity of societies. Of this subsumption, he offers no evidence, so that he begs the question at a point one step behind Bellarmine's argument. His conception of societies is what may be termed the mechanical or mathematical. To the mathematician, when he employs the unit of weight—a *pound*, say—it makes no difference whatever what composes the pound—feathers, lead, or gold. So many pounds are so many units; they are the same sum. But this view is evidently at absolute variance with the prevailing conception among men. Thus the commonwealth of England, as distinguished from other individuals of its class, has its identity during many ages, not from the sameness of the human units making up its membership, but from certain covenants specifying the purposes for which these human units have been and are associated. For practical purposes, the very reverse of Hooker's subsumption is held by men. Whether, indeed, in a more strictly accurate analysis, the membership may not be also a subordinate element, may appear further on in this discussion. But, in his attempt to establish by proof the major premise of the argument, Hooker plunges into a bottomless quagmire. Of this a popular illustration may be given. A, B, C, D, etc. (a number of these human

units) form a society for mutual improvement in literature, under the name and style of "The Pickwick Club." But, for purposes of lawful gain, the same persons organise themselves into "The Georgia R. R. & Banking Co." Now, according to Hooker, the membership of these two societies being the same, the societies are *ipso facto* merged into one, which may be properly designated "The Georgia R. R. & Banking Co.," as it operates in finance, and "The Pickwick Club," as it indulges in literary pastime and in dinners!

One other difference between Hooker and Bellarmine—it lies in the application made of the principle held by them in common. Bellarmine uses it (falsely, it is true) to establish the supremacy of the Church over the State. Hooker (with equal error) applies it to establish the domination of the State over the Church. His point of view is essentially Erastian. However, he contrasts with Erastus by resorting to philosophical reasoning instead of the attempted exposition of Scripture. He may, therefore, be termed a Rationalistic Erastian. The Jesuit unquestionably presents in this regard a far nobler conception of the Church.

Bishop Warburton's theory of an "unequal alliance," wherein the Church agrees to surrender her autonomy in consideration of the temporal benefits and protection accorded by the State, is yet more undisguisedly Erastian than Hooker's. Dr. Arnold of Rugby's somewhat mystical conception of a mutual inclusion—the *local* Church of England or Scotland being merged in the "Christian kingdom," while "the Christian kingdom" itself, as such, becomes part of the "holy Church universal"—is liable to the same fatal objection, that it ignores the divine constitution of the Church of Christ as set forth in the Holy Scriptures. Arnold's "holy Church of Christ universal" is, so far as yet appears, not materially different from that which we commonly term Christendom—a loose conception of those peoples who in some sense prefer Christianity to Paganism or Mohammedanism. And in this view of the matter, his local Erastianism, in England, Scotland, etc., would be poorly compensated, indeed.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Miscellaneous Works of Arnold, Appleton's Ed., N. Y., 1845, p. 500. Dr. Arnold fully acknowledges, indeed, that upon the supposition of the

Passing by, for the present, the elaborate essay on Church and State by the now famous Premier of Great Britain, Mr. Gladstone, we next encounter the modification of the union between Church and State as it is exemplified in Presbyterian Scotland, on the basis of the Westminster Confession in its primary form; that is to say, as propounded in the "humble advice" of the Assembly of Divines, enacted with some amendment by the Long Parliament, and ratified by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. The paragraphs bearing on this topic are these:

Chap. XX., Sec. 4. . . "And for their publishing of such opinions, or maintaining of such practices as are contrary to the light of nature, or to the known principles of Christianity, whether concerning faith, worship, or conversation; or to the power of godliness; or such erroneous opinions or practices as either in their own nature, or in the manner of publishing or maintaining them, are destructive to the external peace and order which Christ hath established in the Church; they may lawfully be called to account and proceeded against by the censures of the Church and by the power of the civil magistrate." (Last clause stricken out in the American revision, 1789.)

Chap. XXIII., Sec. 3. "The civil magistrate may not assume to himself the administration of the word and sacraments, or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven; yet hath he authority, and it is his duty, to take order that unity and peace be preserved in the Church; that the truth be kept pure and entire; that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruptions and abuses in worship or discipline prevented or reformed, and all ordinances of God duly settled, administered, and observed. For the better effecting whereof he hath power to call Synods, to be present at them, and to provide that whatsoever be transacted in them be according to the mind of God."<sup>1</sup>

Chap. XXXI., Sec. 2. "As magistrates may call a Synod of ministers and other fit persons to consult and advise with about matters of religion; so, if magistrates be open enemies to the Church, the ministers of Christ, of themselves, by virtue of their office, or they, with other fit persons, may, upon delegation from their churches, meet together in such assemblies."<sup>1</sup>

Church having a divinely revealed constitution and government, such a union as he proposes would be wrong. *Id.*, §10.

<sup>1</sup> Am. Revision: "And it belongeth to the overseers and other rulers of the particular churches, by virtue of their office, and the power which Christ hath given them for edification, and not for destruction, to appoint

The discretion in ecclesiastical matters herein accorded to civil magistrates is, indeed, very wide, including not only the oversight of church officers, but also the infliction of corporeal punishment for violations of ecclesiastical law. The strenuous denial by Cunningham and Bannerman of this fact, so obvious when the language of the Confession is read in the light of contemporary history,<sup>1</sup> is only another melancholy illustration of the power of prejudice, when inflamed by controversy, to obscure high intellectual powers and warp the judgments of good men.

In Scotland, indeed, those evils which everywhere attend the union of Church and State have been held in check to a remarkable degree by two causes especially—the noble conception imbedded in the Confession of the Church as the spiritual kingdom of Christ ruled by his word and filled with his Spirit, and persecution. For it is plain to us now that the Lord in his tender love allowed the State to persecute the Church, in order that the two societies might be kept separate in fact, though united in name. Indeed, the last paragraph cited (Chap. XXXI. § 2), while fully acknowledging the authority of magistrates in the Church in a normal state of things, yet provides for the autonomy of the Church in exceptional cases. In this the Westminster Confession is a decided advance upon the Anglican Articles, which completely subject the assemblies of the Church to the will of the civil magistrate.<sup>2</sup> And in this largely lay the hope of an independent Presbyterian Church.

This brings us to the inquiry, How do Presbyterians, holding the "*ius divinum*" doctrine as to the constitution of the Church, justify themselves in consenting to such an alliance with the State? With them, philosophical speculations on this subject

such assemblies (Acts xv.) ; and to convene together in them, as often as they shall judge it expedient for the good of the Church (Acts xv. 22, 23, 25)."

<sup>1</sup>In the unamended Confession, among the sins forbidden in the Second Commandment is, "tolerating a false religion." Stricken out in 1788, A. Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Art. XXI. (cited from the Eng. Ed. of 1571, in Schaff's "Creeds of Christendom," Vol. III., p. 500) : "Generall counsels may not be gathered together without the commandment and wyll of princes."

must be lightly esteemed. They admit the Church to be a positive institute, grounded on the word of God, and not deducible by reason from the nature of things. As such she lives and moves and has her being in the utterances of the divine oracles. The maxim of this Presbyterianism is, Whatsoever is not commanded is therefore forbidden. Now all parties acknowledge that there is no authorisation of such a relation in the New Testament, the most that is claimed as regards the New Testament being that it does not forbid the connexion. Scriptural authority must be sought in the alleged exemplary character of the Hebrew theocracy. Thither resort, therefore, the Presbyterian advocates, from Gillespie to Cunningham and Bannerman; the two last-named being content to refer to Gillespie's demonstration of the principle. If this fails them, "the Establishment Principle" is left without so much as a peg left in the Scriptures upon which it can be supported.

(1) It is needful, therefore, that we examine carefully into the alleged example, that we may see whether the necessary points of identity can be verified. Is the Jewish theocracy, then, of the same species as the Presbyterian State-Church set up by the Westminster Confession? One might almost assume that the mere asking of the question is sufficient. The Hebrew theocracy is *not* of the same species as a modern State-Church. Men have taken the liberty of borrowing an element here or there, but they have not gone according to "the pattern shewed in the mount." Some are for taking more, some less. Gillespie gives to the magistrate a discretion very like to that exercised, with God's approbation and blessing, by pious princes under the theocracy. The Assembly of Divines and the Long Parliament, the latter with startling emphasis, are for using the sword upon stubborn and hardened sinners. They refer, with evident intention to claim the precedent, to the case of Samuel hewing Agag in pieces. And the practice of the Church of Scotland, as reported in Steuart of Pardovan's "Collections," testifies abundantly to the fact that the Assembly felt authorised to appeal to the secular arm.<sup>1</sup> But why stop short of the divine model, which not only

<sup>1</sup> Here are references to a few instances hastily gathered. The edition

permitted but required the death of the idolater, the necromancer, the blasphemer, the Sabbath-breaker? To this no reply can be made unless it amount to this, "Such parts of the divine model are intuitively felt to be incongruous with the institutions of the New Testament." No word of God is pleaded showing what parts are perpetual and what are abrogated. The selection of the parts to be retained seems to be dictated by the feelings or fancy of each writer. Dr. Thomas Chalmers frankly limits the exemplary force of the theocracy to little, if any thing, more than providing for the financial maintenance of the ministry. Dr. Cunningham insists upon the obligation of magistrates bringing all the influence of their office to promote the "true religion." And he would fain have us believe that this moral suasion exhausts the intent of the Confession!

It is not wise to place the parts of a delicately constructed chronometer in the hands of a village blacksmith, that he may select those which are essential, and combine them for us in a new time-piece. Experience shows how hurtful it is for man to interfere with the *fauna* of a country. For example, a certain species of bird is found depredating upon our gardens. A violent remedy is at hand. Shot or poison relieve us of the feathered robbers. But behold nature's *nemesis*! That tiny insect, which had been kept within bounds by the birds, increases and multiplies, like the flies in Egypt, to devour far more than the birds had claimed for the protection of our property. In the divine model, God, its contriver, had a complicated system of checks and balances which are omitted in the coarse imitations of it devised by men. Among these checks and balances *inspired prophecy* holds the foremost place. Indeed, there is ground for the suggestion that for the most part, if not always, supernatural intimations of the divine will directed and limited the employment of physical force in the punishment of sins against God.<sup>1</sup> The alleged

is that of the Edinburgh Printing Co., 1837. • Pp. 178, 352, 357, 360, 361, 363, 364, 371, 395. The list might be increased largely.

<sup>1</sup>The limits of this paper do not allow us to enter upon the question of an ecclesiastical administration in Israel during the theocracy as distinguished from the civil administration. Gillespie's principles required

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instance of the Jewish theocracy is not a case of the legitimate argument from "example" at all. It is a *lucus a non lucendo*—an example which does not exemplify.

The theocracy was indeed exemplary. It was designed to teach us something. And its divine Author has plainly shown us what he intended that it should symbolise. It was a type of Christ's spiritual dominion in the Church of the New Testament. Only this, and nothing more. The three offices, or the threefold office, of the Mediator—sacerdotal, prophetic, kingly—were essential elements of the indivisible, unique, inimitable structure. There is no place found for Cæsar, his prerogatives, or his relations to Christ's kingdom in it. To inject such an idea, is to confuse the divine symbolism and mar the picture.

So much for the alleged import of the Jewish theocracy. This is the main dependence of those who would fain prove, upon scriptural principles, the lawfulness of having a State-Church. There is another line of argument frequently mentioned, but generally not much insisted on. It is the argument from prophecy. In the prophetic Scriptures it is foretold of the new dispensation that kings and queens are to be "nursing fathers" and mothers to the Church. In a burst of impassioned song the Psalmist exclaims, "Be wise now, therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the earth; serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." (Ps. ii. 10-12.) And in a similar strain he sings again: "The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents; the kings of Seba and Sheba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him." (Ps. lxxii. 10, 11.) The inference drawn from these words is that the official names of the persons addressed imply that the acts enjoined are also official. Kings (and other magistrates) hold to such separation, and he argues for it at great length in his "Aaron's Rod Blossoming;" but, to the writer's apprehension, unsuccessfully. The intimations which, in his opinion, show two sets of office-bearers, two Sunhedrims, one civil, the other ecclesiastical, are very obscure and unsatisfactory at best, while the instances are many and indisputable of the same men exercising both functions.

trates) are commanded, *in their political capacity*, to render service to Jesus Christ! And this command, so it is alleged, authorises governments to frame laws for the maintenance of public worship and to do whatever else may be needful for the establishment of a State-Church. It is not without good reason that this argument is not emphasised by the advocates of State-Churches, for the wise maxim finds place here, "*Prophetica Scriptura ne sit dogmatica.*" That is, let not the prophetic Scriptures be employed to *originate* doctrines, but rather to confirm and illustrate such truths as may have been otherwise revealed. Experience, too, admonishes us that *literalism* was the rock upon which the Jews were wrecked when Christ came in the flesh. "The Messiah," so they affirmed, and truly, "is represented in prophecy as a mighty king and conqueror. He is David's son and successor. As such he is to sit upon the throne of David and to receive the homage of dependent kings and peoples. His enemies he will dash in pieces even as an earthen vessel is shivered by an iron rod." They expected such a Messiah, and showed unmistakable readiness to follow Jesus, if only he would consent to act some such part. And when they accepted his refusal as final, their hosannas changed into hooting and blasphemies.

The prophecies admit of other interpretations which do no violence to the inspired words. If literal kings be meant, that is, if the royal names be more than eminent and influential persons, then we must remember that kings and princes are sinners, and as such need to be redeemed, like other men. And even if it be indubitably certain that *official* actions are required, still the precise nature and form of these actions are not defined. The demands of the prophecies may be fully met when magistrates perform in the fear of God such political acts as are proper to

<sup>1</sup> Up to this point the argument from prophecy has been used to maintain another doctrine, *i. e.*, rejecting the analogy of the Jewish theocracy, and with it every form of alliance between Church and State; there are those who hold that these prophetic Scriptures do enjoin religious actions upon princes and magistrates *in their political capacity*, such, for example, as publicly acknowledging God, the Creator and Preserver, or Christ, the mediatorial King, in their fundamental law, and also the appointing of Fast Days, National Thankgivings, etc. The reply given in the text is believed to apply with equal force against this inference also.

their office. The acts may not be distinctively religious at all, and yet they are done in a spirit which glorifies God. This view finds countenance, as I humbly conceive, in our Confession—that is, in the American Revision of 1788, which thus speaks, Chap. XXIII., Sect. 3:

"Civil magistrates may not assume to themselves the administration of the word and sacraments; or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven; or in the least interfere in matters of faith. Yet, as nursing fathers, it is the duty of civil magistrates to protect the Church of our common Lord, without giving the preference to any denomination of Christians above the rest, in such manner as that all ecclesiastical persons shall enjoy the full, free, and unquestioned liberty of discharging every part of their sacred functions without fear or danger. And as Jesus Christ hath appointed a regular government and discipline in his Church, no law of any commonwealth should interfere with, let, or hinder the due exercise thereof among the voluntary members of any denomination of Christians, according to their own profession and belief. It is the duty of magistrates to protect the person and good name of all their people in such an effectual manner as that no person be suffered, either upon pretence of religion or infidelity, to offer any indignity, violence, abuse, or injury to any other person whatsoever; and to take order that all religious and ecclesiastical assemblies be held without molestation or disturbance."

These are golden words. In them our Church confesses her belief as to the teaching of God's word touching the relation of the civil magistrate to the Church and to religion. The actions ascribed to them are, every one of them, *civil* as distinguished from religious. The sum of all that is said is that magistrates are to defend from all aggression the liberty to worship God, which is one of our inalienable natural rights.

The authority alleged from the Old Testament Scriptures for the endowing and maintaining of churches by civil enactment being thus taken away, opportunity is thereby given for the unrestricted application of the Master's declaration: "My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." Our Lord's life is a com-

<sup>1</sup> The Directory of Worship, Ch. XIV., Sect. 4, seems to go further by acknowledging the propriety of the civil magistrate appointing fasts and thankgivings, which our people ought to respect.

ment on these words. He resolutely declined the title when the Jewish people eagerly urged it upon him (John vi. 15), even as he had refused the royal crown when tempted by Satan. He refused to act as a civil judge in questions of property (Luke xii. 13, 14,) and in criminal prosecutions (John viii. 3-11). He declined to decide the dispute about paying tribute to Cæsar, remitting the matter to the individual conscience, Luke xii. 13. And at the end he was careful to explain to Pilate that his kingdom had nothing in common with political institutions, so that there could be no opposition to or rivalry with Cæsar. Dr. Whately is fully justified in insisting as he does<sup>1</sup> upon the deep significance of this "good confession" before Pilate. He was impeached on suspicion of treason against the Cæsar. And when Pilate, who is to judge of the accusation, questions the prisoner as to the allegation, our Lord, before replying to the inquiry, is first careful to learn from the questioner the precise purport of his words. Does Pilate use the word "king" in a spiritual or in a temporal sense? "Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell thee of me?" Pilate's impatient reply fixes his meaning. And so our Lord, calmly disregarding the scornful petulance of the vacillating Roman, answers the question in terms which imply a negative as to the main point of Pilate's inquiry. His words necessarily have this meaning: "My kingdom is in no sense political or civil. It is purely spiritual." Of this he submits proof in the fact that his servants did not repel force by force. Having thus cleared the way to the full declaration of his mission, our Lord further answers Pilate's inquiry as to whether or not he claims to be, *in any sense*, a king: "Yes; I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I (voluntarily) into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." "What is truth?" questions the judge, in the tone, doubtless, of the fashionable scepticism. Alas! he does not await the answer. But yet, with Roman justice, he pronounces the interesting enthusiast, as he seems to have regarded him, guiltless of the charge. There was no sense, as Dr. Whately correctly argues, in which Christ's kingdom could be

<sup>1</sup> "Kingdom of Christ," Essay I., Sect. 10.

termed political. He repudiates physical force in every form as a means of maintaining and propagating his gospel. He speaks for all time; for the Church in all ages. The ground is completely swept from beneath the Papal doctrine of the temporal supremacy, and State-Churches are cut up by the roots. Had Christ's professed disciples but learned of him this lesson, then infidelity had never blasphemed, nor humanity shuddered, over the horrors of "religious wars." The martyrdom of John Huss or of Michael Servetus would have been equally impossible. And persecution for opinions would have been unknown in Christian records, save as the more appropriate work of heathen and Mohammedans.

4. This may be a suitable view-point for noting the progress made in the solution of the problem set before us. The problem is to determine, upon scriptural principles, the reciprocal relations of Church and State, and to show the fundamental contrast between them. It may be safely claimed that the fundamental errors of the Roman and of the Erastian theories have been detected and refuted, and that we have discovered that there is no basis in Scripture for any sort of union or alliance between the two societies. Upon Presbyterian principles, therefore, all such relations are to the Church unlawful, since she may not do anything which Christ, her King, does not ordain. If, therefore, the State has any religious functions whatever, it cannot exercise them through the Church, whether in the form of a "Religious Establishment" or otherwise.

But there are those who, going heartily with us to this point, here feel constrained to part from our company. "State-Churches," they say, "are unscriptural. The Church indeed has no political functions, and cannot decide political disputes even when they seem to involve a moral duty. But the State itself has its religious duty which is independent altogether of any Church organisation. It springs directly from the relation of the State itself to God, its Author and moral Governor."

So far our friends seem to be agreed among themselves. But when they come to expand their general proposition, they are found to diverge almost as widely from one another as they do

from us. Some of them with Dr. Thornwell hold that besides the doctrines of natural religion the State is bound to acknowledge its fealty to Christ, as mediatorial head over all things to his Church. Others prefer the shorter creed of natural religion. Some with George Gillespie would hold the State bound to enforce by appropriate legislation the Ten Commandments. Others call for Sunday laws, at least. While still another school would be content with an occasional Thanksgiving or Fast appointed by public proclamation. This diversity does not of itself prove the falsity of all shades of the doctrine, of course, but it precludes us from following each variation into its details. The chief reasons alleged for the doctrine of the religious functions of the State, (disregarding now the all but endless variations as to the details,) are, *first*, that revealed truth that the State is *an ordinance of God*, and, *secondly*, the metaphysical postulate that the State is a *moral person*, from which it is inferred that it must discharge the religious obligations (or some of them) involved in such beings. Besides these chief reasons there are others of more circumscribed use and authority. Allusion has already been made to inferences based upon the prophetic Scriptures which, while excluding State-Church establishments, demand religious actions from kings and rulers in their political capacity. Dr. Charles Hodge seems to find a basis for some religious duties on the part of the American States and the Federal Government growing out of the circumstances which attended their foundation and early history. But, turning our attention now to the two reasons above specified, let us carefully examine them and criticise the inferences which are claimed to follow from them.

(1) *First*, then, it is a revealed truth that civil government is an ordinance of God; and from this truth it follows, so our friends think, that the State in its organic capacity must, in some distinctively religious way—just what, they cannot agree upon among themselves—honor its Author. This inference is certainly true as regards *some* of God's ordinances, as, for example, the family and the Church. But is it a universal fact, true alike of all the ordinances of God? The validity of the argument can be maintained only upon this assumption, for it is the *major*

*premise* of the syllogism. The advocates of the doctrine have somehow omitted to prove this *major*, so far as I can learn. They assert it with such confidence as, in the absence of the proof, would suggest that it may be deemed an axiom, or law of thought, and, therefore, of equal validity and self-evidence with the law of causality. But contenting myself with having signalled the omission and waiving the easy task of showing that the proposition, "All ordinances of God must perform acts that are distinctively religious," is not self-evident, I go on to consider the words of Scripture alleged as the basis of the doctrine. The *locus classicus*, as every body knows, is found in Rom. xiii. 1-7. In this famous passage the apostle grounds the duty of obedience to the lawful commands of magistrates upon the allegation that government is the "ordinance of God for good." The inquiry before us is, What relation as between God and human governments is herein declared?<sup>1</sup>

The "historical environment," (to borrow an expressive term,) enables us to answer the question with confidence. *Paul wrote these words to Roman Christians under Nero's government.* Obviously, then, he does not here treat of any relations between the power and providence of God, on the one hand, and human government, on the other, which do not enter into this concrete case. It is not David's reign over Israel, nor Victoria's in Britain, but *Nero's* that furnishes the key to his meaning. In what way,

<sup>1</sup> The precise limits of obedience are not involved in this discussion. But it is impossible for a Presbyterian, to forget the doctrine of "Passive Obedience," and the part which it played in the sufferings of the Covenanters, the history of Great Britain, and the fate of the infamous House of Stuart. We cannot help thinking of the parsons and bishops who so filled the head of poor Charles I. with the "Divine Right of Kings" that the mischief could not be wholly undone by cutting the head off; and at last, after rivers of blood had flowed, the bloody House had to be deposed and banished. The clergy have indeed made all the amends in their power to their victim, by making of a forsworn prince a saint and martyr. But their shameful abuse of Scripture is apparent in the simple fact that Paul spent his whole life in preaching the gospel contrary to the commands of the Cæsars. His writing this letter to Christians at Rome was an act of deliberate disobedience. And he was finally put to death as a violator of Roman law by this very brute, Nero.

then, was Nero's government related to God's providence? God, as Creator, may be said to be, in a sense, the Author of any government, in that he created man with such a nature and has placed him in such circumstances as to render government of some kind an absolute necessity with him. And political governments of any kind, even Nero's horrible tyranny, may be truly styled an "ordinance of God for good," inasmuch as any government, *even that*, is better than anarchy. As the God of providence, the Lord was related to Nero's government. He determined to permit him, being such as he was, to reign in Rome. God determined Nero's relation to the Roman commonwealth and also to each man in that commonwealth. To some his wickedness was overruled for good, by being made the instrument of God's fatherly discipline. It was so, beyond doubt, with Paul. To others—and these doubtless the vast majority—Nero was an instrument chiefly, not wholly, of wrath. It was an age of dreadful wickedness, as Paul testifies in the first chapter of this very Epistle. And as such it deserved richly the horrors of Nero and Caligula. But beyond this limit the circumstances of the case will not authorise us to go. This is the typical case by which the inspired words "an ordinance of God"—"a minister of God for good to thee"—are to be interpreted. And it goes without saying that these facts furnish no basis for the theory of inherent religious obligations resting on the State, as such. If, indeed, any other government be "an ordinance of God" to its subjects in a sense different from this, so be it; *but these added elements are not found in Paul's inspired words.* Nor can they appear in our doctrine.

It is curious to observe that Dr. Cunningham in his discussion intimates that the settlement of the sense in which Providence is related to political institutions has much to do with determining the question at issue. But there he does not help us by solving the problem. It is a pity that he passed it by. However, he prudently adds that, even though this analysis should fail to support his theory of the religious obligations of the State, yet his view might be maintained on the ground that, though religious duties be not an end to the political *office* itself, still they are to

the *agent*. As he puts it, though religious acts be not *finis operis*, they may be and are *finis operantis*. This is truth, and important truth. The service and glory of God are an end to magistrates (and to all men) in every work of life, in civil as well as in ecclesiastical actions. But then, this great truth yields nothing for Cunningham's theory, for it *does not settle the distinctive character of the acts to be performed*. "Whether ye eat therefore, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." This does not settle the essence of the act, but indicates a quality that may belong to all human actions. The sincere Romanist misses the mark when he seeks to obey the command by refusing meat on Fridays. The zealous woman errs, when she undertakes to preach in public. The modern "evangelist," however praiseworthy in other respects, misapplies it, when he discharges the peculiar functions of the Christian ministry without ordination thereto "with prayer and the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." In a word, the pious magistrate may fill up the measure of his duty, so far as his civil office is concerned, by discharging all civil duties honestly, faithfully, and in the fear of God. The act would be civil, the spirit intensely religious.

(2) The next ground is the metaphysical assumption that the State is a *moral person*, and as such falls under the universal rule that moral persons must serve and glorify God by actions that are distinctively religious. This consideration weighed heavily with our beloved and honored Thornwell. The reader will find some criticisms upon this philosophical doctrine in Macaulay's review of Mr. Gladstone's early essay, "The State in its Relations with the Church." Mr. Gladstone embraced the proposition in all its length and breadth. He even goes so far as to discuss, with a *naïveté* which is sure to provoke a smile, the possibility of "corporations" having souls as well as bodies. The discussion is rather brief than prolific of course. Adding to this metaphysical postulate the political doctrine which is known as the "Paternal Theory of Government," he maintains that governments are bound to do all the good to their people that is possible. And as the promotion of religion is the highest good, government is under obligation to promote piety among its sub-

jects. This was more than forty years ago, however, when as Macaulay testifies, he whom we now know as the great leader of the Liberal Party in the British Parliament, was the rising star among the Tories. Whether he has changed his religio-philosophical doctrines as well as his political creed, one would naturally be glad to know. However, Macaulay in the review above mentioned undertakes upon Mr. Gladstone's doctrine the *reductio ad absurdum*. He signalises the fact that Gladstone fails to show that his reasoning is limited to that form of society known as the State. If, therefore, because of the fact, as alleged by Mr. Gladstone, that the State deals with personal rights and moral laws, it is a "moral person" and bound to have a creed, then other societies possessing the same marks are also moral persons, under obligations to have a creed. But this is true, as Macaulay urges with irresistible force, of all forms of association among men. Nay, Mr. Gladstone himself, in a recent controversial tract on Romanism, pertinently observes that when the Pope claims to have jurisdiction "only over morals," he makes no limitation whatever, for moral principles enter into every act of human life. Banking companies deal with personal rights and moral laws. So do the railway corporations. So do the owners of hacks and omnibuses, as Macaulay insists, for the Scriptures say that "a righteous man regardeth the life of his beast." Moral principle enters into even that relation. The conclusion seems inevitable, then, that these corporations are, all of them, "moral persons" in exactly the same sense as the body politic. If it be bound to profess a creed, to perform acts distinctively religious, to propagate religion, so are they. The reply seems to be a complete instance of a *reductio ad absurdum*.

Furthermore, if the State be a moral person in such a sense as thereby to be obliged to perform certain religious acts, what shall these acts be?

Mr. Gladstone, at the time of writing his essay, had no misgivings as to the proper reply to this question. England, at least, (and by good and necessary consequence all other commonwealths,) is held bound to hold and propagate the Anglican creed and worship. Moreover, endowed as she is with the incomparable gift of the

true apostolical succession, the Church of England so Mr. Gladstone thought (it were curious to know what he now thinks), is eminently entitled to the approval of every rightly constituted mind. Mr. Gladstone was not in favor of persecution, at least of employing physical force; but he held the State justified in excluding Dissenters from the universities and from civil office—which, as Macaulay justly observes, would be a milder form of persecution, and also an excellent plan for encouraging hypocrisy.

Our brethren in Scotland, for the most part, the United Church being dissentients, are quite as confident that the State ought to uphold the Westminster standards, albeit they do like canny Scots emit a doubt or two as to the theological qualifications of the national Legislature for dealing with the "five points." As well they may, since the majority of them are Anglican Ritualists, and not a few Papists and infidels.

We of the American Churches must, of course, be content with a far shorter creed on the part of the State; but just how short it should be, and what articles must go into it, are likely to remain to the end of time mooted points. Some, as before remarked, are for the doctrines of natural religion—a very non-committal doctrine, by the way, since there is no way of deciding absolutely what the doctrines of natural religion are. Some, with Thornwell, are for confessing Christ as providential Ruler of the world. And this seems to involve, by logical necessity, the great mystery of the Trinity. Others seem to care less for the creed of the State than for right action. They are content if it will pass certain laws about the Sabbath and proclaim fasts or thanksgivings at proper seasons.

But, in the face of all this well-nigh hopeless diversity, the question will return, like the ghost of Banquo, If the State, as a moral person, be bound to hold religious truths and perform religious acts, what shall these truths and actions be? For all the parties in this discussion there is but one standard of truth, from which no appeal can be taken. "To the law," then, "and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Those of us who hold, as our

Scottish brethren do, that the duties enjoined upon judges and kings under the theocracy are in some sense patterns for civil magistrates now, must show cause, if they can, why the Christian magistrate is at liberty to believe less or do less than his Jewish prototype, who was bound to profess and maintain *vi et manibus* any other creed in its Old Testament form. In the absence of any other specific rules than those furnished by the theocracy, other men must be content, as it seems to me, with analogous cases as a guide. Scripture tells us expressly what God requires of the class "moral persons." It reveals precisely "what man is to believe concerning God and what duties God requires of man." We are clearly informed as to the limits of faith and of duty for man as an individual, and as he is associated with his fellows in two societies, the family and the Church. In each of these relations the same limits are imposed by God's authority. He must believe what the Scriptures reveal, and he must do what they enjoin. Neither more nor less. So far, therefore, as analogy is a guide, it would seem that the State, as a moral person, must believe what others of that class are required to believe, and do what they are obligated to do. That is, the State must hold, practise, and teach the *whole Bible*; nothing less. And this Mr. Gladstone interprets to be Anglicanism; we must, of course, with Bannerman, hold to be Presbyterianism. Our opponents are rather silent, so far as yet appears, as to the precise rules by which their various limits are fixed. In the meanwhile, let all ponder this serious question, What right has man, in any relations, under any conditions whatever, to hold a mutilated creed or to come short of the perfect standard of duty? This is, indeed, a solemn matter. For one I dare not advocate a conscious coming short of what God has spoken. It has no warrant, as I humbly submit, in the Holy Scriptures. And such criteria as "the nature of things," "the circumstances of the case," fail to satisfy; they have an ominous sound. I know nothing of "religion in a generic, broad sense of the word;" at least nothing that I can advocate.

But it is time that we inquire somewhat critically into the meaning of the terms "*moral person*," when applied to a society of men such as the State. In doing this, I am glad to avail

myself of the labors of a distinguished predecessor in the chair to which you have called me. Dr. B. M. Palmer has discussed the subject in two articles, which appeared in the third volume of the SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW. And it has been a comfort to find that my own humble efforts have led to the same results as his. Beginning with the derivation of the word *persona*, Dr. Palmer avails himself of the light that the etymology and history of the word shed on its meaning. The term seems to be derived from the Roman theatre (*per-se-una*, that which is one in itself, is evidently far-fetched). The root is *sonare*, to give sound; *personare*, to sound through. *Persona* was the *mask* worn by actors, so designated with special reference to the mouth-piece which served as a sort of speaking-trumpet in sending out the voice through vast theatres. From the mask it grew to designate the actor himself; then the *character* "personated," as we say; and finally, the character which one sustains in real life, an *intelligent being, a moral agent, the man himself*. The present purpose does not require us to enter fully upon the philosophical inquiry, What constitutes personality in man? much less into the theological problems concerning personality in the divine nature. Human personality is equivalent to the man, and speaking generally, whatever is required to make the man, is required to constitute a person. Of these elements, intelligence and will are the most prominent factors. Philosophically speaking, then, a person, that is to say, a man, may be described as that unity which is made up of many human powers or faculties. Now, in what sense is the term person transferred to a society composed of many individuals, as for example, a commonwealth? To this Dr. Palmer makes answer that the term is, in that case, evidently *analogical*, the analogy being couched in the comparison of many faculties (intellect, emotion, will, etc.) united in the one man with many distinct agents (A, B, C, etc.) united in the one society. This "resemblance of relations" or analogy justifies the use of the term. But to go beyond this, as Mr. Gladstone and others seem inclined to do, by implying that there is something very mysterious and transcendental in the terms "moral person," when applied to a commonwealth,

is to strain the analogy beyond the truth which it is intended to teach. It is a truth, as Dr. Palmer observes—and one *vital* in this discussion—that the words Church and State designate respectively a *relation* between this, that, and the other man; only this, and no more. Now, to disregard this truth, by employing the terms in the *ontological*, instead of the metaphysical sense; suppose them to indicate mysterious entities endowed with properties—this procedure inflicts such an outrage upon the language as can hardly find a parallel save in the vagaries of mediæval Realists. The only substantive beings on the earth which pertain to such societies as the Church and the State are the human beings thus related to each other. These human beings are the only “thinking substances,” “entities,” with whom this analysis is concerned. The words family, State, Church, all belong to that class which Locke terms “*mixed modes*,” and as such they stand sharply contrasted with the composite beings designated by the common names, *man, horse, stone*. Not, indeed, that these words denoting *relations* are less real than those denoting substances; for relations are as real and as essential as things. Indeed, some relations, as those indicated by the terms *parent, husband, Creator*, are of infinitely more importance than most substances.

Now, if it be suggested as a difficulty to the acceptance of this explanation, that “the State” generally survives while the individual part dies, or *vice versa*, the State perishes by war, while we live on to mourn it, the reply seems as simple as it is complete. The death of the individual dissolves his relation to his associates, as death dissolves the relation of husband and wife. Or else war violently dissolves the relations of the whole mass to each other, as divorce cuts asunder the marriage bond.

This being, as is humbly submitted, firmly established, the question returns upon us in this shape, Are men (the only thinking entities belonging to this world) bound in *all* their various relations with one another to profess a creed of some sort and perform duties of some kind? Or, if this be answered (as it is by common consent) in the negative, then what special evidence is there to show that men in the political relation are, under the gospel dispensation, more bound in their corporate organisation

to profess a creed and perform acts that are distinctively religious, than they are in other relations which, like the State, are formed for secular ends? If further reply be needed than has already been suggested, I might be allowed to adopt as my own the words of our beloved Church in her Address to all the sisterhood of Churches, as sent forth by the Assembly in session at Augusta in 1861; though I must in candor admit, even should I seem over-bold therein, that the interpretation put upon the words is more severely strict than might have been acceptable to some who adopted, even to the immortal pen that drafted, the paper: “The provinces of Church and State are perfectly distinct, and the one has no right to usurp the jurisdiction of the other. The State is a natural institute, founded in the constitution of man as moral and social, and designed to realise the idea of justice. It is the society of rights. The Church is a supernatural institute, founded in the facts of redemption, and is designed to realise the idea of grace. It is the society of the redeemed. The State aims at social order, the Church at spiritual holiness. The State looks to the visible and outward, the Church is concerned for the invisible and inward. The badge of the State’s authority is the sword, by which it becomes a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well. The badge of the Church’s authority is the keys by which it opens and shuts the kingdom of heaven, according as men are believing or impenitent. The power of the Church is exclusively spiritual, that of the State includes the exercise of force. The Constitution of the Church is a divine revelation, the Constitution of the State must be determined by human reason and the course of providential events. The Church has not to construct or modify a government for the State, and the State has no right to frame a creed or polity for the Church. They are as planets moving in different orbits, and unless each is confined to its own track, the consequences may be as disastrous in the moral world as the collision of different spheres in the world of matter. It is true that there is a point at which their respective jurisdictions seem to meet—in the idea of duty. But even duty is viewed by each in very different lights. The Church enjoins it as obedience to God, the State enforces it as the safeguard of order.”

Thus our argument has conducted us, by steps that seem to be in full accord with the infallible teachings of God's holy word, to the conclusion that, save within the narrow limits of the pious household, the only institution on earth for professing, maintaining, and propagating "the faith once for all delivered to the saints," is the Church of Christ. Brethren, it is an inspiring thought—especially so to us, who, like our Covenanting forefathers in Scotland, have been made to feel the heavy hand of an unfriendly government. We, doubtless, needed such faithful dealing to save us from idolising the State, as the old Romans did. We have had, besides sorrowful recollections, little left us on earth save our family ties and the Church of our Lord. It is a significant fact, that our Church owes her existence, under God's providential leadings, to a solemn, necessary protest against an attempt made, contrary to Scripture and the Constitution, to intermingle and confound things spiritual and things temporal. We could not choose but affirm that in assuming the right to decide the disputed question as to which of the two political powers, the State or the Federal, the allegiance of American citizens was primarily due, the Assembly at Philadelphia acted outside of the authority given to the Church in the word of God, and violated the covenant by which all parts of the Church were bound together. The Scriptures do not treat of the complex system of government which the people of the United States have devised for themselves, and therefore the Church which knows nothing among men but the words of Scripture, cannot decide the question of the primary obligation as to allegiance in the American system. The whole question was extraneous to the Scriptures, and therefore, as to the Church, *ultra vires*. Besides, our compact, following exactly the word of God, forbade any such decisions. The language of the covenant reads thus: "Synods and Councils are to handle or conclude nothing but that which is ecclesiastical; and are not to intermeddle with civil affairs which concern the commonwealth, unless by way of humble petition in cases extraordinary, or by way of advice for satisfaction of conscience, if they be thereunto required by the civil magistrate." Conf. of Faith, Chap. XXXI., Sec. 4. It has never been main-

tained, I believe, that the action, against which we protest as subversive of the Constitution and as a violation of Scripture, was taken under either of the two exceptional heads. The justification has been that a question of duty was pressing for an authoritative settlement, and whatever was done by the Assembly was only to that end. The reply is, Precisely so; a political question was tacitly but really decided in order to reach the question of duty. This was exactly the transgression. Now, we humbly conceive that the Church should have imitated her Lord when confronted by the question of tribute to Cæsar. That, too, involved just such a mixed question, partly political, partly moral. He declined to decide the political dispute, merely observing in effect as he called attention to the Roman Denarius: "I see that you have some sort of dealings with Cæsar. Very well; in all your dealings with him, render to Cæsar whatever is due to him, and to God what belongs to him."<sup>1</sup>

Nor have we been able to this hour to withdraw that protest. For our brethren have continued steadfastly to reiterate their adhesion to their action in 1861. Succeeding Assemblies have gone far beyond the "Spring Resolutions." The Baltimore Conference, in 1875, developed the fact of their unwillingness then to change a jot of their former action. And the negotiations of 1882, between the Assemblies at Atlanta and at Springfield, proved beyond a doubt that our brethren adhere with invincible resolution to their "Deliverances as to Loyalty and the Rebellion." This being the case, nothing is left to us but to hold fast to the purely spiritual functions of the Church, as they are set down in our Confession. It is our duty to protest, by our separate existence, for the glory of Christ, the supremacy of his word, and the good of all men. We are few among the thousands of Israel. But so were the twelve apostles and seventy evangelists. In themselves weak, they as God's humble instruments

<sup>1</sup> Sufficient evidence for this construction of our Lord's answer seems to be furnished by the conduct of his keen-witted interlocutors. Neither party attempted to use the words to his damage, as they had hoped to do. If he had said, No, the Herodians intended to report his speech to Pilate, as advising sedition; if Yes, then the Pharisees would have inflamed the ready jealousy of the masses.

were able to overturn the cherished opinions of the world. The Covenanters—under Cameron and Renwick were a feeble band, and yet, when every other voice had been hushed, and British liberty had been all but sacrificed, they maintained their protest until the nation slowly recovered her senses and finally hurled the apostate race of Stuart from the throne. God seems to have given us this as our special mission, with a far wider view of the truth than was vouchsafed to Cameron and Renwick, to testify with a deeper meaning for the crown rights of King Jesus. Oh that we may be correspondingly faithful to our trust! Men will despise and laugh us to scorn for our self-conceit. Be it so. Let us not put on a sanctimonious face, which will be saying to the world, "See what noble martyrs we are!" But like Paul, let us rather forget self and pain in our Master's work.

Brethren, we are thoroughly agreed as to the inadmissibility of State-Churches. They are not only unauthorised imitations of the Jewish theocracy, but caricatures of it. We are united in the solemn purpose, I trust, of maintaining with modesty and charity our protest against all secular and political acts by the Church of Christ, and in particular by the Church under the compact of the Revised Confession of 1788. How can we sanction the assumption of the right to set aside a compact without the consent of both parties? And this being determined, are we not now prepared, in the light of our own experience, to go a step further, by renouncing all claim, as preachers of the word, to say in our official capacity, in God's house, and on his holy day, what we cannot affirm in our Synods? Will we not resolve to preach only and simply the word of God? A larger liberty has been claimed and exercised among us, doubtless with the best intentions, but also with the most disastrous consequences. But on what ground? If the courts are to represent Christ, is not the preacher to do the same? And is not his act, if possible, more absolutely restricted, as it is the highest function of the Church? Surely there has been error among us in this regard. It will be well for us, as preachers of the word, to go just as far as it goes, and to stop just where it ceases, with regard to the so-called "topics of the day," and all the sciences, whether physical or

metaphysical, ethical or political. We thank God for our ancestors who framed the Westminster Confession as it was enacted by the Long Parliament, though the Parliament had no right to touch it. We thank God for our fathers in America, who, in 1788, amended that old Confession, and greatly improved it, by bringing it more nearly into harmony with the word of God. We thank him for his grace which enabled us, amid sore trials, to keep the records of our Church free from all secular and political action. May we not pray to be kept from uttering in our pulpits one word which is not his word?

WM. E. BOGGS.