



THE LIFE

*Bea B. Waifeld*

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OF

*from* Judge Samuel Miller Breckinridge

SAMUEL MILLER, D.D., LL.D.,

SECOND PROFESSOR

IN THE

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

AT PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY.

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BY

SAMUEL MILLER.

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L I F E  
OF  
SAMUEL MILLER, D. D., LL. D.

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PART THIRD.

PRINCETON.

1813-1850.

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CHAPTER TWENTY-FOURTH.

FIRST YEARS IN THE PROFESSORSHIP.

1813-1820.

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1. NEW SCENES AND DUTIES.

ONE of the most interesting portions of Dr. Miller's diary is that in which he records his removal to Princeton, and his resolutions upon entering on his duties as professor in the Seminary. A large part of the subsequent history of his life was but a development of the ideas of this paper; which, when first it fell under the eyes of survivors, seemed rather to recount, than to anticipate, thirty six years of academical labor.

'December 3d, 1813. This day I arrived in Princeton, to enter on the discharge of my duties, as Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. \* \*

'I feel that, in coming hither, I am entering on a most weighty and important charge. At this solemn juncture I

have adopted the following *Resolutions*, which I pray that I may have grace given me faithfully to keep.

'I. Resolved, that I will endeavor hereafter, by God's help, to remember more deeply and solemnly than I have ever yet done, that *I am not my own*, but Christ's servant; and, of course, bound to seek, not my own things, but the things which are Jesus Christ's.

'II. Resolved, that I will endeavor, by the grace of God, to set such an example before the candidates for the ministry committed to my care, as shall convince them, that, though I esteem theological knowledge and all its auxiliary branches of science *very highly*, I esteem *genuine and deep piety* as a still more vital and important qualification.

'III. Resolved, that I will endeavor, by the grace of God, so to conduct myself toward my *colleague* in the seminary, as never to give the least reasonable ground of offence. It shall be my aim, by divine help, ever to treat him with the most scrupulous *respect* and *delicacy*, and never to wound his feelings, if I know how to avoid it.

'IV. And, whereas, during my residence in New York, a very painful part of my trouble arose from disagreement and collision with a colleague, I desire to set a *double guard* on myself in regard to this point. Resolved, therefore, that, by the grace of God, while I will carefully avoid *giving offence* to my colleague, I will, in *no case*, take offence at his treatment of me. I have come hither resolving, that *whatever may be the sacrifice of my personal feelings*—whatever may be the consequence—I will not take offence, unless I am called upon to relinquish truth or duty. I not only will never, the Lord helping me, indulge a *jealous, envious, or suspicious* temper toward him; but I will, in *no case*, allow myself to be wounded by any *slight*, or appearance of *disrespect*. I will *give up all my own claims*, rather than let the cause of Christ suffer by *animosity* or *contest*. What am I, that I should prefer my own honor or exaltation to the cause of my blessed Master?

'V. Resolved, that, by the grace of God, I will not merge my office as a *minister of the Gospel*, in that of *professor*. I will still preach as often as my Master gives me opportunity and strength. I am persuaded that no minister of the Gospel, to whatever office he may be called, ought to give up preaching. He owes it to his *ordination vows*, to his *office*, to his *Master*, to the *Church of God*, to his *own character*, to the benefit of *his own soul*, to go on preaching to his last hour. Lord, give me grace to act on this principle!

'VI. Resolved, that, as indulgence in *jesting* and *levity* is

one of my *besetting sins*, I will endeavor, by the grace of God, to set a *double guard* on this point. The example of a professor before a body of theological students, in regard to such a matter, is all important.

‘VII. Where *so many clergymen* are collected in one village, clerical character is apt to become *cheap*; and it seems to me, that a peculiar guard ought to be set, by each one, to prevent this, by a careful, dignified, and sacredly holy example. Resolved, that I will endeavor, by the grace of God, to exercise special and prayerful attention to this matter.

In another connexion, and long afterwards, Dr. Miller wrote,

‘On coming to Princeton, in 1813, I resolved to begin a new course in regard to *Politics*. I determined to do and say as little on the subject as could be deemed consistent with the character of a good citizen:—to attend no political meetings; to write no political paragraphs; to avoid talking on the subject much either in public or private; to do little more than to go quietly and silently to the polls, deposit my vote, and withdraw; and, in the pulpit, never to allow myself, either in prayer or preaching, to utter a syllable from which it might be conjectured on which side of the party politics of the day I stood. True, indeed, on great national questions, such as arose at the commencement of our Revolutionary War, the clergy ought publicly and openly to take a side, as they generally did on that occasion—the Presbyterian clergy almost unanimously on the side of the Colonies. Still, I have no doubt that, even then, many of the ministers devoted themselves to *Politics*, both in the pulpit and out of it, to an extent, and in a manner, which were by no means dictated by the soundest evangelical wisdom.’

Dr. Miller’s uniform attention to the duty of voting has been already mentioned. To the close of his life he always, when it was possible, appeared seasonably at the polls, which he approached scarcely looking to the right hand or to the left, called out clearly and emphatically his own name—‘Samuel Miller’—though everybody knew it, deposited his ballot, and then, in the same way, with seldom another word, or at most only a quiet salutation to acquaintances, retired from the scene. He certainly never lost respect or influence, as either a man or a Christian minister, by this course: on the contrary, when, in after life, his familiar form and features, his head venerable with



early and later frosts, was seen approaching, the crowd, however excited, kindly opened the way for him, and testified, by at least a momentary hushed stillness, that his Christian patriotism and conscientiousness were never doubted. He was decidedly and consistently, as long as the writer can remember him, what would now be called "an old-line Whig."

Writing to the Rev. James Richards,<sup>1</sup> December 27th, after speaking of the journey to Princeton—in a heavy stage as far as New Brunswick; thence, on account of the bad roads, in a lighter vehicle, with a supplemental farm wagon for the weightier baggage—Dr. Miller says,

'Our accommodations here are full as comfortable as we expected, and even more so. And I have also the happiness to add, that the aspect of our seminary is more favorable than I calculated to find it, when I left New York.

'I am glad to hear of the exertions of your pious ladies. We stand in need of all the aid we can obtain; and I cannot but hope, that the great Head of the Church has much mercy in store for us, and that he will put it into the hearts of his people to give our institution ample support. Unless, however, more numerous, active, and efficient friends are raised up than have hitherto appeared, it must languish.

'\* \* I know it will give you pleasure to be told that the most perfect harmony and cordiality reign between him [Dr. Alexander] and myself; that the number of our pupils is twenty-four; that they generally discover an excellent spirit; that my health is gradually improving; that my labors here prove more pleasant than I had ventured to anticipate; that my Sarah seems happy in Princeton; and that the general aspect of things is promising.'

To aid the Seminary, and the great cause of ministerial education, for the promotion of which it had been established, societies were formed, especially by females, in many parts of the Church. Some of these were designed simply to raise money, by stated contributions from the members and otherwise, for the institution itself; others to raise money in like manner to support wholly, or in part, individual needy students; others to provide clothing for the same class. Altogether, these societies performed, especially during the infant years of the Seminary, and its

<sup>1</sup> D.D. from 1815. See 4 Sprague's Annals, 99.

earlier struggles, a most important work. Many young men were, humanly speaking, brought into the ministry, by such comparatively humble efforts; and the faith, and prayer, and zeal which these very efforts engendered were of incalculable benefit to the Church.

Dr. Miller had rented a dwelling in Princeton, with the design of going at once to house-keeping; but, for various reasons, he engaged board and lodging, upon his arrival, with Mrs. Ten Eyck, at the north-eastern extreme of the village, and remained with her until some time in the ensuing spring. Then he took possession of the rented house, which stood on the site of one yet standing, afterwards erected and occupied by Robert Voorhees, Esquire. But very soon he determined, if indeed he had not decided previously, to build a dwelling for himself. A written contract for its erection was duly executed on the 6th of July, 1814. This instrument, still extant in Dr. Miller's handwriting, was not more precise than a theological professor might be expected to make it; and although the contractor was to forfeit five hundred dollars, unless the house were completed by the first of April, 1815, the usual expedient of "extras" enabled him to extend the time, elude the penalty, and add a considerable amount to the stipulated cost. It seems to have required a new roof, within a year, or thereabout!

Dr. Alexander's residence, the house subsequently occupied by Francis Janvier, Esquire, was nearly opposite to Dr. Miller's new dwelling, which was the first building erected in connection with the Theological Seminary. The main edifice of the institution, one hundred and fifty feet in length, fifty in breadth, and four stories high, designed for recitation and library rooms, students' lodging rooms, a refectory, and apartments for the steward's family, was the next erection, and was not ready for occupation until the autumn of 1817, when about half of its interior was finished. Until this time, the professor's studies had been the recitation rooms; the students had found board and lodging where they could; and instructors and pupils had been brought into a very close and profitable intimacy. Meanwhile the latter had gradually increased in number to about thirty.

On the 26th of September, 1815, when the corner-stone of the Seminary edifice was laid, at five o'clock in the afternoon, the trustees of the College, who happened to be assembled for business, and were invited to witness the ceremony, went in procession to the place.

Dr. Miller, as we have seen, was ever warmly attached to his native State; yet, when settled in New York, and expecting there to spend his life, he became, in feeling and interest, a thorough New Yorker; even proposing, as a favorite literary project, to write a history of the State of his adoption. So too, on removing to Princeton, his new citizenship sat so naturally upon him, that no one would have supposed he was not a Jerseyman by birth. For the interests of New Jersey he felt as lively a concern, as he could well have felt for those of Delaware or New York. This was owing to the continued freshness and ever ready flow of his affections; prompting him to enter everywhere into the proper feelings of the place, the occasion, and the circumstances; and to his habit of regarding the whole Union as his country, and State lines as of subordinate importance. To theories of State rights and emotions of State pride he seldom gave much countenance. If Delawareans and Jerseymen may be thought to be little tempted in this respect, they have, at least, the greater reason to be thankful for not having been led into temptation, and for being freer, on that account, than some others, to cultivate an enlightened feeling of cosmopolitanism, and that love for the whole country, which should be nurtured and strengthened, not restricted and weakened, by State love. Just as home should be the training place, not the whole and ultimate, or even the chief, field of natural affection; so the State should be the school, not the theatre, of patriotism.

## 2. DR. ALEXANDER AND DR. MILLER.

Speaking of the Divine Spirit's influence in the establishment of the Theological Seminary, Dr. Boardman says,

“His benign agency is especially to be recognized in the selection of the original Professors. Upon them would depend mainly, under Providence, not only the character of this Seminary, but the character of future Seminaries to be established

in other parts of the Church, and, indeed, the character of our entire ministry as a body. Our Church can never be sufficiently grateful to God, that he so ordered events as to place the Institution in the hands of two men who were preëminently qualified for this very responsible trust; nor have we less cause for gratitude in the remarkable fact that they were spared to administer its affairs for so many years."<sup>1</sup>

The biographer of Dr. Alexander says,

"Dr. Miller brought with him a high reputation as a preacher, an author, and a Christian gentleman. He was about three years<sup>2</sup> older than his colleague, being accordingly in his prime of mental and bodily vigour. His name was widely known from his "Retrospect of the Eighteenth Century," and more recently from his defence of presbytery against the attacks of Doctors Hobart and Bowden. For many years he had maintained his post, with honour and esteem, in the First Presbyterian Church of New York. \* . \*

"In many particulars they [Dr. Alexander and Dr. Miller] were dissimilar; indeed two men of genuine piety could scarcely be found more unlike. Dr. Miller came from the training of city life, and from an eminently polished and literary circle. Of fine person and courtly manners, he set a high value on all that makes society dignified and attractive. He was preëminently a man of system and method, governing himself, even in the minutest particulars, by exact rule. His daily exercise was measured to the moment; and for half a century he wrote standing. He was a gentleman of the old school, though as easy as he was noble in his bearing; full of conversation, brilliant in company, rich in anecdote and universally admired. As a preacher he was clear without brilliancy, accustomed to laborious and critical preparation, relying little on the excitement of the occasion, but rapid with his pen, and gifted with a tenacious memory and a strong, sonorous voice; always instructive, always calm, always accurate.

"His colleague had received a lasting impress, in manners and labours, from a very different class of influences.<sup>3</sup> The inward principle of delicacy and refinement, the soul of true politeness, we think we may assert, was within him in high measure. Perhaps no man ever more respected the feelings of

<sup>1</sup> Tribute to the Memory of Dr. Miller, 12, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Not quite two and a half, having been born the 17th of April, 1772.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Alexander had been settled between five and six years only in Philadelphia, Dr. Miller about twenty in New York; but probably the habits, manners and general mould of both, as in regard to the latter has been before suggested, had been in a great measure formed enduringly, before their city pastorates commenced.

others. But he was not a man of rules. Eminent natural simplicity was his characteristic. If this led him to be careless or abrupt, at any time, he cared not for the inelegance, even when he grieved over any occasional offence. His studies and his way of life were singularly free from all constraint and plan. \* \* Never did he seem more at a loss than when called upon to lay down regulations for the hours, the employments, or the behaviour of others. Perfect liberty, as to time, pursuits, and even bodily movements, was almost his passion. \* \* In the pulpit, he was most himself when he was most truly extemporaneous; which perhaps was in the mind of the learned Chief Justice Kirkpatrick, when he said, with a jocose eulogy, "Dr. Alexander is the prince of Methodist preachers."<sup>1</sup>

After Dr. Alexander had been but a few months in Princeton, he instituted, for the Seminary students and all who chose to attend, a Sabbath evening service at his own house, though soon, for want of room there, he was obliged to transfer it to an apartment in one of the College edifices. Of this service Mrs. Miller has left the following reminiscences:—

'One of the most interesting positions in which Dr. Alexander's presented to my memory is that in which he frequently appeared, when I was first a resident in Princeton, in 1813-14, and when he had been there himself only a few months. The church may be said to have been in his house. \* \* a stagnant spirit rested upon even professors of religion. With all the embarrassments of a new situation, he began a little weekly meeting \* \* which, from a few at first, gathered in, from time to time, numbers sufficient to make it an object of feeling and conversation throughout the village. Few persons were more calculated to do good in such an effort; \* \* and from that time, I think, a peculiar religious work began in Princeton, which, though very small in the beginning, evidently grew until we were partakers, pretty largely, in the Spirit of revival which had been given, for several years, to various parts of our land. Both the College and the town long felt the influence.'

In the services thus described, Dr. Miller, to some extent, assisted his colleague; and though it might have been expected that the duties of his professorship would draw him away from the pulpit, if indeed any pulpit should be open to him, he appears to have preached, for some time after his arrival in Princeton, if not oftener than he did as

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 380, 1, 2.

a pastor in New York, at least quite as often. To the end of life he retained the most striking characteristics of his earlier delivery, though with a gradual abatement of animation and force; and he always had frequent opportunities, which he delighted to improve, of preaching the Gospel.

Until the beginning of the year 1826, the professors of the Seminary, with their families and students, the students occupying the gallery, worshipped in the College Hall, every Sabbath morning, taking turns with the President and professors of the College in conducting the services. Dr. Alexander's service already mentioned, and a service in the village church, divided at first the attendance in the evening; but, after the lapse of a few years, the former was abandoned, and all attended upon the latter, in which also the professors of the Seminary took a more or less regular part. With the beginning of 1826, a Sabbath morning service was commenced in the Seminary "Oratory," the professors preaching in turn, and their families partly attending there, partly in the village church. In 1834, this service was transferred to the new Seminary chapel, where accommodations had been provided for all the families connected with the institution; and here, thenceforth, all stately worshipped in the forenoon. The only organized churches, however, from first to last, were those of the village—originally, and for a long time, the First Presbyterian Church alone; where, in the evening of the Lord's day, with the temporary exception already adverted to, the worshippers from both Seminary and College attended divine service. But to the end, Dr. Miller, with his colleagues, was very frequently called upon to preach out of regular course, both in Princeton and in neighboring churches. Thus, taking at random the year 1835, we find from his 'Record of Preaching,' that he preached sixty-seven times, besides making a number of sacramental, monthly concert, temperance, and other addresses.

The first years of Dr. Miller's life in Princeton present little varied incident, little that is suited to biographical detail. They were years, necessarily, of laborious study in the line of his professorship, and earnest attention to all its new, untried duties. Dr. Boardman remarks,

"He had displayed a ripe scholarship, a minute acquaint-

ance with the annals of the early Church, and a capacity to vindicate the primitive form of ecclesiastical government, which clearly indicated him as a suitable Professor for the new Institution. He did not disappoint the hopes of the Church. The office to which he was called was one of weighty responsibility. The difficulty of meeting its requisitions would be great under the most advantageous circumstances; but in his case it was materially enhanced by the novelty of his position. No one had preceded him. He was not only to traverse the forest, but to break the path. Even an incompetent precursor would have lightened his task; but the entire burden of collecting, digesting, and arranging authorities, and framing a *curriculum* for his department, as well as filling it up, was devolved upon himself. He was without the assistance to be derived from suitable text books—indeed to this day there is no adequate text book in Ecclesiastical History. Entering upon the discharge of his duties under these and other serious embarrassments, it is impossible to withhold a tribute of admiration for the ability, wisdom, and energy he displayed in the prosecution of his work.”<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Miller was received into the Presbytery of New Brunswick, upon certificate from that of New York, at Princeton, on the 26th of April, 1814.

### 3. CORRESPONDENCE.

The following letter was written to Dr. Green on the 28th of February, 1814:—

‘Rev’d and dear Brother,

‘Hearing you say, this morning, that Mrs. Green took some claret with apparent benefit, and being desirous of contributing to her comfort by every means in our power, it has occurred to us that a bottle or two of good quality might not be unacceptable. Happening to have a little of a parcel that was considered sound and excellent, we beg your acceptance of the bottles herewith sent. If they should be found useful, we have two or three more at your disposal.

‘I am, my dear Sir, with earnest wishes for the comfort and speedy recovery of Mrs. Green, in which my wife and sister join,

‘Your affectionate brother,

‘Sam’l Miller.’ }

‘To Col. William Duane, Editor of the *Aurora*, a warm political newspaper printed in Philadelphia.

<sup>1</sup> Tribute to the Memory of Dr. Miller, 18, 19.

‘Sir,

Princeton, December 26, 1815.

‘The design of this letter is to request, that you will cease sending me the *Country Aurora* after the 31st instant.

‘As my political feelings have been gratified by the perusal of your paper, and would still dispose me to take it; and as the very handsome manner in which you have lately spoken of my brother-in-law, Mr. John Sergeant, has certainly not been unpleasant to me; perhaps I owe it both to you and to myself to state my reason for discontinuing my subscription. It is simply and solely this. The cause of “*Bible Societies*” and of “*vital religion*,” which your Gazette has so frequently ridiculed, and so studiously stigmatized, especially for near twelve months past, is a cause very dear to my heart, and very important, in my opinion, to the best interests of mankind. I can no longer consent to encourage a publication, which appears to me hostile to objects worthy of the highest veneration. If it be, as you suggest, that some distinguished individuals, both in Europe and America, who profess to be zealous friends of these objects, give too much reason to suspect that they have other and most detestable designs in view, it is to be deeply lamented; but I do not know that this ought to render “*Bible Societies*” or “*vital religion*” less precious in my eyes. Some of the warmest and ablest advocates of *civil and religious liberty*, both in our own country and in Europe, appear to me to be unprincipled men. But it never occurred to me that I ought to love the great and good cause which they profess to support, in any degree the less on account of their inconsistency. If such men, by their publications, or exertions, become instrumental in promoting the prevalence of correct principles or practice, I feel bound to be thankful for their aid, while I abhor or despise their character.

‘I write this, Sir, with a mind altogether free from personal animosity. If it should be the means of diminishing your *hatred*, or if *that* should remain the same, your *public abuse*, of institutions very dear to my heart, I shall be cordially gratified; and it will give me real pleasure again to take the *Aurora*, whenever I can perceive that it may come into my family, without my children being liable to see, in every page of a paper countenanced by their father, those objects, which he professes to love and promote, held up to ridicule and scorn.

‘I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

‘Samuel Miller.’

‘P. S. I scarcely need inform you that this letter is intended merely as a *private communication*.’

The real, clearly defensible, and very important princi-



ples of the foregoing letter, never more opportune or widely applicable than at present, seem to deserve here particular notice. 1. Whatever a publication may be in political character and principles, if its influence be unfavorable to "vital religion," Christians should unhesitatingly withdraw from it their patronage. Religious interests are of infinitely higher moment than mere political, or any other interests. All who help to support such a publication are partakers in its sins. 2. Though a man may suppose himself in no danger of contamination and injury from such a source, he cannot be insensible to the danger of his family, and of others, whom his example might lead to become readers of a work hostile to Christianity. 3. A jealous watch must be kept over all the reading of the youth under our control or influence, if we would not have our moral and religious teachings effectually counteracted and nullified; and over the issues of the periodical press, so numerous, so diffusive, so all penetrating and prevading, so attractive, and so insidious often, as they are, should a special jealousy be exercised. 4. The artifice of opposing and ridiculing religion itself, under the pretext of only condemning its inconsistent, hypocritical professors and advocates, is too transparent to deceive aught but wilful blindness.

With the Rev. John H. Rice,<sup>1</sup> of Richmond, Dr. Miller was permitted to form an intimacy which he always sincerely prized. To this a number of letters, which will be presented in the sequel, bear ample testimony. On the 28th of December, 1815, Dr. Miller wrote to him,

'I received your letter of the 23d instant, yesterday, with much pleasure. Not that I was glad of the disagreeable facts which it related; but it gratified me to find, that I was not forgotten by you. Though I am one of the most miserable correspondents in the world, it gives me great and peculiar pleasure to hear from valued friends, and such is the pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Richmond.

'The General Assembly, two years ago, appointed me their historiographer, and directed all the materials for the history of our church, which had been collected by their order, to be put into my hands. This, however, has not yet been done; they are all still in Philadelphia; so that I have not a single paper or document of the Assembly in my

<sup>1</sup> D.D. from 1819. See Maxwell's Memoir of Dr. Rice, and 4 Sprague's Annals, 325.

possession, and am not able to help you, in the least degree, on the subject concerning which you write; except by making some general statements, and giving some general assurances, which I am perfectly confident are correct.

‘From my life of Dr. Rodgers, (published near three years ago, and which you have probably seen,) you perceive that I have paid some attention to the history of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. From my knowledge of the subject, thus acquired, I feel confident in asserting—

‘I. That the Presbyterian Church in the United States has repeatedly been a *persecuted*, but in no single instance, a *persecuting*, sect. They were persecuted in the most distressing manner, in Virginia and New York, (as you learn from my life of Dr. Rodgers,) and in several other states, prior to the Revolution; but never have they been chargeable with encroaching on the rights of other denominations, or so much as attempting to bear hard on them. I should feel perfectly confident in defying any man or body of men, to produce a single example which had any such aspect.

‘II. The Presbyterian Church in the United States is so far from being a *sectarian* body, that I verily doubt whether there ever was on earth a body of Christians so extensive, and that included so much talent and wealth, that took so little pains to make proselytes, or that was so strangely negligent of all those arts, and cautions, and exertions, by which most other societies have endeavored, and are endeavoring, to build themselves up. They have, in no instance that I am acquainted with, ever *commenced* attacks on other denominations; and when attacked, have been rather slow and reluctant, than forward, to defend themselves. When they have distributed books, they have, in almost all cases, been of such a general and practical nature, as had no sectarian tendency. In fact the forbearance and liberality of our church, in this respect, has been thought by many of its members to be excessive, and worthy of blame; and is certainly, as I believe, without a parallel in the history of American churches.

‘III. The Presbyterian Church, in this country, has been uniformly friendly to *civil and religious liberty*. The conduct of their clergy and people, during the Revolutionary contest, is well known and highly honorable to them. And, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the same character has been displayed by them, under all circumstances, and at all periods, since. Nor has this fact been confined to America. It has been manifested in Geneva and Holland. And Mr. Hume bears decided attestation to it, when he says, that “The precious

sparks of liberty were kindled and preserved by the Puritans in England; and that to this sect, whose principles appear so frivolous, and whose habits so ridiculous, the English owe the whole freedom of their constitution."

'IV. The Presbyterian Church has never manifested the smallest disposition towards an establishment, or any peculiar claims or immunities in its favor. I have never heard of any judicatory of our church, greater or smaller, or of any individual clergyman or member, who has shown any disposition of this kind. And I am perfectly persuaded that no such instance, or anything that looks that way, can be produced. On the contrary, the Presbyterians were the principal, and the successful, opponents of the introduction of an American Episcopate, on account of its tendency to interfere with religious liberty; (as you will find in my life of Dr. Rodgers, pp. 186, etc.) and they were also the most influential opponents of a religious establishment, which was proposed to be incorporated with the first constitution of South Carolina. \* \*'

In 1816, it was in contemplation to establish, upon the basis of Dartmouth College, a complete university. The Rev. Thomas C. Searle, an alumnus of the Princeton Seminary, writing to Dr. Miller from 'Dartmouth University, August 29,' said,

'They have done me the honor to propose an appointment of Professor of Languages. It is, of course, an anxious inquiry with me, who are to be my associates, and who my head. The great object of all the gentlemen now is to find a general Head of the University. Those who are active have pressed me to do what my own inclination dictated; viz., to venture a question, confidentially, to yourself, whether in any circumstances and with any encouragement, you could consent to be the head of this institution, and unite, more than any other could, the hearts of all. That the dearest interests of religion are at stake is already known to you as my poor opinion. That, if properly occupied, this post offers a wide field of commanding influence is on all hands admitted. \* \* It is the uniform wish of all the friends of Dartmouth University, that you should be its head.'

To this letter Dr. Miller replied as follows:—

'My dear Sir, Princeton, September 7, 1816.

'Your letter of August 29th reached me on Thursday last. I have heard much of the revolution in Dartmouth University, and, it is scarcely necessary to say, have taken a

deep interest in the situation and prospects of a seminary so long dear to the friends of science and religion.

‘The intimation which you give me of the wishes entertained by the trustees of this important institution is as unexpected as it is flattering. I shall not attempt to express the sentiments of profound respect and gratitude with which this testimony of confidence has impressed my mind. In such a case, I have always considered reserve as improper; and shall, therefore, answer the question which you convey to me in the same spirit of direct undisguised frankness with which it is asked.

‘When I consented to remove from my pastoral charge in New York to the station which I now occupy, it was under a full conviction, that the office of professor in the Theological Seminary of our Church was better adapted to my particular taste and habits, and would be likely to afford me an opportunity of more extensive usefulness, than any other within my knowledge. This is still my undiminished conviction; and, of course, while this conviction remains, I could not conscientiously abandon my present place, for the presidency of any university, or college, in the United States.

‘I am, therefore, my dear Sir, after serious and mature deliberation, constrained to say, that even if the trustees of Dartmouth University were to do me the honor to give me a unanimous and affectionate call to the presidency of that institution, and were to connect with the acceptance of it every emolument and accommodation that heart could wish, I should still deem it most clearly and decisively my duty to decline accepting it.

‘While I thus explicitly request, that my name may be removed from the list of candidates for this responsible and honorable place, I pray that the Author of all wisdom may direct the venerable Board of Trustees to a more worthy object of choice; and render the important seat of science, of which they are the guardians, a richer blessing than ever to our beloved country and to the Church of God.

‘With respectful and grateful salutations to such of the friends of Dartmouth University as may have thought favorably of me for its head; and with the best wishes for your personal welfare and happiness, I am, dear Sir, with great regard,

‘Your affectionate friend and brother,

‘Rev. Thomas C. Searle.

Samuel Miller.’

#### 4. MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS.

In 1816, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Y. How fulfilled the intention, announced in his preliminary work of 1808, of

examining more thoroughly Dr. Miller's Letters on Episcopacy. As the reason for a temporary abandonment of his plan, he gives the appearance of "so full a refutation" from Dr. Bowden's pen; and as the reason for resuming it, Dr. Miller's renewal of the "attack;" by "publishing, in 1811, a sermon on the subject of lay elders; and, in 1813, a Life of Dr. Rodgers; both of which contain matter," he adds, "which the sincere Episcopalian must regard, not only as inaccurate in itself, but as very pernicious in its tendency."<sup>1</sup> To this work, entitled "A Vindication of the Protestant Episcopal Church," and addressed to Dr. Miller, he made no reply. Indeed, in the close of his second volume of letters,<sup>2</sup> he had fully declared his intention to lay down his pen, and give his opponents, if they claimed it, the last word.

The General Assembly of 1816 had appointed Drs. Romeyn, Alexander and Miller a committee to revise the Forms of Government and Discipline, and the Directory for Worship. In fulfilling this duty, Dr. Miller, though not the chairman, took a very prominent part. In 1819, the committee reported forms which were sent down for revision to the presbyteries. These were to return their suggestions to Dr. Miller, who was authorized to have the necessary number of copies of the report printed. In 1820, a report amended according to the suggestions made, was presented to the Assembly; by that body carefully considered and still further amended; then sent down for final action to the presbyteries, which, by a considerable majority, gave it their approval. The Assembly of 1821 ratified the decision of the presbyteries; and ordered the printing of the whole constitution thus amended, which has not been since materially altered.

Dr. Miller's duties in the Seminary were not so all-absorbing, that he lost his interest in other institutions for the advancement of learning. In 1816, a committee, of which he was chairman, was appointed by the Synod of New York and New Jersey, to consider and report upon an overture for the establishment of an African School, for the education of candidates for the ministry. The school was resolved upon, and a Board of Directors appointed, at

<sup>1</sup> Vindication, 393.

<sup>2</sup> P. 431.

the same sessions. The next year two scholars were reported as under tuition with the Rev. John Ford of Parshippany. Funds had been raised to the amount of \$825. The Synod's narrative of religion, in 1818, represents the school, with three pupils, as in a prosperous state, and promising to be eventually a great blessing. In 1819, the number under instruction had increased to seven; and for several years it was a very important business with Synod to provide for the interests of this institution. The proposal to establish the school is said to have come from "that remarkable servant of God, Samuel J. Mills."

Negotiations entered into with the Synods of Philadelphia and Albany, in 1818, designed to secure their coöperation in the support and management of this school, led to a new outbreak of the Hopkinsian controversy. The formula of subscription, already noticed<sup>1</sup> as prescribed for professors in the Theological Seminary, had been, from the first, as too stringent in their estimation, distasteful to those called Hopkinsians in the Presbyterian Church. The Synod of Philadelphia now proposed that the same formula should be subscribed by every theological teacher in the African School. This was warmly opposed by Dr. Griffin, Dr. Spring and others; and from the judicatories of the Church, the controversy came out into more public notice through the press. Finally, the Philadelphia proposition was rejected.<sup>2</sup> The same party which opposed, thus successfully, the application of the "New Test," as they called it, to the African School, were considered lukewarm, if not, as some of them undoubtedly were, actually hostile, to the Theological Seminary. This, of course, gave additional importance to the controversy.

Early in the year 1817, Dr. Miller sent, with a letter, to the Rev. Thomas McCrie, D.D., of Edinburgh, author of

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. I., pp. 356-7.

<sup>2</sup> Indebtedness should here be acknowledged, for a portion of this account of the African School, to the lately published "History of the New School," by the Rev. Samuel J. Baird, D.D. To that work, as also to his "History of the Early Policy of the Presbyterian Church in the Training of her Ministry, etc.," further reference may hereafter be made. They are very valuable contributions to our Church Annals, and, on this account, and for the sake of what may yet be expected, in the same line of investigation, from their accomplished author, it may not be amiss to query, whether he has not fallen somewhat into the "New School error" of claiming to judge the heart; and does not lack somewhat of that calm impartiality, so essential in a historian: from a mere biographer not quite so much is expected.

the "Life of John Knox," a copy of the two volumes of his "Letters concerning the Constitution and Order of the Christian Ministry." From Dr. McCrie's acknowledgment, the following passages are taken.

'Nothing could have given me greater pleasure than your esteemed letter, with which I was favored a few weeks ago. For several years I have desired your correspondence, and would have solicited that honor, but from a strong and culpable aversion to letter-writing, which I have suffered myself to contract, which has often led me to suspend my intercourse with those whose friendship I esteem, and, consequently, discourages me from forming new intimacies. If there is an individual across the Atlantic to whom I could promise to act a different part, I can sincerely say it is Doctor Miller, provided he shall be so kind as to stimulate my indolent temper by the continuance of his correspondence.

'Accept of my warmest thanks for the valued present of the two volumes of your work on the Episcopal controversy. From what you know of my sentiments and turn of reading, you can scarcely doubt of their giving me great pleasure. The character which I had heard of them made me anxious to possess the work, but the copy which you have sent is the first one I had seen. Urgent engagements have, as yet, prevented me from reading it with care, but I could not refrain from gratifying my curiosity by running through it; and the cursory glance that I have taken at it is sufficient to convince me of its merits. As far as I am yet entitled to judge, it is perspicuous and popular, and, at the same time, accurate and argumentative; and the author has shown himself as superior to his opponents in good temper and good manners, as in extensive acquaintance with the subject. I rejoice that the cause has found so able an advocate. I rejoice that, in America, there are men of talents and piety, so deeply imbued with the Presbyterian spirit, and so thoroughly impressed with a sense of the importance as well as the verity of Presbyterian principles. And I rejoice that a person of this description now fills the important situation of Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. And I hope that, while he continues to display a candid and a liberal spirit to Christians of a different persuasion, he will show the same firmness which he has already shewn, in maintaining, both practically and argumentatively, the integrity of the principles of his own church; and guard those under his care against agreeing rashly to strip themselves of their most honorable and valuable distinctions, that they

may pursue the phantom of an undefined and undefinable Catholicism.'

Dr. Miller was a member of the General Assembly of 1817, and took a prominent part in its action, when, for the first time, the "New Divinity," under the name of Hopkinsianism, was arraigned before that body. The Synod of Philadelphia, by resolution, and in its pastoral letter,<sup>1</sup> had pointedly condemned "Arian, Socinian, Arminian, and Hopkinsian heresies," and exhorted its presbyteries to take vigorous measures for their exclusion and suppression. Of the committee appointed to examine the Synod's records, Dr. Miller was chairman, and probably drew—beyond doubt approved—the report which was adopted, but was earnestly protested against by twelve members of the Assembly. As to certain parts of the pastoral letter, and a resolution, "which enjoins on the several presbyteries belonging to the Synod to call to an account all such ministers as may be suspected to embrace any of the opinions usually called Hopkinsian," the Assembly adjudges, "that while they commend the zeal of the Synod in endeavoring to promote a strict conformity to our public standards, a conformity which can not but be viewed as of vital importance to the purity and prosperity of the church," they "regret that zeal on this subject should be manifested in such a manner as to be offensive to other denominations, and especially to introduce a spirit of jealousy and suspicion against ministers in good standing, which is calculated to disturb the peace and harmony of our ecclesiastical judicatories. And whereas a passage in the pastoral letter above referred to appears capable of being construed as expressing an opinion unfavorable to revivals of religion, the Assembly would only observe, that they cannot believe that that venerable Synod could have intended to express such an opinion."<sup>2</sup> Probably this last sentence was a hypercriticism, but it exemplifies the sensitiveness on the subject of revivals, which has marked so many of the controversies that have agitated the Presbyterian Church.

That the earlier years of Dr. Miller's professorial labors were years of earnest and almost undivided attention to

<sup>1</sup> See Min. of Gen. Ass. (1789—1820.) 655. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Id. 653.



Seminary duties is manifest from the fact that, for so long a time, his strong inclination to authorship was held so completely in check. From the date of his Sketch of his brother Edward's life, until 1820,—about six years,—he published literally nothing but a brief Sketch of the Theological Seminary;<sup>1</sup> and, excepting his "Letters on Unitarianism," and "Letters on the Eternal Sonship of Christ," which were in a manner forced from him in 1821 and 1822, he gave to the press only a few sermons and lectures, with a pamphlet "Letter to a Gentleman of Baltimore," before 1827, when his "Letters on Clerical Manners and Habits" appeared. In almost any circumstances, the duties of a professor's chair must, at the outset, be very burdensome; but they were particularly so, as already suggested, in the state of theological literature at that time, and for the pioneers of theological seminary training in the Presbyterian Church of this country.

Dr. Miller's sister, Mrs. McLane, died on the 29th of October, 1817, and was committed to the grave in Philadelphia. Soon after his return from the funeral, we find him writing to his niece, Miss Patten, 'You can readily imagine some of the reflections which must have occupied my mind with the remembrance, that I was the last survivor of my father's children.' 'It seems to me as if another barrier were taken away between me and the grave; and as if I were approaching that narrow house with more rapidity than ever.' Colonel McLane had died about four years previously—on the 29th of August, 1813.

Dr. Miller's concern for the welfare of the College was scarcely less than for that of the Seminary; and as the affairs of the former were almost as much under his eye, yet not so much under his control, as those of the latter, it was extremely difficult to be at once faithful and delicately reserved in fulfilling the duties of a College trustee and of a friend to Dr. Green. The latter, in his diary, on the 10th

<sup>1</sup>"Sketch of the Rise, Progress and Present State of the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. To which is subjoined a Copy of the Constitution of the Seminary. Published by order of the Board of Directors, 1817."—Svo. Pp. 19. An enlarged edition was published in 1838—"A Brief History of the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church, at Princeton, New Jersey; together with its Constitution, By-Laws, etc."—Svo. Pp. 45.—This History was republished in the 10th volume of the Am. Quarterly Register, pp. 31, etc.

of August, 1818, says, "Dr. Miller made a communication to me in regard to the state of the College which alarmed and affected me much."<sup>1</sup> Dr. Green also mentions, without fixing any date, that "there was an agreement with the professors and students of the Seminary to pray daily, at eight o'clock in the evening, not only for \* \* a revival with us, but for a similar one in all the colleges of our country."<sup>2</sup>

##### 5. REMINISCENCES.

The Rev. William B. Sprague, D.D., so long pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church of Albany, kindly prepared, after Dr. Miller's death, the following reminiscences. One of the earlier students of the Seminary, having been matriculated in 1816, he was upon terms of particular intimacy with the professors; Dr. Miller followed him in his subsequent settlements and labors with affectionate interest; with very few of the alumni did he keep up so frequent a correspondence as with him; and certainly none of them manifested a kinder appreciation of Dr. Miller than he—did more to honor him while he lived, or has done more to honor him since his death.

‘My dear Sir,

Albany, March 1, 1853.

‘I could scarcely have been asked to perform a service in which I should have engaged with more alacrity, than in writing out my recollections of the lamented Dr. Miller. Not that these recollections are more extended than those of many of his other pupils, or that I had better opportunities than many others for observing his character; but I am sure that I yield to no one of them in affectionate reverence for him, or in the desire to honour his memory. From the first interview I had with him to the last hour of his life, I always felt that he was my friend; and I came, at length, to regard him as a friend whose head and heart I could trust with as little reserve as I ever felt in respect to any human being.

Dr. Miller must, I think, have taken rank, at a very early period, among the most distinguished clergymen of his denomination, or indeed of any other, in this country.

<sup>1</sup> Life of Dr. Green, 418.

<sup>2</sup> Life, 431.

Though I was brought up in a retired village in the heart of Connecticut, where, in my childhood, I used to know little that was passing beyond our own neighborhood, yet I scarcely remember the time, when Dr. Miller's name was not familiar to me, or when I was not accustomed to associate with it everything good and venerable. I distinctly recollect that when Dr. Griffin was to be installed in Park street church, Boston, in 1811, it was currently reported that Dr. Miller was to preach the sermon—a circumstance which was expected to give great additional interest to the occasion; and there was a general disappointment felt, when it was ascertained that he could not be there. The first time I saw him was in the pulpit of Wall street church, a few weeks before he resigned his charge to go to Princeton. I was then a member of the Sophomore class in Yale College, and had gone down to New York, with a view, specially, to pass the Sabbath, and listen to some of the distinguished preachers of the city. Having heard Dr. Mason in the morning, I went to hear Dr. Miller at three in the afternoon; and the moment I saw him, he struck me as quite a model of a man in his external appearance. When he began to speak there was something so calm and dignified, so bland, and gentle, and persuasive in his whole manner, that I was quite charmed with him; and the service throughout was of such a character as not only to justify, but greatly to confirm, my first impressions. It was a beautiful sermon that he preached—perhaps I may say, one of his most striking sermons; for I well remember that when I heard him preach the same several years after in the church at Princeton, it had lost none of its interest with me from the repetition.

‘The greater part of the year that succeeded my graduation in 1815, I spent in the neighborhood of Alexandria, Virginia, where I became intimately acquainted with that venerable old model of Christian simplicity and goodness, Dr. Muir.<sup>1</sup> He knew Dr. Miller intimately, and no man seemed to stand higher than he in his regards; and when I was about to return to New England, as I expected to pass through Princeton, Dr. Muir gave me a letter which was designed to procure for me the privilege of Dr. Miller's

<sup>1</sup> 3 Sprague's Annals, 516.

acquaintance. It turned out that I was unable to stop at Princeton, and, of course, did not then deliver my letter; but I had another letter to Dr. Romeyn of New York, which I did deliver, and which was instrumental of determining me to return to Princeton, to prosecute my theological studies. It was at the close of the fall vacation in 1816, that I joined the Seminary, and that my acquaintance with Dr. Miller commenced. On the morning of the first day of the session, I called at his study to deliver my introductory letters, (for I had one from Dr. Romeyn as well as from Dr. Muir,) and I can never forget the courteous and yet winning and affectionate manner with which he received me. He was evidently very much pressed with engagements, but he laid aside everything and sat down and conversed with me, as if he had nothing else to do; and so much was I impressed by his urbanity and the interest which he manifested in my welfare, that I left the room congratulating myself more than ever, that the question, at what seminary I should pursue my theological studies, had been decided in favor of Princeton.

‘As my acquaintance with Dr. Miller increased, my respect and affection for him increased also. The first point at which he came in contact with us officially was in the recitation room. As the Seminary was then in its infancy, I think my class did not consist originally of more than ten or twelve; and when he came to hear our recitations, he seemed like a father sitting in the midst of his family. As his instructions at that time were somewhat elementary, our recitations cost him no more effort than the reading of the Bible in his family devotions would have done; and yet he always seemed to have everything at hand that would illustrate, in any degree, the subject before us; and we all felt that we were in no danger of meeting with difficulties which he was not abundantly able to solve. His questions were always put with great directness and clearness, and were generally such as we *ought* to have been able to answer; but when, as sometimes happened, there was, on the part of the student, hesitation or perhaps absolute ignorance, the Doctor would always manifest the most considerate regard for his feelings, by giving the question a different turn, or perhaps asking another, or else by making some

explanation that would suggest the appropriate answer. It happened to our class, as I suppose to most others, that we were not all equally bright; and it was pretty clear that Dr. Miller was himself bright enough to make this discovery; for I think he generally took care to put the heaviest burdens on those who were best able to bear them.

‘A large part of the instruction which Dr. Miller communicated to us was, of course, by lectures. And here I always considered him admirable. I cannot say, that he had any great vivacity of manner, or that he was given to saying brilliant and startling things, which would be remembered and talked about afterwards; but his lectures were remarkable for exhibiting a full, clear and perfectly logical view of his subject. He had none of that miserable affectation of originality, which prefers a doubtful path to a beaten one, and which is never satisfied unless it is following some *ignis fatuus*, or gazing at a sky rocket. There was such perfect continuity of thought in his lectures, whether he read them or delivered them extemporaneously, and withal, his utterance was so distinct and deliberate, that it required nothing more than an ordinary memory, especially if assisted by brief notes, to retain a large part of what it would take him an hour to deliver.

‘I have already intimated that my first impressions were greatly in favor of Dr. Miller as a preacher; and I never liked him less after his preaching became familiar to me. He used, in my day, to preach every third morning in the College Hall; and then he generally, though not uniformly, had his discourse lying before him. He preached alternately with Dr. Alexander, on Sabbath evening, in the village church; when he either extemporized or preached memoriter, or, as I should rather think, more commonly united the two modes. I believe we generally listened to him with more pleasure when he read his sermon; for the style was always a little more perfect; and he read so admirably, that if one’s eyes had been turned away from him, he would hardly have suspected that he had been reading at all. His voice was not powerful, nor susceptible of very varied intonations; but it was exceedingly bland and agreeable; his gesture was not abundant, but it was always correct and sometimes highly impressive; his attitudes were

manly and dignified; and there was a devout and reverential air pervading his whole manner, that was altogether befitting the solemnities of religious worship. There was nothing that could be called specially imposing in his general style of delivery; and yet I have heard him utter single sentences with as much effect as almost any other man. I remember, for instance, in a New Year's sermon on the text, "How old art thou?" he related the anecdote of the Roman Emperor, reckoning with himself every evening in regard to the manner in which he had spent the preceding day; and who, when on one occasion he found that the day had very much gone to waste, cried out with bitter regret, "Oh, I have lost a day!" That exclamation, as he uttered it, vibrates upon my ear to this hour. I doubt whether Kean could have pronounced it more effectively.

'It is not necessary that I should say much of the general character of Dr. Miller's sermons, as so many of them have been published, that multitudes, who have never heard him preach, have still had the opportunity of judging of his mode of sermonizing. It always seemed to me, that he was one of the safest and best models in this respect that I have known. His sermons, like his lectures, were thoroughly methodical; they had a beginning, a middle, and an end; and the attentive hearer, after listening to one of them, would find that the substance of it was lodged in his memory, as material, if he were disposed thus to appropriate it, for devout meditation. I think there was no great originality in his sermons, especially those which were written out and read; they had not generally the appearance of being greatly elaborated; much less was there anything in them that approached to philosophical abstraction; but they were sober, practical, well considered exhibitions of divine truth; they were evidently the productions of a workman that needed not to be ashamed. A few of his discourses, however, made a much stronger impression upon me than the rest, particularly one on the doctrine of the Resurrection. I thought at the time, and still think, that I never heard that glorious subject treated in a more edifying and eloquent manner, than it was treated in that discourse. I recollect, some time after I left the Seminary, falling in with Governor Robinson of Vermont, and he mentioned

that he once heard Dr. Miller preach that sermon before Congress, and that it was listened to by the members with great attention and admiration.

‘One of the most noticeable things in this venerable man, pertaining to his connection with the Seminary, was the affectionate and paternal solicitude which he evinced for the welfare of the students. At the Sabbath afternoon conference which was held in the oratory, he was very regular and punctual in his attendance; and it was there especially that he met us with a father’s counsels, and brought out to us the ample treasures of his own Christian experience. He was accustomed also to converse much with the students in private in regard to their spiritual interests, and especially when there were any difficulties to be removed, or any wounded spirits to be administered to. In a case of dangerous illness, he would visit the room of the invalid with almost as much apparent interest, as if he had been visiting, in similar circumstances, the chamber of his own son. An instance of his very kind and considerate regard, of which I was myself the subject, now occurs to me. I had been quite ill for several weeks, and, by advice of the Professors, had determined to pay a visit to my friends in New England. Just as I was on the eve of commencing my journey, Dr. Miller sent me a bottle of very old wine, accompanied with a kind note, in which he expressed great concern for my health, and a wish that the wine might strengthen me to endure the fatigue of travelling. I do not know, whether, with the more stringent views of temperance which he subsequently held, he would have sent me *wine*; but I am quite sure that he would not have been unmindful of me, and that he would have sent me anything within his reach, which he had supposed would minister to my comfort.

‘I always thought that Dr. Miller’s social qualities were of the highest order. He talked a good deal; but nobody, I imagine, ever felt that he talked too much. His extensive and varied information, his large fund of amusing anecdote, his easy and flowing style of speaking, and his perfectly urbane and courteous manner, could not but render him a favorite in every circle into which he was thrown. He would not hesitate to reprove one for his faults; but

he did it with such manifest Christian sincerity and gentleness, that the reproof could scarcely fail to endear him to the offender. He had sometimes an inimitable way of hitting off the character of an individual in a few words, each word indicating a distinct characteristic. I remember, for instance, when I was about to leave the Seminary, to preach as a candidate for settlement at West Springfield, I asked him what sort of a man Dr. Lathrop was—then the aged pastor of the West Springfield church. He gave me his character in about six words; and as it subsequently opened upon me from an acquaintance with him, I found him to be precisely as Dr. Miller had represented. Dr. Miller had passed a few days with the old gentleman a number of years before, and had left a most agreeable impression upon him; which I found was not altogether without its advantage to *me*, as I carried Dr. Lathrop a letter from Dr. Miller, which he highly appreciated, and was fully disposed to honour.

‘I cannot forbear here to add, that I have had evidence that Dr. Miller was one of the most forgiving of mortals. I have heard him, more than once, talk about people who I knew had manifested towards him a most unreasonable hostility, and, in one or two instances, I believe, had sought to injure his character and usefulness; and I have sometimes watched to see, whether any expression of ill will, or even impatience, concerning them, would escape him; but never did I hear a word. On the contrary, I recollect one instance in which, after he had spoken in high terms of a certain individual, I said to him, “But I am surprised to hear you say that, Sir, for I thought he had treated you with great unkindness.” “Yes,” said the Doctor, “he did; but he was a highly respectable man, and I doubt not a truly pious man, notwithstanding.”

‘On leaving the Seminary I had no right to expect that my acquaintance with Dr. Miller would be continued in any other than the most general manner; but it turned out otherwise—it was my privilege to share largely in his offices of good will as long as he lived. Whenever I visited Princeton, his house was my home. Whenever I needed advice in respect to any matter of difficulty, he allowed me to consult him with the utmost freedom; and he never failed to throw



much light on the subject of my inquiries. Whenever he knew that I was in affliction, he was sure to communicate to me in some way the expression of his sympathy. Whenever I had any service, as I had in several instances, which it was particularly desirable that he should perform for me, I had only to communicate the request to him, to have it complied with. When I came from West Springfield to my present charge, he readily consented to preach my installation sermon; and did preach it greatly to the delight of a very large audience. In a work in which I have been engaged for some years past, commemorative of the more prominent deceased clergymen of this country, he manifested a deep interest; and continued, from time to time, to furnish me his recollections of his ancient friends, until very near the day when he himself became a subject for biography. Others, I know, have had a similar experience in respect to him. His large heart disposed him to serve his friends to the utmost—to do good to all as he had opportunity and ability.'

The brief remainder of Dr. Sprague's reminiscences, referring to Dr. Miller's last days, will appear on a subsequent page. The Rev. Francis McFarland, D.D., matriculated in 1817, in a letter of condolence to Mrs. Miller, just after her husband's death, said,

'There were three men towards whom I felt as towards no others on earth. The first was the Rev. Elisha Macurdy, who died a few years ago in Allegheny City, Pennsylvania; who was my spiritual father, and to whose advice and influence I owe it that I am in the ministry. The other two were Dr. Miller and Dr. Alexander. I regard it as a dispensation of divine Providence, for which I can never be sufficiently grateful, that I was led to prosecute my studies under the direction of those men. They were the only professors in the Seminary when I was a student. The students were then comparatively few, and we had more free intercourse with the professors than could be enjoyed when they became more numerous. I was probably the oldest student in the Seminary at the time; and whether it was on that account, or some other, I know not; but I often received from you and Dr. Miller distinguishing marks of kindness and confidence. More than once, when

you and he were to spend the night from home, have I been invited to spend it at your house, as the protector of your then young family. I was also allowed to visit you with a freedom rather becoming a relative than a stranger.'

#### 6. CORRESPONDENCE.

Mr. Rice commenced the Virginia Evangelical and Literary Magazine with the beginning of the year 1818, and turned to the professors of the Seminary at Princeton, as tried friends, for assistance. Writing to Dr. Alexander, who had been his theological preceptor in Virginia, on the 31st of December, 1817, he says,

"Will you try to enlist the zeal and talents of Dr. Miller in our behalf? We want the aid of his historical knowledge. All that we can find, concerning the rise and progress of the Presbyterian Church in this country, will furnish very acceptable matter for the Magazine."

Dr. Miller afterwards wrote to Dr. Rice,

'Rev'd and dear Sir, Princeton, December 14, 1818.

'I thank you for your letter of the 27th ult. Although I am a busy man, and withal a little lazy; and, of course, like the ghosts, seldom speak till I am spoken to, yet I can truly say, that a letter from you always does my very heart good. If I dared, on account of any return I am able to make, I would say, write frequently. As it is, I can only promise a hearty welcome to all you can write, at all times.

'It gives me unfeigned pleasure to know, that Virginia is more and more disposed to listen to the gospel message. And it certainly does not diminish my pleasure to hear, that many are particularly desirous of receiving it from Presbyterians. The calls for missionaries from every part of our country, are numerous and loud. What will be done to supply them I know not. May the Lord of the harvest send forth more laborers into his harvest!

'You will be disappointed, my dear Sir, if you expect any light from me, upon the subject on which you are to report to Presbytery—I mean the subject of licensing *exhorters* and *catechists*. I have no historical information to give; nor do I know where to find any that is *ad rem*. Perhaps the best series of facts applicable to this subject is that which is furnished by the history of some portions of the Independent Church, and these facts, I suspect, would not be very creditable to the practice of lay-preaching and exhorting.

‘On the whole, if I were on the committee to report on this subject to the Presbytery of Hanover, I should be disposed to give an answer adverse to the proposed measure. I should say, such a measure would be *unconstitutional*—that is, our constitution makes no provision for it; nor do I think the Scriptures make any; and we profess to consider them our rule of faith and practice. The Scriptures, indeed, direct all Christians to “exhort one another daily,” “lest any be hardened, etc.,” but this, I take it, is something different from public exhorting, and that in virtue of an ecclesiastical license.

‘And to me it appears still more decidedly *inexpedient*, than it is unconstitutional. All that belongs to private teaching, or that which it is lawful for a private Christian to perform, and which does not encroach on the ministerial office, may be done, by the persons in question, without your license as well as with it. And anything beyond that they ought not to do even with a license. If you ask me, how I will draw the line between private and public teaching, I frankly confess, I cannot draw it. Nobody doubts that a private Christian may catechize or instruct, in a parlor, or in a school-house, a dozen people, young or old, who are disposed to listen to him. If he may thus address a dozen, why not three dozen?—why not six dozen? And, if he may do this standing on the floor of the apartment, why not do it standing on a platform, or behind a desk, or in a pulpit? The truth is, I find it one of the hardest things in the world to draw the line between private and public teaching; between that which an ordinary Christian may do, and that which none but a licentiate or minister ought to attempt. I am a warm friend to private Christians being much engaged in the business of catechising, and private teaching and exhorting. But I think everything that properly falls into this department of instruction had better be performed without the license of a presbytery than with it; because, with such a license, publicly avowed, it will appear to the people more like public preaching than otherwise; and no explanation will be sufficient to prevent the misconstruction. And, if any little transcending of proper limits should ever occur, will it not be better that it should take place in the hands of a man not licensed by the presbytery, than in the hands of one clothed with any kind or degree of authority? Thus I have hastily and crudely thrown out my thoughts on this subject as they arose. I am conscious they are worth nothing to a mind like yours. But such as they are you have them.

‘With respect to the Magazine, I think that it is conducted not only well, but very honorably. If I were not writing to

the editor, I should say more. But, if you knew how oppressed and borne down I am with the duties of my office, and how perfect a stranger to a leisure half hour, you certainly would not propose my writing for it.'

The following letter was written to Mrs. Valeria Fullerton, widow of R. Fullerton, Esquire, and fifth daughter of the Rev. Dr. Elihu Spencer, and, therefore, an aunt of Mrs. Miller, who had moreover, at one time, before marriage, resided with her.

'My dear Madam, Princeton, December 25, 1818.

'Having a leisure hour to-day, which I have not before had since my return from Philadelphia, I seize the opportunity to assure you of our continued sympathy, and our affectionate recollection.

'We have cherished the hope, until within a short time, that we should have the pleasure of seeing you in Princeton, before the severity of Winter should set in. But we now fear this hope must be given up for the present season. I trust it is unnecessary for me to say, that we should have been greatly gratified to see you; and that we shall hope for that pleasure as soon as the opening Spring will allow you to travel.

'Though we have known what it was to lose a beloved son; yet we are aware that we cannot enter into all your feelings. We have a number still left: your all has been taken. But, blessed be God! though this is the case with respect to children, there is a friend left infinitely better than any earthly relative can be. Our hope and prayer is, that you may find a gracious God, even your father's God, a present help in every time of trouble; and that, even in tribulation, you will be enabled to rejoice in Him with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

'I have no wish, my dear Aunt, to represent your loss as less than it really is. It is truly and unspeakably great. But my wish is to turn your mind to the numerous mercies which have attended this bereavement, and which furnish ground for the deepest thankfulness; and, especially, when streams of earthly comfort are dried up, that your views may be directed to that infinitely better Friend, who gave himself for us, that whosoever believeth on him might have everlasting life; and in whom is all our hope as sinners. If it should please God, by taking away your dearest earthly relative, to give you clearer views than you have ever had before of the Saviour's glory and excellence, and to lead you to an unreserved and affectionate dedication of yourself to him, who styles himself emphatically the "Consolation of Israel," you will have reason to say with

one of old, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." I hope that it will be your daily prayer that this may be the blessed result. I can say, with that confidence which experience alone can give, that the best, nay, the only refuge, under bereavement and sorrow, is a throne of grace and a covenant God.

'My dear Sarah thinks and speaks much of you; and sometimes has even talked of going down to Philadelphia, and bringing you up with her to Princeton. But the severity of the weather and the care of eight children have prevented. She and I are both of opinion, that if you could make an effort to stir a little about the house, and attend, in a moderate degree, to your domestic affairs, it would be of use to your health and spirits. Forgive this suggestion. It is made from the sincerest desire to promote your comfort, and from some experience of the nature of trouble, and of those things which are calculated to cherish and continue it.

'Let us hear from you soon; and recollect that it will always give us great pleasure to receive your commands.

'That our Heavenly Father may bless and comfort you, and give you strength under all your trials, is the unfeigned prayer of your affectionate niece, and of him who, with the sincerest regard, is

'Affectionately yours, \* \*'

Dr. Samuel Stanhope Smith, who had retired from the presidency of the College in the autumn of 1812, after filling that office for more than seventeen years, died in Princeton on the 21st of August, 1819. "His remains were interred near those of his venerable predecessors, amidst a larger assemblage of mourners, inhabitants and strangers, than was ever before seen, on a like occasion, in the village of Princeton." "The students of the Theological Seminary preceded the corpse. The two professors of this institution, and four clerical members of the Board of Trustees bore the pall." The students of the College walked as mourners. Dr. Miller, by request of the College trustees, prepared the Latin epitaph which was inscribed upon the tomb.

## 7. EDUCATION SOCIETIES.

In 1815, *The American Education Society* was formed in Boston, and its founders, like those of Andover Theological Seminary, seem fully to have expected to include the Presbyterian, as well as the Congregational, Church in

their operations. But, in the Presbyterian Church, there was a growing jealousy of New England Theology, and New England fraternization; and an education society of its own was freely talked of in various quarters. The Professors of the Seminary at Princeton had, for more than a year, entertained and debated such a project, and, in the first week of October, 1818, it was brought before the Presbytery of New Brunswick, to which they belonged; but, after an interchange of views, definite action was deferred, that, at the next meeting of the Assembly, a society for the whole Church might be organized. When, two weeks later, the Synod of New York and New Jersey met, a like project was suggested to one of the Professors, and an immediate organization urged, on the ground, that the American Education Society was about to send an agent to the South to solicit funds, which ought, properly, to be controlled for the sole benefit of Presbyterianism. Dr. Alexander and Dr. Miller then consented to attend a meeting in New York, where the Synod was in session, to take immediate measures for the formation of a society. A committee appointed at this meeting prepared a Constitution, which was reported to another meeting held at New Brunswick, on the 26th of November, where and when an organization was effected under the title of *The Education Society of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*. The plan, however, of this organization, originating in New York City, and insisted upon, in spite of the expostulations of a minority, including the Princeton Professors, was found to be, like the position of New York between Philadelphia and Boston, a half-way affair between Presbyterianism and Congregationalism. Particularly, the authority, and even the influence of the General Assembly were provided against, and, on the strange plea of irreconcilable theological differences in the Presbyterian Church, provision was made for the academical training only of candidates, whose theological training was thus virtually left to the Boston Society. Protesting against these and other features of the organization, Dr. Alexander and Dr. Miller courteously withdrew from the meeting.

Meanwhile, in the Synod of Philadelphia, assembling simultaneously with that of New York and New Jersey,

originated a proposition to form an education society of a more thoroughly Presbyterian stamp. In this measure, the Professors of the Seminary now heartily concurred; and, on the 17th of December, *The Education Society of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, under the care of the General Assembly*, was formed in the City of Philadelphia, providing for the theological as well as academical training of candidates, and for strict amenability to the Church. The Constitution and By-laws were prepared by a committee consisting of Drs. Janeway, Neill, Wilson, Green, Alexander and Miller, and the Rev. James Patterson.

Overtures were now made, though irresponsibly, by a certain minister in New York, "to the gentlemen in Princeton," for a reconciliation between the two schemes; but these overtures not meeting their views, and being without real authority, were disregarded. Of this, and of the whole course of the Professors of the Seminary, the Rev. James Richards, D.D., of Newark, complained, heavily, in a printed circular, to which Dr. Alexander and Dr. Miller replied, in another circular, dated the 12th of February, 1819, and evidently from the pen of the latter, whose signature also stands first. The whole Princeton circular is most suggestive of the differences and difficulties which were, already, agitating the Presbyterian Church, and forming gradually within it two hostile parties, which, about five or six years later, began to be designated as *Old School* and *New School*. Subsequently, the Philadelphia Society and that of New York had some correspondence relating to reconciliation; but it resulted in nothing; their differences were too serious for adjustment, embracing, as they did, in a shape already quite distinct, the whole controversy, which, from this time, became so earnest, between the advocates of church boards on the one hand, and of voluntary societies on the other. Already, too, both parties recognized the existence of doctrinal diversities lying at the foundation of all these ecclesiastical troubles; and just here, particularly, we find the New-School confessing, that these diversities of belief were so great as to forbid the harmonious union of the two parties in the Presbyterian Church, in any scheme of theological education!

“We were told,” says the Princeton circular, “by the majority, [at the New Brunswick meeting,] that this [the exclusion of the theological training] was considered, by the framers of the Constitution, as one of the most essential features of the whole plan; that there were known to be differences of theological opinion among us; and that, unless we left out the theological part of education altogether, it would be impossible to proceed harmoniously. We were both surprized and grieved to hear an argument of this kind introduced. \* \* The majority, however, persisted in this course of discussion, and repeatedly avowed their determination to act with reference to these differences of opinion in forming the proposed society. \* \*

“We deeply regretted, from the beginning, that party considerations should have been brought into view on this subject. We still regret it. But since it has been done and persisted in, by our Brethren, we hope it will be offensive to none, if we most respectfully offer a few queries, founded on the acknowledged fact, that there are differences of opinion in our church:—Was it unreasonable to doubt whether Brethren *all* from *one neighborhood*, and, with respect to theological opinions, *all*, excepting a single individual, *of one party*, were, or could be, qualified to form a Constitution adapted to our whole Church? Of those who finally adopted the Constitution, was there *a solitary individual*, who did not belong to that party? Was it unreasonable in those, who, though a small minority at the meeting in question, sincerely believed that they represented the sentiments of a large majority of our Church, to wish that an opportunity might be afforded for the deliberate and fair expression of the opinion of the whole Church? Was it unreasonable in the minority, when they well knew, not only that a great and powerful Education Society was in full operation in New England; but also that another, no less powerful, and perhaps more rich, had also been organized in the state of New York, and in the bosom of that part of our Church;—was it unreasonable, that on this, as well as on other accounts, they should think it highly expedient to carry the permanent seat of our Society at least as far south as Philadelphia? Would the minority have been faithful to the Church of which they are members, if they had either concurred in the measures pursued, or been silent, when they verily thought both the interests and wishes of a great majority of that Church were not consulted? Did it “evince a disposition to have everything in our hands,” that we were unwilling to become subservient to a plan, which, however honestly intended, we were persuaded, in



its operation, would be far from being either impartial or beneficial?"

Among the propositions made by the Philadelphia, to the New York, Society, pending their negotiations, was this:—that each of the Societies should request the next General Assembly to appoint an Education Board for the whole Church, to which each of them might be a mere auxiliary. This proposition was, of course, rejected; but the Assembly of 1819, did, nevertheless, appoint such a Board; though, through adverse influences, it was left so powerless, that, for five years, it accomplished next to nothing; and then had so little efficiency imparted to it, that, at the end of seven years more, one of its opponents, a member, however, of a committee upon its affairs, "contemptuously remarked, that the Board was dead, and it would be well to leave its burial to the Philadelphia brethren." But the Philadelphia brethren, "having received such a charge," nevertheless found life in the body left for dead, and happily resuscitated it to do, as it has been doing ever since, a noble work.

Before the meeting of the Assembly, the Presbytery of New Brunswick had determined to form an Education Society, auxiliary to the general Society organized in Philadelphia. Drs. Alexander and Miller were appointed to draft the Constitution, which they reported in October, 1819.

#### 8. CORRESPONDENCE.

In January, 1820, we find Dr. Miller writing to Dr. Rice,

'Our Seminary is going on tolerably well. The number of students is sixty-nine;—larger than we ever had before. But with respect to funds, our situation and prospects are gloomy enough;—quite enough so to alarm us thoroughly, if we had not a confident persuasion, that He who is able to take care of it, and provide for it, will not suffer it to sink. We cannot hope that its affairs, in this respect, will be materially bettered very soon. But *the Lord will provide*. We do not admit any other thought. It is good to be poor and pinched. Somehow or another, I find that, at such a time, we are more apt to look upward, and feel our dependence, than in other circumstances.

'I have been thinking a little, my dear Brother, respecting the state of your mind as to the "opening sermon," in May

next; and the result of my cogitations is this. If that service were about to devolve on me, I should certainly, with my present views, take *conciliatory* ground, and preach a sermon the object of which should be to promote *harmony* and *love*. I have even said to myself, 'If I were about to preach on that occasion, I would select some such theme as the following:—*"The objects which ministers of Christ ought to have in view in coming together in their general councils."* I have not thought of a text; but some one connected with the Synod of Jerusalem might answer, or fifty others. Among other things, I should say, they ought to come together, to strengthen each other's hands, to warm each other's hearts, to become more and more united in counsels and exertions, to mingle lights, etc. etc. Oh when shall Synods and General Assemblies come together and deliberate in such a manner as not to realize the complaint of Gregory Nazienzen concerning them?

'One thing I will venture to hint. Are you not aware that our Virginia brethren, under God, have much in their power respecting the future destiny of our Church? We ought not it split. I hope we shall not. But, if we keep together wholesomely and comfortably, I think it will be in consequence of a kind Providence's making use of the candour, impartiality, and influence of the ministers of your Synod, to mediate and moderate between the parties. Our Yankee brethren, I believe, have, in general, good feelings towards you, and will see you exert influence without pain.'

Dr. Rice's sermon, at the opening of the Assembly, on the 18th of May, was from Romans xiv. 19: "Let us therefore follow after the things that make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another."

The Seminary, to the condition of which the foregoing letter refers, was steadily increasing in the number of its students, but was constantly and painfully embarrassed for funds. The Board of Directors issued a circular in September, 1819, when the number of students exceeded fifty, setting forth the necessities of the Institution, but did not succeed in awakening any great degree of liberality. The First or highest, class of that year in the Seminary resolved to found a scholarship, in regard to the establishment of which the reviewer of Dr. Alexander's Life, in the Biblical Repertory,<sup>1</sup> remarks,

"Sometimes a state of real enthusiasm was produced by a

<sup>1</sup> For 1855. p. 153.

lecture [of Dr. Alexander's] which seemed to dissipate the darkness that hung over some difficult subject. On one occasion of the kind referred to, the late William Nevins, D.D., of Baltimore, loved and admired by all who knew him, came to the room of two of his classmates, and said, "Brethren, it is a shame, that we should enjoy such advantages, and do nothing to secure to others the same privileges. Our class ought to endow a scholarship." This was the origin of the scholarship of 1819. When a committee of the class waited on Dr. Miller to inform him of what they proposed to attempt, Mr. Nevins in his frank manner told him of the occasion of the movement; when the holy man, with tears in his eyes, lifted up his hands, and said, "My young friends, I do not believe such a man as Dr. Alexander walks the earth."

On the appointment of Dr. Miller, in 1813, the two professors "divide the whole course of instruction, prescribed by the plan of the Seminary, between them. But the Assembly which met in May, 1820, finding that the health" of Dr. Alexander, "as well as his other duties, did not admit of his longer continuing to conduct the instruction in the original languages of Scripture, resolved to authorize the Professors to appoint an assistant teacher of those languages. And to this office Mr. Charles Hodge, a native of Pennsylvania, and then a licentiate under the care of the Presbytery of Philadelphia \* \* was soon afterward accordingly appointed. By the Assembly which met in 1822, he was elected Professor of "Oriental and Biblical Literature," and was solemnly inaugurated in the following September."<sup>1</sup>

The recommendation of a subject to Dr. Rice, for his General Assembly sermon, evidently had regard to the already distracted state of the Presbyterian Church. The evil which Hopkinsianism was working within its bounds, had manifested itself in the division of the Young Men's Missionary Society of New York, on account of the rejection of the Rev. Samuel H. Cox, as a missionary, because of his Hopkinsianism; in the "New Test" troubles; in the controversy about a Board of Education; and in various other disagreements and difficulties.<sup>2</sup> Firmly as Dr. Miller had resisted the effort to commit the training of Presbyterian candidates for the ministry to irresponsible

<sup>1</sup> Brief Hist. of Theol. Sem. (1838,) 26, 7.

<sup>2</sup> See Dr. Eaird's Early Policy of the Presb. Church, 17.

and unfriendly organizations, he was, throughout, an earnest advocate of peace, whenever he did not regard the purity and order of the Church as endangered. His kindly feelings, and intimate friendship with some of those whose theological aberrations gave most alarm, may naturally have blinded him to evils already threatened, and afterwards more clearly developed.

The letter, from which the following extracts are taken, was written on the 9th of February, 1820, to the Rev. Jonathan Freeman, of Bridgeton, New Jersey,

‘You may rely upon it, my dear Brother, that we have a deep impression of the importance of endeavouring to build up the “waste places” in West Jersey, and every disposition to furnish all the means in our power. But where Missionaries are to be had, is a question which distresses and perplexes us, whenever it is asked. All we can say is, that we hope *the Lord will provide*. \* \* Mr. G. is, I believe, a decided *anti-Hopkinsian*. Mr. B., perhaps, may be a little inclined to the *Novanglian* speculations. \* \*

‘With respect to your question about the doctrine of Universal Salvation, I state the following fact. In the year 1792, this question was introduced into the General Assembly from the Synod of the Carolinas—“Are they who publicly profess a belief in the doctrine of the universal and actual salvation of the whole human race, or of the fallen angels, or both, through the mediation of Christ, to be admitted to the sealing ordinances of the Gospel?”

“The Assembly determined that such persons should not be admitted.”<sup>1</sup>

‘I remember to have heard Dr. Green and others remark, that considerable stress was laid upon the word *publicly*; and that if a member, already in the communion of the Church, should be known to entertain such sentiments, but to keep them pretty much to himself, it might be better to let him remain undisturbed. And my opinion, on the whole, is, that, in most cases, this course would be the best. I say, in most cases, because some cases may be so peculiarly and strongly marked, as manifestly to render a different course expedient. With regard to *receiving* a person to membership, who is not yet in the Church, while he is known to be a Universalist in sentiment—I should certainly be very unwilling to do it. Such a step would, in my opinion, be very injurious in its tendency. For, although we are not required to make all our private members

<sup>1</sup> Minutes 1792, p. 60. Reaffirmed 1794, p. 86. See Baird's Dig., (1856,) 32.

subscribe the Confession of Faith, formally and explicitly; yet the doctrine in question appears to me so peculiarly pestiferous, that I cannot help believing that we ought to be especially careful to exclude it from our church.

‘I cannot recollect any example of the doctrine of Universal Salvation being taught by any distinguished man previously to the time of Origen in the 3d century.

‘In haste I am, Rev’d and dear Sir,

‘Respectfully and affectionately, your friend and brother,  
‘Sam’l Miller.’

The following paragraph is from Mrs. Miller’s diary:—

‘Friday, March 10th. I took up my cross when I first began to pray in our family, in the absence of my husband, about fourteen years ago; and the Lord was pleased to give a great reward. Since that time, I have been called to several little trials in this way, by the addition of a relative or acquaintance now and then on such occasions, but never any very painful. I have some impression that my faith and resolution are to be proved more decidedly in time to come.’

To Miss Patton, on the fifth of June, 1820, on the eve of her marriage to John Wales, Esquire, of Wilmington, Delaware, Dr. Miller writes,

‘You may suppose it was with no small interest that I heard, in a pretty direct manner, several weeks since, that you were on the eve of being married, and now receive a confirmation of the report from your own pen. My first wish, my dear Ann, is, that the connection which you have in view may take place under the smiles of Heaven, and be made largely to promote your temporal and eternal happiness. From the truly respectable character of Mr. Wales, I am led to indulge very pleasing anticipations; but, after all, however flattering every earthly prospect and calculation, I hope you and I shall always recollect, that the blessing of God only can make us truly happy. \* \*

‘Your aunt has been, for several months past, in very delicate health. For restoring and confirming it, I design, with the leave of Providence, to set out, to-morrow morning, on a journey to New England with her. We propose to travel in the steam-boats and stages, and to be absent about three weeks. This movement, which has been long planned, and with which several purposes are connected, will render it impracticable for me to be in Delaware on the 15th instant. It would give me great pleasure to be present and to solemnize your nuptials; but, in the circumstances in which I am placed, I can do no

more than send forward in this letter, by way of anticipation, to you and Mr. Wales, my best wishes and very cordial benedictions.'

Dr. and Mrs. Miller took their contemplated journey to New England, and we find him preaching twice on the Sabbath, June 11th, at Dorchester, doubtless for his friend, Mr. Codman. They called during this journey, upon the Ex-president, John Adams, to whom Dr. Miller wrote after his return as follows:—

'Princeton (N. J.), June 30, 1820.

'Honoured and dear Sir,

'When I had the honour and pleasure of an interview with you, at Quincy, a few weeks ago, in company with Mrs. Miller, we spoke of her brother, John Sergeant, Esquire, a member of the House of Representatives of the United States, and of the speech which he delivered, some time since, in that body, on the Missouri question.

'I hardly need say, that it gave me great pleasure to hear you speak, as you did, of the character of that gentleman, and of his efforts to serve his country on that interesting occasion. I do myself the honour to send herewith a copy of his speech, of which I beg your acceptance.

'It is not improbable that you have seen it before. If so, I shall still attain one of my purposes in sending it, which is to testify my profound and filial respect for one of the most illustrious fathers and benefactors of my country; and also to express the high gratification I feel, in adverting to the relationship, however distant, between your family and mine, which you have been pleased to do me the honour repeatedly to recognize in our different interviews.

'In the year 1813, my residence was transferred from the city of New York to this place, by an appointment of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States to a professorship in their Theological Seminary. A pamphlet, entitled "A Sketch, etc.," which I do myself the honour to inclose with the other, will probably give you all the information concerning the rise, progress and present state of that institution which you may desire to receive.

'It is more than possible, however, that a mind so enlarged and active as yours may feel some curiosity to know the general character of our Seminary as to theological doctrine. We stand on the old Calvinistic ground of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, as exhibited in their Confession of Faith and Catechisms: and, although this ground may not entirely coin-

cide with that on which you stand ; yet I have no doubt you will do us the justice to believe that we are sincere and honest in our intentions.

‘Thus much I have said, my highly venerated Sir, not for the purpose of entering on theological discussion, but for the purpose, solely, of giving some account of myself to one who, I know, approves frankness, and who has been pleased to honour me with some portion of his regard.

‘Mrs. Miller unites with me in most respectful salutations to you and your family.

‘That your declining years may be gilded with more and more enjoyment of the best kind ; and that we and ours may finally, through the merits of our exalted Redeemer, be prepared to spend a blissful eternity together, is the humble prayer of, honoured Sir,

‘Your most obliged and most respectful

‘friend and servant,

‘Honourable John Adams.

Sam’l Miller.’

Dr. Miller received the following answer—evidently written by an amanuensis, although signed, with a tremulous hand, by Mr. Adams himself:—

‘Dear Sir,

Monteville, July 7th, 1820.

‘You know not the gratification you have given me by your kind, frank, and candid letter. I must be a very unnatural son, to entertain any prejudices against Calvinists or Calvinism, according to your Confession of Faith ; for my father and mother, my uncles and aunts, and all my predecessors, from our common ancestor who landed in this country two hundred years ago, wanting five months, were of that persuasion. Indeed I have never known any better people than the Calvinists. Nevertheless I must acknowledge that I cannot class myself under that denomination. My opinions, indeed, on religious subjects ought not to be of any consequence to anybody but myself. To develop them, and the reasons for them, would require a folio larger than Willard’s Body of Divinity. And after all I might scatter darkness rather than light. Before I was twelve years of age, I necessarily became a reader of polemical writings of religion as well as politics ; and for more than seventy years I have indulged myself in that kind of reading. As far as the wandering, anxious, and perplexed kind of life which Providence has compelled me to pursue, would admit, I have endeavored to obtain as much information as I could of all the religions which have ever existed in the world. Mankind are by nature religious creatures. I have found no nation without a religion, nor any people without the

belief of a Supreme Being. I have been overwhelmed with horror, to see the natural love and fear of that being wrought upon by politicians to produce the most horrid cruelties, superstitions and hypocrisy—from the sacrifices to Moloch, to those of Juggernaut, and those of the Kings of Whydah and Ashantee. The great result of all my researches has been a most diffusive and comprehensive charity. I believe, with Justin Martyr, that all good men are Christians; and I believe there have been and are good men—sincere and conscientious—in all nations. That you and I shall meet in a better world, I have no more doubt than I have that we now exist on the same globe. If my natural reason did not convince me of this, Cicero's Dream of Scipio, and his essays on Friendship and Old Age would have been sufficient for the purpose. But Jesus taught us, that a future state is a social state, when he promised to prepare places in his Father's house, of many mansions, for his disciples.

'By the way, I wonder not at the petition of the Pagans to the Emperor, that he would call in and destroy all the writings of Cicero, because they tended to prepare the mind of the people, as well as of the philosophers, to receive the Christian religion.

'My kind compliments to Mrs. Miller; and thank her for the obliging visit she made me. I interest myself much in her family. Her father was one of my most intimate friends, in an earlier part of his life, though we differed in opinion on the French Revolution in the latter part of his days. But I find, that differences in opinion in politics, and even in religion, make but little alteration in my feelings and friendships, when once contracted.

'I have not received Mr. Sergeant's speech, nor the sketch.

'I am, Sir, with great and sincere

'Esteem and affection,

'Your friend and humble servant,

'John Adams.'

Though Dr. Miller had pleaded his multiplied pressing duties as an excuse for not contributing to *The Virginia Magazine*, we find him occasionally sending an article to Dr. Rice, as a pledge of friendship and of his interest in that publication as a channel of evangelical truth. The following letter accompanied such an article, and other letters, of the same year, refer to similar contributions.

'My dear Brother,

Princeton, August 18, 1820.

'Though I am more tardy in making this communica-



tion than you wished me to be, yet I cannot think myself to blame for it. I have been, for several weeks past, almost distracted with multiplied and oppressive engagements. I really have not been able, until this moment, to scribble off anything more about the Waldenses, and now must have it in the post-office in a few minutes.

‘I consider the death of Dr. Hoge<sup>1</sup> as a great loss, not only to Virginia, but also to the whole Presbyterian Church. Every successive time that I was in his company, my estimate both of his talents and his piety rose continually. It is my deliberate persuasion, that he was one of the very best men I ever saw, and that his mind was of the first order. With all this, such modesty, such meekness, such child-like simplicity, as he constantly manifested, both inspired and charmed me. But the Lord can do without any of us; and who would not rejoice that it is so? Blessed be his holy name that he reigneth, and that the whole earth must and will be filled with his glory!

‘I do not know whom you will get to supply Dr. Hoge’s place. But pray do not attempt to take my excellent and invaluable brother Alexander. Can you find in your heart to concur in any plan, which would inflict a fatal blow on our Seminary? I am compelled in haste to conclude, with affectionate salutations to Mrs. Rice, in which Mrs. Miller joins.

‘Cordially your brother,

‘Samuel Miller.’

Among the difficulties, with which the Seminary was soon obliged to contend, was the effort, in some quarters of the Presbyterian Church, to establish other institutions, rivals in effect though not in name. The chief plea for this was exactly the same which has ever since been urged—the danger that young men, educated far away from home for the ministry, would lose home feelings; and that their services would be lost to their native States. In our own day, we see the strength of the church sadly wasted by the multiplication of seminaries, the greater number of which are exhausting, in a bare struggle for existence, all the means and energies at their disposal. In 1820, we find the Synod of Tennessee engaging in such a rival enterprise. The Rev. Francis McFarland,<sup>2</sup> who had left the Princeton Seminary in that or the previous year, writing to Dr. Miller, says, ‘I was at the meeting of the Synod of Kentucky at

<sup>1</sup>The Rev. Moses Hoge, D.D., who died on the 5th of July, 1820. See 3 Sprague’s Annals, 426.

<sup>2</sup>Afterwards D.D.

Shelbyville. It was a pretty interesting session. The subject of co-operating with the Synod of Tennessee, in supporting their theological seminary, was brought before them by a letter from that Synod. It was moved to postpone the subject indefinitely, which received a unanimous and thundering *aye*. Mr. Cameron said, he 'would rather go to Princeton on foot.' The students of that day, as, for the most part, ever since, left Princeton with a grateful sense of the advantages they had enjoyed there. Mr. McFarland, in the same letter, says, 'Remember me affectionately to Mrs. Miller and your daughters, and to that dear man, Dr. Alexander. I hope I shall never cease to remember, with gratitude, not only your public instructions, but the many marks of private friendship which I have received from you both.' To the same effect are the following acknowledgments, in behalf of his son, from the Rev. Robert M. Cunningham<sup>1</sup> of Lexington, Kentucky, in a letter of the 9th of May, 1821.

'My dear Brother, when I review the period of Joseph's probation for the gospel ministry, coming to a close under your immediate instructions and example, and those of our beloved Dr. Alexander, I desire to feel thankful to the Almighty for the wise and beneficent arrangements of his providence. Permit me to say, I feel peculiarly grateful to you, my dear Sir, and others, who have had an instrumentality in preparing my son, as well as many other young men, for the holy ministry. With thousands, I feel a tender solicitude for your health, and the continuance of a life so useful to the Church of Christ, and particularly that branch, of which I have the honor to be a member.'

<sup>1</sup> D.D. from 1827. See 4 Sprague's Annals, 58.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-FIFTH.

CORRESPONDENCE AND PUBLICATIONS.

1820-1823.

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### 1. MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS.

THE Rev. Benjamin B. Wisner,<sup>1</sup> upon leaving the Seminary in Princeton, was settled in Boston over the Old South Church, to which Dr. Miller had strongly recommended him. Just after his settlement, the latter wrote to him,

‘My dear Sir,    Princeton, January 29th, 1821.

‘I take for granted you are now in Boston, and have entered on your great work in that place. My prayer is, that he who (as I believe) has sent you thither, will support, and guide and bless you there: that he will prepare you for your work, preside over every part of its performance, and then crown it with his blessing. You occupy many of my thoughts; and I hope I shall be enabled often to remember you, in my nearest approaches to him whose friendship is the best portion.

‘I have long thought that an evangelical minister, in Boston, ought to lay much more stress, and to place unspeakably more reliance, on the efficacy of pure truth, and the promise of his God, than on his endeavors to cope with his adversaries with their own weapons—learning, biblical criticism, and eloquence. To these latter I am not an enemy, as you well know; but I believe that when they are too much relied upon, the great Head of the Church will frown upon such confidence, and will make his servants to feel and acknowledge, that the excellency of the power is of himself, and not of them. Under this impression, I trust, you will always go forth to meet the enemies of the truth which surround you. They are the enemies, the blasphemers of that Saviour in whom is all my hope; and, though as proud and as powerful as Goliath, yet, if they are encountered in the spirit of David, there is infinitely more pros-

<sup>1</sup> D.D. from 1828. See 2 Sprague's Annals, 632.

pect of victory, than with the most formidable preparation, training, and array of carnal warfare. On this subject, I do not merely *believe* myself to be right; I *know* it; and you know it too; but, Alas! the trouble is with our own hearts; there, are the most obstinate and ever rising difficulties in the way of going forth to war simply and humbly in the strength of the Lord.

‘I speak of warfare; and doubtless, it will be always raging, either openly or covertly. But there is a thought to which I wish to draw your particular attention. I do not believe that most good is done by preaching the truth *in a controversial way*, even when that preaching is of the most consummately able and conclusive sort. There is something in the polemical form of administering truth, which appears to me more adapted to operate upon the intellect, than the heart. When a preacher appears before his audience as the professed logician, the professed oppugner of error, I suspect they will all be apt, in spite of themselves, to hear him with more or less of a similar spirit; to feel as if it were their business rather to sit in judgment upon his arguments, than simply and practically to enter into the preciousness of truth, as the food and the life of the soul. I think you will often find yourself called upon to preach in a controversial way; to preach unreservedly and professedly against prevailing error; but I think the great body of your preaching ought not to be of that kind; but to be an affectionate, animated, powerful exhibition of truth in a practical way, as if no particular heresy were in your thoughts, and as if love to the truth itself, and love to the souls of those whom you addressed, were your only prompters. If you are enabled, by the grace of God, to gain the hearts of your hearers, everything else will follow of course. Their false notions will give way without difficulty, and perhaps a little the more readily, if they are not conscious of having been formally overcome in argument.

‘Your excellent predecessor, if I am not misinformed, acted upon the plan which I have recommended; and I think the eminent usefulness with which he was blessed is an argument of no small weight in its favor. The congregation have long been accustomed to a mild, didactic, and affectionate mode of preaching; and I verily believe it to be the best.

‘Are you aware, my dear young Brother, that the climate of Boston is a trying one, and that young men, especially, need admonition and frequent warning with respect to the care of their health? I entreat you, as a duty you owe to your Master, to pay constant and sacred attention to yours. When I was in Andover, last June, I asked Professor Stuart, what

guard he had adopted against the rigors of an eastern climate. He told me it had been very severe upon him; but that the best defence was going very warm-clad. This was his great prophylactic, and he had found the effect admirable. Clothe yourself warm, then; do not breathe the cold air, after speaking, more than you can help; and do not allow yourself to be prevailed on to preach when you are sick. The Lord be with you and bless you! Make my respectful and affectionate salutations to Mrs. Wisner, and also to Mrs. Huntington. I rejoice that you are to be some time under her roof.

‘Believe me to be yours unfeignedly,  
 ‘Rev. Mr. Wisner. Sam’l Miller.’

In the General Assembly of 1821, the subject of Freemasonry, upon a reference from the Synod of Pittsburgh, was discussed at considerable length. It seems to have been the desire of some, that the Assembly should declare Masonry incompatible with Christianity, and connexion with a Masonic lodge a sufficient ground for exclusion from the church. Dr. Miller took the floor in earnest opposition to this suggestion. He claimed, as himself a Mason, but a Mason who had not entered a lodge for several years, and did not expect to enter one ever again, to have some knowledge of the subject, and yet to be a measurably impartial witness.

‘I will not, indeed, Sir,’ he said, ‘insult your understanding so far as to contend, as some have done, that Masonry is the same thing with Christianity—that to be a good Mason is the same thing with being a good Christian. But, if I comprehend the subject, Masonry is an institution, which embraces individuals of all ranks, of all countries, of all religions,—the Jew, the Mohammedan, the Christian,—and binds them to acts of mutual benevolence, by an initiation into certain mysterious rites, and by the communication of certain signs and words, which enable members of the institution to recognize each other. \* \* It may be perverted; it may be abused; but, considering its original nature and design, I think we ought to be very far from pronouncing it that odious and abominable thing which many are fond of representing it.’

The Seminary was now upon the whole prospering: its pupils, during the Summer session of 1821, reached the number of seventy-six.

Of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions Dr. Miller was made a corporate member as early

as about 1812, or 1813. His interest in its affairs may be gathered from the following letter:—

‘My dear Sir,           Princeton, (N. J.,) September 6, 1821.

‘It has been my earnest desire, for a number of years past, to attend the annual meetings of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions; but my public engagements have always rendered it impracticable. The ensuing annual meeting will happen at the very time of our public examination, from which, I need not say, it is impossible for me to think of being absent, as it is always conducted by the Professors of the Seminary.

‘But I do not think it proper that I should be a *pecuniary gainer* by staying at home. And as the journey, probably, could not be accomplished for less than \$30, I inclose that sum as an humble offering to the Lord, in lieu of my personal presence. It is worth far more than my presence; and may the blessing of our common and most blessed Master go with it!

‘When I reflect, my dear Brother in Christ, what a loss, (speaking in the language of man,) not only our Board, but also the cause of the Redeemer in this western hemisphere, and indeed throughout the world, have experienced in the death of the ever to be lamented and revered Brother Worcester, I feel as if we were all solemnly called upon to double our diligence, and try to make our devotedness to the King of Zion more unreserved than ever. In pondering on the departure of such a man,—a man of so much piety, prudence, wisdom, diligence, and holy consecration to the cause of Missions,—a man who mingled so much mildness, inoffensiveness and dignity, with so much discernment, enterprize, and martyr-like firmness and constancy,—I am sometimes ready to ask who shall stand up in his room. But I check myself. The Lord, in whose cause he died, loves that cause, and knows how to estimate the value of his servants, infinitely better than any of us. To his wisdom, his love, and his covenant faithfulness let us humbly commit it; and resolve, each one for himself, whatever may occur, to be, by the grace of God, found faithful.

‘Have the goodness, if you attend the meeting of the Board to communicate to them my reason for not being present; and also my affectionate and most respectful sympathy, on occasion of the removal of another beloved and highly valued Associate.

‘May the Lord preside in your counsels, and direct all your measures!

‘I am, dear Sir, with great regard, your friend and fellow servant in Christ,

‘Jeremiah Evarts, Esquire.

Sam'l Miller.’

To the Rev. William B. Sprague, Dr. Miller wrote, on the 3d of October, 1821,

‘But how shall I address you, my dear young Brother, respecting your conjugal loss?—a loss in the view of man altogether irreparable, but not so with God. He can more than make it up. May he give you true and continued submission; and, as your feelings of sorrow on the subject become more calm and mellowed, may they be more and more connected with that deep, sanctified use of the dispensation, which will render it a blessing through the whole of your subsequent course.

‘Since I received your letter, I have been in the utmost hazard of losing my own beloved companion. \* \* But the Lord was pleased, while he took the child, to spare the mother. Blessed be his holy name! May this sparing mercy make an indelible impression on my poor, cold, stupid heart!

‘My dear young Brother, you have the unfailing promise of your covenant God, that he will make all things work together for good to them that love him. And if the bereaving dispensation by which he has been pleased to take away the desire of your eyes, should be the means of drawing you nearer, and keeping you nearer, to himself; causing you to take deeper, clearer, and more practical views of truth; making you more spiritual, disinterested, and devoted; and, in short, preparing you for more eminent service in his church; you will then be able with emphasis, to apply the promise to yourself, and to say, It was good for me to be afflicted. God grant that you may realize all the preciousness of this experience!’

## 2. ORDINATION OF THE REV. WILLIAM NEVINS.

It is proper, at this point, to recur to events of nearly a year previous to the time reached in the foregoing narrative. The mention of them has been delayed, that it might now place them in a more fitting connexion.

In 1820, Dr. Miller was invited by the Presbytery of Baltimore, to preach at the ordination and installation of the Rev. William Nevins,<sup>1</sup> an alumnus of the Seminary, as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in that city. This service was performed, and the sermon, by request of the presbytery, and also of the session and trustees of the First Church, was published.<sup>2</sup> Among “the difficulties and

<sup>1</sup> D.D. from 1834. See 4 Sprague’s Annals, 629.

<sup>2</sup> “The Difficulties and Temptations which attend the Preaching of the Gospel in Great Cities: A Sermon preached in the First Presbyterian Church, in the City of Baltimore, October 19, 1820; at the Ordination and Installation of

temptations which attend the preaching of the gospel in great cities," Dr. Miller mentions "the refinements of philosophy falsely so called," and the prevailing taste for "smooth and superficial preaching." Under these heads he includes some reflections upon Socinianism, under the latter, remarking,

"In the great cities of the Roman Empire began that clerical ambition, which invaded the primitive parity of gospel ministers, and which finally issued in the Papal usurpation. In great cities, likewise, or, at least, in states of society similar to what is commonly found in such places, has generally commenced that fatal decline from orthodoxy, which began, perhaps, with calling in question some of what are styled the more rigid peculiarities of received creeds, and ended in embracing the dreadful, soul-destroying errors of *Arius* or *Socinus*.\* We might easily illustrate and confirm this position, by examples drawn from our own country, had we time to trace the history of several sects among us, and especially of American Unitarianism. But I forbear to pursue the illustration farther; and shall only take the liberty to ask, as I pass along—How is it to be accounted for, that the preaching of those who deny the Divinity and Atonement of the Saviour, and who reject the doctrines of Human Depravity, of Regeneration, and of Justification by the righteousness of Christ—How, I ask, is it to be

the Reverend William Nevins, as Pastor of said Church. By Samuel Miller, D.D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government, in the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, at Princeton. Baltimore: 1820."—Romans i. 15, 16.—8vo. Pp. 43.

\* The above language, concerning the destructive nature of the *Arian* and *Socinian* heresies, has not been adopted lightly; but is the result of serious deliberation, and deep conviction. And in conformity with this view of the subject, the Author cannot forbear to notice and record a declaration made to himself, by the late Dr. *Priestley*, two or three years before the decease of that distinguished Unitarian. The conversation was a free and amicable one on some of the fundamental doctrines of religion. In reply to a direct avowal, on the part of the Author, that he was a *Trinitarian* and a *Calvinist*, Dr. *Priestley* said—"I do not wonder that you Calvinists entertain and express a strongly unfavorable opinion of us Unitarians. The truth is, there neither can, nor ought to be, any compromise between us. If *you* are right, *we* ARE NOT CHRISTIANS AT ALL; and if *we* are right, *you* ARE GROSS IDOLATERS." These were, as nearly as can be recollected, the words, and, most accurately, the substance of his remark. And nothing, certainly, can be more just. Between those who believe in the Divinity and Atonement of the Son of God, and those who entirely reject both, "there is a great gulph fixed," which precludes all ecclesiastical intercourse. The former may greatly respect and love the latter, on account of other qualities and attainments; but certainly cannot regard them as CHRISTIANS, in any correct sense of the word; or as any more in the way of salvation than *Mohammedans* or *Jews*.†

† Pp. 20, 21.



accounted for, that such preachers, all over the world, are most acceptable to the gay, the fashionable, the worldly minded, and even the licentious? That so many embrace and eulogize their system, without being, in the smallest perceptible degree, sanctified by it? That thousands are in love with it, and praise it; but that we look in vain for the monuments of its reforming and purifying power? I will not pretend to answer these questions; but leave them to the consciences of those who believe, that the genuine doctrines of the Gospel always have had, and always will have, a tendency to promote holiness of heart and of life; and that we must *all* speedily appear before the judgment seat of Christ."

Soon after the publication of this sermon, an anonymous writer, styling himself "A Unitarian of Baltimore," supposed to be the Rev. Jared Sparks, recently settled there, reviewed it harshly, not to say scurrilously, and at length, in "The Unitarian Miscellany, a monthly magazine issued in Boston, extensively circulated, and said to be the most popular periodical belonging to the denomination. The review accused Dr. Miller of having, among other offences, seized upon a very unsuitable occasion to deliver his sentiments; denied that Unitarians were Christians; and charged upon them immorality and licentiousness. A reply offered for insertion in the "Miscellany," but refused a place, was published by Dr. Miller, in Baltimore, in the spring of 1821.<sup>1</sup> In this he justifies his choice of an occasion, and his deliberate exclusion of Unitarians from all right to the name of Christians; while he denies having impeached their morality, or failed of a becoming charity towards them; and defends Locke and Watts from the charge of being Unitarians.

In writing to the Rev. B. B. Wisner of Boston, on the 23d of April, he says,

'I should have made this "Letter" much longer and fuller, as to several topics, if I had not intended it originally for insertion in "The Unitarian Miscellany," of Baltimore. Finding it rejected there, I thought it would not be advisable to make it an essentially different thing, when published in pamphlet form. I considered it best, therefore, on the whole, to print it substantially as the editor of that work had first seen it.'

<sup>1</sup>"A Letter to the Editor of the Unitarian Miscellany, in reply to an Attack, by an Anonymous Writer in that Work, on a late Ordination Sermon delivered in Baltimore. By Samuel Miller, D.D., Author of the Sermon. Baltimore: \* \* 1821."—Svo. Pp. 34.

## 3. "LETTERS ON UNITARIANISM."

The course of the controversy thus commenced led Dr. Miller to publish, in 1821, "Letters on Unitarianism."<sup>1</sup> His own words will best explain the reasons for this work which was addressed to Mr. Nevins's Church.

"A train of events, as unexpected as unsought by me, has led to the present publication. When, in the course of the last year, my ardent desire to promote your welfare, and my affectionate respect for your young Pastor, prompted me to consent, on the day of his Ordination, to address you from the pulpit, I little thought that obloquy and controversy were to result from the service of that day. But so it has happened. Some of your Unitarian neighbors have deemed it proper to make me an object of repeated attack, and my sermon on that occasion a subject of protracted and tedious discussion. I have seldom been more surprised than to find, that a few plain sentences, which were delivered under the impression that they contained nothing more than was universally understood to be the sentiments of the Orthodox, should give such deep offence, and lead to so much waste of ink and paper. Nor can I yet account for the fact, but by supposing that the Unitarians in the *United States* are determined to make the experiment, whether they can write themselves into notice and importance; and in prosecuting this experiment, resolve to let nothing, however trivial, escape their animadversion. If this be their plan, I make no complaint of its operation on me. I am not certain that anything which has occurred is to be, for a moment, regretted. On the contrary, a consciousness of having done my duty has cheered me in the past; and, if the following pages should prove in any degree useful to you or your Children, I shall have reason unfeignedly to rejoice in what was, in itself, by no means desirable to a lover of peace."

After disclaiming all intention of opening the account before finally closed with "A Unitarian of Baltimore," who had conducted his recent "attacks in such a manner as to render defence altogether unnecessary," Dr. Miller went on to say,

"My object in writing at present is your benefit. It is to put you on your guard against a system of error, which I have no hesitation in considering as the most delusive and dangerous of

<sup>1</sup> "Letters on Unitarianism; addressed to the Members of the First Presbyterian Church in the City of Baltimore. By Samuel Miller, D. D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government, in the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, at Princeton."—8vo., pp. 212.

all that have ever assumed the Christian name. This system its advocates, in your neighborhood, are endeavoring to recommend and establish with a zeal worthy of a better cause. From the pulpit and the press, by the formal volume, the humble pamphlet, and every variety of exhibition that ingenuity can devise, they are endeavoring to make an impression on the public mind. \* \* Probably in no part of our country, out of *Massachusetts*, do these poisoned agents so completely fill the air, or, like one of the plagues of *Egypt*, so noisomely “come up into your houses, your chambers, and your kneading-troughs,” as in *Baltimore*. \* \* Now, though I have no fear of the influence of all this on the minds of those who read and think, and inquire and pray; yet there may be others to whom an antidote is not wholly unnecessary. The sagacious and eloquent Mr. *Burke* has somewhere said, “Let us only suffer any person, however manifestly he may be in the wrong, to tell us his story, morning and evening, but for one twelve-month, and he will be our master.” \* \* The young and inexperienced, who are not aware of the insidious arts of error; the busy, who have but little taste for reading, and little time or disposition for profound reflection; the amiable, who are ready to look with a partial eye on every serious and plausible claim; and the gay and worldly, who are predisposed in favor of an indulgent system;—all these, when frequently assailed by the zealous, the confident, and the talkative patrons of heresy, will be peculiarly liable to be unduly impressed in their favor. When they every day hear individuals, and every day meet with pamphlets, which, on the one hand, in the most triumphant tone, praise the Unitarian system, as the only enlightened, liberal, benevolent, and *rational* system, and its adherents as decisively the most learned, amiable, and pious friends of truth and candid inquiry; and, on the other hand, stigmatize its opponents, as narrow-minded, prejudiced, austere, righteous over much, and enemies of liberal thinking;—when they find these representations made every day, and repeated without contradiction, they will be apt at length to believe them.”<sup>1</sup>

The Rev. Elisha P. Swift, D. D., of Pittsburgh, wrote to Dr. Miller, on the 3d of January, 1822,

‘I have seen one or two of the uncivil and insolent letters addressed to you in the Unitarian Miscellany, but have not been able to possess myself of your sermon or the reply. If the style and spirit of that publication are a specimen of the civility and charity of which those zealous and deluded gentlemen have

<sup>1</sup> Letters on Unitarianism, 9-14.

so repeatedly and proudly boasted, the thinking part of the community will not be long in learning how to appreciate those professions to which much of their success is to be ascribed.'

Writing to Mr. Wisner, on the 2d of February, Dr. Miller said,

'In this work, some of my friends here are almost afraid that I have gone too far. The majority however seem to be of a different opinion, and that it was high time to take, without hesitation, the ground that I have taken. How it may suit the meridian of Boston, I know not. I can only say, that I am honest in the convictions I have expressed, and that, if they be just, there is certainly no room for half-way, or temporizing measures.'

These letters were praised by Trinitarians, and, of course, were assailed vigorously by those whose error they exposed. The Rev. James Taylor, pastor of the Unitarian church in Philadelphia, after preaching, indirectly, against the work and its author, was wrought up to the pitch of writing to Dr. Miller, and, after quoting from Dr. Priestley a passage referred to in the letters, demanding a retraction.

'Unwilling,' he says, 'to believe, that you made the assertion, that Dr. Priestley, in his memoirs, speaks of what the orthodox regard as exercises of experimental piety, in a manner expressive of both contempt and horror, with a full knowledge of what he had actually written, I have transcribed the whole passage, that you may perceive the propriety, not only of authorizing me, in your name, to retract what you have unwarrantably asserted to the dishonor of his memory, but also of yourself giving equal publicity to that retraction as you have done to the work in which the passage quoted by me has a place. Allow me to say, that this appears necessary, as well for your own exculpation from what might subject you to a very serious charge, as in justice to a man who never indulged himself, or countenanced others, in ridiculing serious persons, or things of a serious nature.'

To this very polite and modest request, Dr. Miller returned the following answer:—

'Sir,

'Princeton, February 4, 1822.

'Your letter of the 1st reached me on Saturday evening. I perused it with no small degree of surprise; for, although I am aware how exceedingly partial and prejudiced most persons are apt to be with respect to their own cause; and although I wish

never to forget how liable I am myself, in common with others, to this partiality and prejudice; yet I certainly did not expect to find, in an intelligent reader of my little work, such a singular misconception as your letter presents. Amidst the multiplicity of citations and references which the work contains, it would be strange, indeed, if some mistakes should not be discovered. These, I trust, I shall always be ready candidly to correct. But the passage to which you refer is not, unless I am deceived, one of this description.

‘You are wrong in supposing, that, when I wrote the sentence on page 259, “I had not a full knowledge of what Dr. Priestley had actually written,” in the place referred to in his “Memoirs.” I knew it well. I had the book before me, and made no more of the passage than what I *then* conscientiously thought, and *still* conscientiously think, both its spirit and its letter warranted. What does Dr. Priestley say? If in the paragraph beginning on page seven, and extending to page eight, which you have transcribed, he does not speak disrespectfully, and even sneeringly of those experiences and that new birth, which he acknowledges, and which you know, the Orthodox consider as “necessary to salvation;” if he does not say, that he “looked back with horror,” upon those experiences of his own mind which he, doubtless, thought the same in kind with those which the Orthodox respect and encourage; if he does not distinctly intimate, that he considered these “conflicts of mind” as flowing from a state of “ignorance and darkness;” that they indicated pitiable weakness and error; that more “rational principles of religion” would have prevented them; and that such things are, of course, “irrational,” fanatical and delusive—I say, if all this is not distinctly intimated in the paragraphs in question; then I know not how to interpret language, or how to gather the spirit of any page in any book. And, if all this be intimated, then is nothing contemptuous implied in it? Is it going too far to say, that he speaks of the exercises alluded to with *contempt* and *horror*? I freely grant, indeed, that the language of Dr. Priestley, which you quote, is susceptible of a less offensive construction; but, when it is viewed in connexion with what follows, at the bottom of the 8th page, and especially in connexion with his known and avowed sentiments, and those of Unitarians generally on this subject; I do sincerely think, that I have expressed, in a single sentence, neither more nor less than the plain natural meaning of the whole taken together.

‘Such being my impression, you will perceive that I consider myself as having no reason either to authorize you, or to under-

take myself, to make the public retraction you speak of. If Dr. Priestley himself were alive, I am persuaded he would think that I had done no violence to his meaning, and that, consequently, no apology or explanation was necessary. I have none to make; and, therefore, while my present convictions remain, shall make none.

'It is no way inconsistent, in my opinion, with all this, that Dr. Priestley speaks, in "highly respectful terms," of his "excellent aunt," and of other Orthodox people. That this truly eminent man abhorred Calvinism; that he thought it an "irrational" and most pestiferous system; and that he, of course, could not fail to regard it with feelings, which, without injustice, might be called those of *contempt* and *horror*, I presume no one doubts. At least, if *you* do, I take for granted that you are the only man, who has read his writings, that does. Yet he does not hesitate to acknowledge, in his memoirs of himself, that he derived some benefit from his Calvinistic education; just as I suppose he would acknowledge, that men derive benefit, every day, from things in themselves exceedingly evil. And my belief is, that the serious and devotional cast of mind, which he is generally acknowledged to have possessed, is to be ascribed to this very cause. Indeed, he appears to me himself, implicitly, to admit the fact.

'I have only one more remark to make on this subject. If I understand the scope of your letter, it is not merely to repel the alleged injury to Dr. Priestley, but also to repel, as unjust, my general charge, "that what the Orthodox regard as exercises of experimental piety are ridiculed by the great body of Unitarians as fanatical and delusive." If this be not the scope of your letter, I have mistaken it. But are you willing to say that my charge is unjust? It cannot be. I have always given you credit for entire honesty in acting and speaking agreeably to the convictions of your own mind; and I am still unfeignedly disposed to do so. But, really how to dispose of this letter, if, I construe it rightly, I acknowledge staggers me. What! can those who utterly reject, as irrational, absurd and impious, the doctrines of Original Sin, Regeneration, Justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ, the influences of the Holy Spirit, and other parts of the same system, as held by the Orthodox—can they possibly view otherwise than as fanatical, delusive, and worthy, not only of ridicule, but of something worse, those exercises which are founded upon these doctrines, and which are indissolubly connected with a cordial and practical reception of them? Do not Unitarians generally regard these exercises as both weak and pernicious, and glory in hav-

ing more rational views of Christianity? Dr. Priestley, who was, in general, a remarkably candid man, I am sure would not have scrupled to acknowledge all this: Nay, I think he *does* acknowledge it in a number of instances. What, then, must I think of some recent attempts, on the part of Unitarian writers, to persuade the public, that the exercises of experimental piety in question, as believed in by the Orthodox, are *not* rejected by Unitarians. It may be all entirely honest and candid on the part of those who make such attempts; but I acknowledge I cannot see how it is to be reconciled with probity.

‘I have thus thought proper, my dear Sir, to give, not only a respectful, but an extended answer to your letter. I am constrained to say, however, that I have no wish to continue this correspondence. I remember, with pleasure, our former social intercourse, and by no means forget, that I am indebted to you for the very copy of Dr. Priestley’s Memoirs, to which I referred in the sentence you criticise. I have forborne, for several years, to continue this intercourse, not because I ceased to respect you as a gentleman, but from a conscientious persuasion, that, to one holding my principles, and placed in my situation, such intercourse was, on the whole, unprofitable and embarrassing. The more I became acquainted with your sentiments, the more corrupt and mischievous they appeared to me. If you have any further inquiries or explanations to make on this subject, I shall certainly be disposed to treat them with respectful attention. But I am a busy man, and all correspondence of this kind is, to me, peculiarly irksome. I view you as a man honestly pursuing a course which tends, to the extent of your influence, to the eternal destruction of your fellow-creatures. You, no doubt, view me as laboring for the support of mischievous error. Let us pray for one another, and await the trial of the great day!

I am, Sir, yours very respectfully,

‘Mr. James Taylor.

Sam’l Miller.’

With a copy of the work, Dr. Miller wrote to Miss Edgeworth, who was regarded as a Unitarian in sentiment,

‘Madam,

Princeton, February 18th, 1822.

‘At the instance of your correspondent, Mrs. Griffith, whose requests I cannot lightly reject, I venture to send the volume which accompanies this letter, and most respectfully to beg, that you will do me the honor to accept of it.

‘Had I not been thus prompted from so respectable a quarter, I certainly should not have taken this liberty—for two reasons.

‘The *first* is, that I am sensible that a total stranger, in a distant country, of even whose name you have never heard, has no right to make such a draught on your time and attention.

'My *second* reason is one which I have more hesitation in mentioning, but which, as I am an old fashioned man, not very young in years, and accustomed to a candid expression of my feelings, I will not conceal. It is founded on a lurking doubt, whether my book will be found entirely agreeable to your theological views. I have a large family of children, some of the eldest of whom have nearly reached adult age. Your works have been to several of them familiar companions, and sources of entertainment and instruction, for a number of years. Will you forgive me for saying, that, when I have looked into these works, which has not been seldom, I have been constrained to fear, not from anything which you have said, but from what you have *not* said, that the religion of Jesus Christ has not exactly the same aspect to your mind that it has to mine, either as to its essential characteristics, or its infinite importance. "Oh, what would I give," I have often said to myself, "if these fine talents, this deep acquaintance with human nature, this admirable taste in writing, were more plainly and thoroughly consecrated to the eternal welfare, as well as to the temporal accomplishments, of those whom they reach and fascinate!"

'For this reserve on the subject of religion, there can be no doubt you have reasons which satisfy yourself. But they will not be likely to satisfy your warm admirers and constant readers. Indeed I am compelled to doubt, whether, in ordinary circumstances, any reasons can justify it. Only assume, as I must assume, that religion is infinitely the most important subject that can be presented to the human mind; and that, when rightly understood, and practically embraced, it is infinitely the most operative both on character and happiness; and everything that I contend for seems to follow of course.

'I have often wished for an opportunity of telling you all this; but supposed it utterly improbable I should ever have one. Mrs. Griffith, by her polite request, has, most unexpectedly, put it in my power to approach you—I hope without incurring the charge of offensive intrusion. Am I presumptuous in availing myself of such an occasion to unfold to you my whole heart? Those who contribute so much as you do, to regulate opinion, and to form character, must not be surprised, if their very eminence should sometimes excite the zeal of the warm friends of human happiness, to devise plans for rendering that eminence still more beneficial, and their general influence more benign.

'But, however we may differ on this subject, (and perhaps our difference is less than I apprehend,) I am happy in an opportunity of assuring you of the profound respect, with which I am, Madam,

Miss Edgeworth.

Your obedient servant,  
Sam'l Miller.'



Of this work a writer in "The Washington Theological Repertory," "Edited by the Clergy of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the District of Columbia," said,

It "deserves for its learned author the thanks of all that are interested in the important subject. We had heard that such a production was preparing; and, from the high character of its author as a writer upon subjects of common literature, and of ecclesiastical controversy; from the peculiarity of his employment, as a Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the Seminary at Princeton; from his acquaintance with the doctrines, spirit, and exigencies of the times; from his known prudence and piety as a Christian disputant; and from the talents with which his various duties have ever been performed, we anticipated an important acquisition to the libraries of Christians. Our expectations have been fully equalled. \* \* So well is the work adapted to the condition of the Unitarian controversy in the United States, to the prejudices, the ignorance, and the difficulties upon the minds of those who ought most to read the publication; that, when we consider the popular objections, dispositions, and dangers, that are treated of; the manner in which the Unitarians of the day are met upon their own grounds, and beaten with their own weapons; the spirit of moderation, liberality and Christian charity, that pervades and adorns the whole; and then the dignity and the masterly talent that speaks it to be the work of an enlarged, learned and vigorous mind—we feel anxious to recommend it to our readers as a production peculiarly adapted for their edification, which the unlearned as well as learned may understand, feel, and enjoy, and which promises an extensive benefit to the cause of Christian truth and ecclesiastical security."<sup>1</sup>

#### 4. CORRESPONDENCE.

Deacon Ashley, of Mr. Sprague's Congregation in West Springfield, Massachusetts, was, for a number of years, a liberal contributor to the Seminary at Princeton, sending his donations, through his pastor's hands, to Dr. Miller, who, on the 8th of March, 1822, wrote, after acknowledging such a donation of \$100,

'Our treasury is indeed low, and stands in need of all the aid that we can obtain. Such unexpected donations as this are peculiarly welcome, and both demand and excite peculiar gratitude. We regard them too as pledges, that THE LORD WILL PROVIDE. \* \*

<sup>1</sup> Vol. iii, No. 8, (March, 1822,) 249, 250.

‘We have, indeed, our fears whether we shall be able to continue to aid those to whom we are already pledged. We have been obliged to give a negative answer to several within a few weeks. Oh, that the monied Christians of America could be persuaded to lay to heart the wants of hundreds of pious youth, who would be glad to become ministers, if they had but the means of support in the requisite course of study.’

On the 4th of May, Dr. Miller again wrote to Mr. Sprague,

‘I will not conceal that I am much gratified by the approbation which you express, and which some of your brethren express, of my “Letters on Unitarianism.” My first prayer, I hope, is that they may be useful. Whenever the sale of the edition already printed shall have made such progress, as to warrant me in thinking of a second edition, (if such should ever be the case,) it is my full intention to print the work in a cheaper form. I was induced to print the first edition in the handsome and expensive manner which you speak of, in order to catch the attention, and excite, if possible, the respect of the gay, fashionable, and wealthy people of Baltimore.’

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions invited Dr. Miller to preach in New Haven, at the ordination of Messrs. William Goodell, William Richards, and Artemas Bishop, as missionaries. The following letters have reference to that invitation.

‘My dear Sir, Princeton, August 7, 1822.

‘Your favour of the 1st instant came to my hands two days ago. I thank the Prudential Committee for the honour which they have done me in the appointment which you announce; and will endeavor, with the leave of Providence, to attempt the execution of the task which they have assigned me.

‘I have, indeed, a very strong reluctance to every undertaking of this kind. If I know my own heart, I love to preach the Gospel. But to be appointed, some weeks before hand, to preach on a peculiarly solemn and interesting occasion, on which great expectation is excited, and strong feelings exist, which it is extremely difficult to meet, has long been peculiarly unwelcome to me. My health is delicate; my nervous system is feeble and tremulous; and an untoward event, a day or an hour before the public service, might unfit me to appear in a manner at all consistent with either comfort or edification. But I will wave apologies, and cast myself on my Master’s aid. To him, if I know myself, I desire to be devoted. Allow me

only to say, that if *Brother Fay* comes on, I hope he will put a sermon in his pocket, and be ready to take the place (if necessary) of a nervous brother. Be pleased to remember me affectionately to him, and be assured of the sincere regard of your friend and brother in the best of bonds,

‘Jeremiah Evarts, Esq.’

Sam’l Miller.’

‘Princeton, September 30, 1822.’

‘My dear Sir,

‘I herewith transmit the promised copy of my sermon, delivered in New Haven, on the 12th instant. My avocations, since my return, have been so incessant, that it was not possible for me to look at the manuscript untill three days ago.

‘I wish it to be followed closely—I mean particularly with respect to *capitals, punctuation, italics, etc., etc.*—The contractions—such as *ye* for *the*—the printer will, of course, understand.

‘I have a taste almost fastidious with respect to printing work. Few things set off a composition more than beautiful typography; and, as I am conscious that my sermon needs every advantage it can gain, I am desirous of seeing it neatly printed. The general style in which Dr. Morse’s, Mr. Storrs’ and Mr. Temple’s sermons were printed will meet my views entirely. \* \* \*<sup>1</sup>

‘In haste, I am, my dear Sir,

‘respectfully and affectionately,

‘yours,

‘Jeremiah Evarts, Esq.’

Sam’l Miller.’

##### 5. PRESIDENCY OF THE COLLEGE.

On the 26th of September, 1822, immediately after the commencement exercises, Dr. Green resigned his presidency of the College of New Jersey. Upon the same day, the Board of Trustees elected John H. Rice, D.D., of Richmond, Virginia, to the vacant chair. Dr. Miller, Chief Justice Kirkpatrick, and Dr. John McDowell were appointed a committee to apprise Dr. Rice, in person, of his election. While, at first, apparently intending to visit Richmond, they, wrote, however, immediately, informing him of the action of the Board; and Dr. Miller added a friendly letter.

<sup>1</sup> “A Sermon delivered in the Middle Church, New Haven, Conn., September 12, 1822, at the Ordination of the Rev. Messrs. William Goodell, William Richards, and Artemas Bishop, as Evangelists and Missionaries to the Heathen. By Samuel Miller, D. D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government, in the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church, in the United States, at Princeton, N. J. Boston: 1822.” Isaiah lxi. 4.—8vo. Pp. 38.

‘Dear Brother, Princeton, September 26, 1822.

‘You will receive, by the mail which carries this, a communication from a committee, of which I am a member, informing you of your election to the Presidency of the College of New Jersey. The only member of the committee with whom you are not acquainted is Andrew Kirkpatrick, Esquire, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of our State. So that you see it consists (one only excepted) of men of no ordinary “pith and moment.” The Board certainly intended, in this as well as in everything else, to testify their respect to you.

‘In making this choice, they were, not only ostensibly, but really and cordially unanimous—a thing which, I am persuaded, has not occurred in choosing a president, since the days of Burr. The Board was unusually full—I have never known one, I think, quite so full before. When we commenced the business of casting about for a president, it was somewhat feared, that if Mr. Lindsley (our vice-president) were not chosen to the office, he would be deeply dissatisfied, if not disposed to resign. But it turned out quite otherwise. At an early stage of the business, he expressed a cordial willingness to serve in his present office under any respectable man whom the Board might choose, and appears ardently desirous that you should come; and I doubt not is cordially and earnestly so.

‘The salary voted for Dr. Green’s successor is the same with that which the former has had for ten years; viz., \$2000, together with an excellent house and garden; and also perquisites, which, I suppose, usually amount to between \$250 and \$300 per annum. You may say \$2300 and a house, and that always paid punctually to a day.

‘My dear Brother, this is a most solemn call. I hope you will take it into most serious consideration, and that you will not lightly say a word against its prosecution. I do not know any single station in the United States, in which you will be more likely to serve the Church of Christ extensively; nor any in which, with a moiety of that wisdom and discretion which you commonly exercise, you will be more likely to be both honored and comfortable. No man living would meet with a more cordial welcome from the brethren here, as well as from the whole Board, than yourself. Of this be assured. Come, expecting to be received as a brother beloved and honored; and to have your comfort promoted as far as we possibly can. You know, my dear Brother, that I love you from my heart. If I knew of any circumstance, which, if I were in your situation, would prevent me from accepting the place, I would freely communicate it. You may rest assured, then, that I

know of nothing which, it appears to me, ought to operate unfavorably on this occasion. And I have only to ask, that if any unfavorable hint or suggestion should be made to you, from any quarter, (which however I do not anticipate,) you will not let it influence you in the least, until you shall have communicated with some one here, who enjoys your confidence. \* \*

‘All unite in affectionate salutations to Mrs. Rice and yourself, with, dear Brother, yours,

‘Affectionately,  
‘Sam’l Miller.

‘P. S. I have written the above, perfectly distracted with business and company.’

Dr. Rice had been taken very ill, while attending the commencement of Hampden Sidney College; and a slow convalescence, then a relapse, detained him from home until the middle of January. Finally, he gave a negative answer, on account of his shattered health, his opinion that he was unfit for the office, and a conviction that he could be most useful at the South. The Rev. Philip Lindsley, D.D., who was all this time the acting President, was then, on the 8th of April, 1823, elected; but he also declined the honor. The Rev. James Carnahan, D.D., was chosen, about a month later; Dr. Miller and Dr. Ogden, as a committee of the Board, went to Georgetown, District of Columbia, to present the invitation; he accepted it, and shortly after removed to Princeton. His inauguration took place late in August. On this occasion, Dr. Miller addressed him in a short Latin speech, as had been proposed in the case of Dr. Green.

Dr. Green removed to Philadelphia, and there became editor of a monthly publication, previously established under the title of *The Presbyterian*; a name, however, for which, in accordance with his wishes, was substituted that of *The Christian Advocate*, This magazine he conducted for twelve years. With an article for the Advocate, entitled “Thoughts on Lay Preaching,” Dr. Miller wrote as follows:—

‘Rev’d and dear Sir,                      Princeton, December 23, 1822.

‘I received your last letter, together with the Introduction to the Christian Advocate. With both the name of your new work and the Introduction to it I am well pleased. May the

blessing of the great Head of the Church rest upon the enterprise!

'The more I think of my stated and indispensable engagements and feeble health; and of what I must endeavor to write and print within the next four or five months, if my life and health be spared, the more completely I despair of being able to accomplish much for the "Advocate." You must really expect very little for several months to come, or rather nothing after what accompanies this.

'I send a piece which looks large, but which will not make more than six, or, at most, seven pages of your work, supposing the present type to be continued. I do not know whether you will like the subject; but I must write on such as occur to me, and appear important. I do not wish any human being to know that I am the writer, and must (saving your presence) utterly prohibit the least lisp of my name. If inserted at all, I wish it all to appear together.

'In haste, I am, dear Sir, yours very sincerely,  
 'Sam'l Miller.

'P. S. I do myself the pleasure to send herewith a copy of the sermon preached in New Haven, in September last. We have admitted thirty nine new students into the Seminary. \* \*

'I come on very slowly with my answer to Stuart. My avocations are such that I can sometimes only write two or three pages a week.'

The number of new students mentioned was greater, by eight, than ever before.

#### "6. LETTERS ON THE ETERNAL SONSHIP OF CHRIST."

"The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water,"<sup>1</sup> by the very flow of which the aperture is widened, the volume and momentum of the stream increased, until, perhaps, the flood, in its extent and consequences, exceeds all prior imagination. This, though not a reason for never engaging in controversy, is no doubt a reason for doubly assuring ourselves, that we engage on the right side, and that the present defence of the truth in question is worth the risk of strife's possible issues. None knew this better, or felt it more deeply, than Dr. Miller; for his own experience furnished repeated proofs of it; and impelled, at first, only by powerful motives, to take up the pen of the polemic, he manifested ever afterwards a growing aversion

<sup>1</sup> Proverbs xvii, 14.

to its use. Although his life was very much spent in contending earnestly for the truth, it certainly would have puzzled those best acquainted with him, to discover that he had any real taste for controversy.

The Unitarians were not the only opponents with whom Dr. Miller's sermon at the installation of Mr. Nevins, and the connected subsequent publications, brought him into conflict. Professor Stuart of Andover, in his Letters to the Rev. William E. Channing, on the Trinity, and on the Divinity of Christ, had previously denied the doctrine of the Eternal Generation of the Son of God. Referring, afterwards, to his own Letters on Unitarianism, Dr. Miller wrote,

“———Nothing, I can declare, was more remote from my intention or wish than writing a line which might justly be construed as an offensive attack on any one, or which would be likely to provoke controversy. I will not disguise, however, that something which you had said, in one of your letters to Dr. *Channing*, was partly in my view in what I wrote. And as you have set me so noble an example of candour, I will frankly inform you, by what considerations I was induced to touch on the subject under discussion, in my cursory remarks on the doctrine of the Trinity.

“While I read your Letters to Dr. Channing with high respect for the learning and talent which they manifested; and with no little gratitude to a Brother, who was willing to employ his time and his strength in so good a cause; I must confess that my pleasure in perusing them suffered considerable deduction on account of several things which they contained. I thought that you had made some concessions to the enemies of the truth, which could not fail to impair the strength of your cause; and that, in defending that cause, you had abandoned some of the old, and as I verily believed, scriptural, positions and language, which I had been long accustomed to see the Orthodox maintain, and which I could not but regard as of great value in their system. But I was particularly dissatisfied with the manner in which, in your Second and Fourth Letters, you treated the doctrine of the Eternal Sonship of Christ. It appeared to me, that you not only opposed the doctrine of the Bible on that subject, but that you did it with a degree of confidence, and even severity, which I was at a loss either to justify or explain. I was not at that time aware that so large a portion of the orthodox clergy of New England agreed with you in opinion, as you seem to believe; nor did I suppose that you were

unacquainted with the facts, that the great body of the clergy of the Presbyterian Church in the United States were of a very different opinion, and that they by no means considered it as a matter of small moment.

"It soon became apparent that many of my brethren of the clergy felt as I did, or rather felt still greater uneasiness and apprehension. They regretted that a work which they considered as containing so much excellent and interesting matter, should also contain what they could not but deem calculated to do harm. They doubted whether it was their duty to contribute to its circulation, especially as exhibiting the sentiments of the orthodox body. I received letters from different and distant parts of the country, expressing with regret these feelings, and also urging the propriety of some publication fitted to counteract the influence of such of its parts as were thought to be erroneous. I read these communications with no little anxiety; but not considering myself as either bound or qualified to enter the lists on this subject; and feeling peculiar reluctance to engage in a discussion which might be viewed with pain by some of the friends of truth, and would, pretty certainly, be hailed by its enemies with joy; I resolved to lament in silence what was going on, rather than run the risk of impairing the cordiality of intercourse between Brethren, who certainly ought not to be divided.

"Such was, unfeignedly, the state of my mind, when a variety of unexpected circumstances led me to think that it was my duty to address the Members of the First Presbyterian Church of *Baltimore* on the subject of Unitarianism. I entered on the execution of my plan without the most distant thought of saying a Word on the Sonship of Christ. But, as I advanced in the consideration of the subject, it appeared to me impossible to avoid saying something on that point, without unfaithfulness to the cause of truth; and without incurring the suspicion, among the brethren of my own Church, of being either in error or in doubt with respect to the doctrine in question. I, therefore, felt myself called upon, as it fairly came in my way, briefly but decisively to express an opinion on the subject. The thought of offending even the most zealous and fastidious adherent to the doctrine to which you hold never entered my mind. To deliver my conscience, and to avert from myself unjust suspicion, without wounding the feelings of a human being, formed the sum total of my purpose,"<sup>1</sup>

In 1822, Professor Stuart published "Letters on the Eternal Generation of the Son of God, addressed to the

<sup>1</sup> Letters on the Eternal Sonship, 15-18.



Rev. Samuel Miller, D.D. In his Introduction he remarks,

“I must frankly acknowledge to you my regret, that I have expressed myself, on this subject, in terms so strong. The only apology for this which I can make, is, that at the time when I wrote my Letters, I was not at all apprehensive, that the doctrine of *eternal generation* was looked upon, by Christians in our country, to be so precious and important a truth, as your third Letter represents it to be. I knew, indeed, that there were theologians, who received and maintained the doctrine. But I was not conscious that it was regarded in such a light, as to call for *zealous* efforts to defend it, or that the denial of it would make any breach of entire confidence and charity between Christian brethren. Nothing was more natural for me than to have felt thus. During all my theological life, I had never once heard the doctrine of eternal generation seriously avowed and defended. Nearly all the ministers in New England, since I have been upon the stage, have, so far as I know their sentiments, united in rejecting it, or, at least, in regarding it as unimportant. Our most distinguished theologians, for forty years past, have openly declared against it. Multitudes of ministers among us, of distinguished talents and theological knowledge; men of eminent piety, and whose labors have been blessed with such revivals of religion as have scarcely appeared in any country; men whom the church will honor, long after they are dead, as some of her brightest ornaments, as diadems in her crown of glory; men who are not only orthodox, but distinguished champions of orthodoxy; reject, as I have done, the doctrine of eternal generation. Many who are fallen asleep in Jesus, and have gone to be rewarded by that Saviour whom they loved and honoured, were of the same sentiments and character.”<sup>1</sup>

“I know your excellent character and benevolent spirit too well, to believe that you would write one line in order to wound the feelings of the great body of your clerical brethren in New England, (and of many out of it also,) who reject the doctrine of eternal generation. I will not, therefore, take exceptions at the charge of *impiety*, and of verging to *Unitarian sentiments*, which you have connected with rejecting this doctrine. Though I have the pleasure of only a moderate personal acquaintance with you, I know enough concerning you to believe, that strong as your language is, and high as the nature of the charge might seem to be against your Christian brethren and fellow labourers

<sup>1</sup> Letters on Eternal Generation, 4, 5.

in the gospel, it proceeds from no ill-will to them; nor from any cause but an honest and well meaning zeal, for what you believe to be truth."<sup>1</sup>

"—— I profess to seek for truth; and if my heart does not deceive me, I do sincerely wish to know the truth, on this subject. I doubt not that you reciprocate these feelings; and that you will consider with candor what I may allege, in support of the opinion which I have formed.

"We will not *dispute*; but it is lawful and Christian to *investigate* and to *discuss*. Truth cannot suffer by this, if we act soberly and with kind feelings, while engaged in discussion."<sup>2</sup>

"Nothing but the respect and affection which I have for you, would have induced me, at present, to undertake the laborious investigation through which I have passed. But I acknowledge, that the manner in which you spoke of the sentiments that I embrace, did constrain me to re-investigate them, from a sense of Christian obligation."<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Miller could not well decline the amicable challenge thus given, and in the late Spring of 1823 appeared his reply.<sup>4</sup> Some extracts from this have already been given, as exhibiting part of the history and spirit of the controversy; and a few paragraphs will now be added.

"Before I proceed further, allow me heartily to thank you for the fraternal respect and urbanity with which you have written on this subject. I thank you for the honour you have done *me* by your manner of addressing me. I congratulate you on the still greater honour you have done *yourself*, by maintaining, throughout, with such perfect success, the temper and language of a gentleman and a christian. And, most of all, I rejoice in the honour you have done our common christianity, by shewing the enemies of the truth with what freedom from unhallowed feelings a friend of general orthodoxy can plead for his opinions."<sup>5</sup>

"\* \* there is a single sentence, on the subject under consideration, in the Third of my "Letters on Unitarianism," on which I wish to make a few explanatory remarks. It is in these words—"Where, then, is the absurdity or contradiction of an eternal, necessary emanation from him; or, if you please, an *eternal generation*; and also an *eternal procession* of the Holy

<sup>1</sup> Letters, 6.

<sup>2</sup> Id. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Id. 165.

<sup>4</sup> "Letters on the Eternal Sonship of Christ: addressed to the Rev. Professor Stuart, of Andover. By Samuel Miller, D. D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government, in the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church, at Princeton. Philadelphia: 1823."—12mo. Pp. 295.

<sup>5</sup> Pp. 13, 14.

Spirit from the Father and the Son? To deny the possibility of this, or to assert that it is a manifest contradiction, either in terms or ideas, is to assert, that although the Father *is* from all eternity, yet he could not *act* from all eternity; which I will venture to assert, is as UNPHILOSOPHICAL as it is IMPIOUS.”

“Here it appears to me, that, upon every principle of fair construction, the epithets, *unphilosophical* and *impious* are applied (as they certainly were intended to be) only to the assertion that God the Father, though he *is* from eternity, could not *act* from eternity. Now you declare that neither you, nor those who think with you, either assert or believe any such thing; and yet you seem to insist on applying the offensive epithets to yourselves. This I most sincerely regret. Nothing, I can solemnly assure you, my dear Sir, was ever further from my thoughts than such an application.” \* \*

“Yet, after all, with the most perfect consciousness of innocence, as to my intention, in this case, I can now see, on a review of my language, that it might have been more carefully guarded; and I do sincerely wish it had been differently modified; \* \* I hope, therefore, you will not only acquit me of all designed incivility; but that you will, once for all, be persuaded that I am incapable of employing any turn of expression calculated, in the least degree, to wound your feelings. \* \*

“In all the earnestness, then, with which you deprecate the unhallowed feelings and language of “controversy” on this subject, I most cordially unite with you. It shall be as you say. We will *discuss*, not *dispute*. And I do sincerely hope that those timid friends, who have apprehended that this discussion would prove injurious to the cause of truth, will be agreeably disappointed.”<sup>1</sup>

“What degree of prevalence the doctrine which you espouse may have gained in this country, I am unable with any degree of confidence to decide; but rather suppose it has few adherents out of *New England*. I do not even know who commenced the propagation of it in the *United States*. It was natural that the speculations of *Roell*, toward the close of the seventeenth century, in *Holland*, and, after him, of *Ridgley*, in *Great Britain*, should find their way across the *Atlantick*, and make some disciples. And, accordingly, I have no doubt that this was really the case. I have heard of a very short published hint of such opinion, as held by an eminently pious clergyman of the Presbyterian Church in *Philadelphia*, about forty years ago. Another Presbyterian clergyman, about the same time, of, perhaps, equal eminence for piety, but of a more eccentric disposition, pub-

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 19-22.

lished the same doctrine, as an article of his faith. Not a few reproaches were heaped upon us for tolerating such opinions in our Church; but still they were tolerated. No publick notice was taken of them in the way of discipline. To these succeeded the acute and venerable Dr. *Emmons*, of *Massachusetts*. What proportion of the *New England* clergy may be, at present, believers in that doctrine, I have no means of being accurately informed. It is well known, however, that the illustrious President *Edwards*, and also Doctors *Bellamy* and *Hopkins*, and other distinguished fathers of the *New England* churches, rejected this opinion, and to their dying day adhered to the old doctrine. With respect to the Presbyterian Church, my impression certainly is, that the great body of her clergy, at least nineteen out of twenty, adhere to the old *Nicene*, or rather, as, with my opinion, I ought to say, the *true Bible doctrine*. Certain it is, that none of them can consistently embrace any other, as long as they continue to profess their belief in the *Westminster* Confession of Faith, which is so explicit on this subject.

"I freely acknowledge, with you, that the doctrine which I now advocate, is that in which I was educated. A venerated Parent, who had studied Theology in *Massachusetts*, his native State, was my preceptor. I can truly say, even more strongly than you do, with respect to the opposite opinion, that, during the early part of my theological life, I never met with the slightest hint of opposition to the doctrine of Eternal Generation, excepting in books; nor ever heard a different opinion spoken of, but as an error, to be regarded with apprehension."<sup>1</sup>

In his "Concluding Remarks," Dr. Miller says,

"But you will, perhaps, ask me, what degree of *importance* I attach to the question under discussion. \* \*

"I do not suppose, then, that it ought to be ranked among the *fundamentals* of Christianity. \* \* it would never occur to me to think, for one moment, of placing it [the denial of the Eternal Sonship] in the list of *radical errors*. For example, no candid inquirer, I should suppose, would hesitate to acknowledge the general orthodoxy of the pious and venerable Dr. *Ridgley*, or would venture to brand him as a *heritick*, for the doctrine which he has so zealously taught on the subject of this correspondence.

"Yet, as I said, I must deeply regret the propagation of such a doctrine, and cannot consider it as by any means likely to be innocent. \* \*

"But, my dear brother, I hope you will not ascribe it to the least unfriendliness of feeling, when I say, that the *doctrine*,

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 24-26.

which you maintain on the subject of this correspondence, considered in itself, does not by any means excite so much apprehension in my mind, as the *means* to which you resort for its support. The doctrine *itself* I cannot, indeed, contemplate wholly without fear, in any form: but the medium of proof which you employ, I regard with much more uneasiness. A number of your arguments; the strain of your principal objections; and the license which you indulge, in many cases, in the interpretation of Scripture,—all savour so much of a school with which I should abhor the thought of associating your respected name, that I read them with not a little pain; a pain altogether unconnected with the circumstance of their coming from an opposer of my creed. Yes, my dear Sir, though I know you abhor the sentiments of that school, from your heart; yet, if your name were removed from the title-page; and if the several passages, in which you profess your firm belief in the Divinity of Christ, were expunged from your pamphlet, I should really suspect that it had come from some member of the Unitarian ranks, rather than from the midst of the Orthodox camp, I again deprecate any misconstruction of this remark: but it is the simple truth; and I know it to have been made by a number of others, as well as myself.”<sup>1</sup>

“I will now, my dear Friend, bring this correspondence, on my part, to a close—I hope a final one. \* \* I would much rather that we should spend our leisure hours in the culture of that brotherly love, which it is my earnest hope may ever subsist between us; and in recommending to our Pupils, and supporting before the world, those great fundamental and practical principles of our common salvation, in which we are substantially agreed, and which we concur in regarding as of infinite importance. Verily, my Brother, there is enough in these principles to engage the whole of the best acquirements, and the best energies, that we can summon to their defence.”<sup>2</sup>

“In bidding you farewell, allow me to add, as one more tribute to that cordial amity which I wish to subsist between us, that if I have written a word which is, in the remotest degree, inconsistent with a fraternal spirit, it is my earnest hope that you will forgive it, and set it down to the score of pure inadvertence. \* \* It has been my wish to remember, in every word that I wrote, that I was addressing one whom I regarded as a faithful and devoted Servant of Christ, and with whom I hope, through the riches of sovereign grace, to dwell forever in a more enlightened and a more happy world.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 284, 285, 289, 290.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 292, 293.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 294, 295.

In a letter to Mr. Wisner of January 17, 1823, speaking of his work on the *Eternal Sonship of Christ*, then in preparation, Dr. Miller says,

'I thank you for putting me on my guard against acrimonious language. Several other friends have done the same. The caution is important, and I feel that I have need of it. May he who has the hearts and pens of his people in his hands guide me aright in this as well as in other respects.'

To Dr. Green Dr. Miller wrote,

'Rev'd and dear Sir,           Princeton, January 28th, 1823.

'I received your letter of the 25th instant this morning, with \$7 inclosed. On opening and reading your communication, I acknowledge I felt half offended, that you should suppose me to have written with a view, or the least expectation of being remunerated; or to be willing to receive anything of the kind. No, my dear Sir: as long as the *Christian Advocate* remains in its present situation—struggling for support—I will never receive a farthing for anything I may write for it. I shall rather consider myself, in common with all the ministers and members of the Presbyterian Church, a debtor to its editor, after doing all in my power to help it. If I should live to see the time, when the magazine shall be able to support itself and its editor, comfortably, and have a surplus fund for buying food, I may then consent to receive something for my lucubrations. Until then, I entreat you, never think of offering me a cent, unless you wish to wound my feelings. After this explanation, you will not be surprized that I re-inclose the money transmitted.

'And you may rely on it, I will not write the less for resolving to take this step. I am still deeply engaged with Professor Stuart; but when I have a little leisure, you may certainly expect to hear from me again, if Providence permit. I will endeavor to think of some such little pieces as you mention.

'I am rejoiced to know that your lectures are well attended. I had heard of this, however, before. Mrs. Miller was in Philadelphia, for a single day, about a fortnight ago, and made a point of hearing you. She reported so many good things, I could not doubt that a degree of success equal to your most sanguine expectations was attending the effort.

'With many prayers for your daily increasing comfort and usefulness, in the important station in which you are called to serve the Church,

'I am, my dear Sir,

'Most respectfully and cordially yours,

'Rev'd Dr. Green.

Sam'l Miller.'

The learned and venerable Dr. Livingston, of the Theological Seminary at New Brunswick, thus acknowledged a copy of the work on the Eternal Sonship:—

‘Before I had finished your second letter, I felt inclined to thank you for your valuable present: after reading the whole, my approbation increased, and you must permit me to express the pleasure and satisfaction I received from your whole arrangement, your critical citations, and your unanswerable conclusions. Whether you will convince Dr. S. of his error is doubtful; but that you have established the doctrine, and will confirm others in their knowledge and faith, respecting the eternal generation of the Son of God, is certain; and our churches will unite with me in thanking you for a work in which erudition, and faithfulness, and zeal are successfully blended.’

## CHAPTER TWENTY-SIXTH.

### CHANGES AND LABORS.

1823-1826.

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#### 1. MRS. MARGARET BRECKINRIDGE.

IN January, 1823, Dr. Miller's eldest daughter, Margaret was married to the Rev. John Breckinridge.<sup>1</sup> She was now in her twenty-first year. In a revival which had taken place in Princeton, when she was about eighteen, an interest had been excited among some of her female friends for her conversion. "They concluded to make her the subject of special prayer. Of this she was entirely ignorant, until the evidence appeared in herself of the verity of the promise, as to the result of "fervent, effectual prayer." A sermon of the celebrated President Edwards, read in a small social meeting, arrested her attention, and brought her to continued, deep, serious thinking, which ended, as she thought, in a new view of everlasting things. With all the sanguine feelings of youth, she judged herself prepared to be united with the church; but owing to the unwillingness of her parents to risk the possibility of a premature profession of religion, this step was delayed."

Her next sister, Elizabeth, with whom she had been constantly and closely associated in her education, both at home and elsewhere, in giving an account, some time afterward, of her own religious views, said, she had "experienced an irresistible feeling of contempt for the concern which Margaret manifested, and concluded that she was indulging a mere hypocritical affectation; in consequence of which she was beginning to make some observations to this effect, when, in a moment, a deep conviction fastened on her conscience, of the danger of resisting what might

<sup>1</sup> See 4 Sprague's Annals, 645.



prove to be the influence of the Holy Spirit. This impression resulted in a real concern for herself, and in views equally solemn with those expressed by Margaret."<sup>1</sup>

"Both soon thought that they had obtained an interest in him whose blood cleanseth from all sin"; but Margaret, at length, "through manifold temptations," was drawn away again too much toward the world; while Elizabeth, falling into ill health, from which she never recovered, fell also into such doubt and perplexity about her own state, that for some time she shrunk from making a profession.

Mr. Breckinridge had closed his theological studies, under the conviction that it was his duty to devote himself to the work of foreign missions. With the expectation of accompanying him to a heathen land, Margaret had pledged herself. But events beyond his own control, and the decision of his fathers and older brethren in the ministry, changed his destination. He became pastor of the McChord Church of Lexington in his native State, and thither his wife accompanied him, in the spring following her marriage. Soon afterwards she there tremblingly professed Christ, just about the time—probably upon the same day, although without concert—that Elizabeth, measurably relieved of her doubts and fears, joined the Church in Princeton.

Mr. Breckinridge was a son of the Honorable John Breckinridge, of Kentucky, Attorney General of the United States, under Jefferson's administration. Designed for the Bar, and sent to college at Princeton for his literary training, he there was called, as he ever afterwards trusted, into the grace of Christ, and to the work of the ministry of reconciliation. Graduated with high honor in 1818, he was, in 1820 and 1821, a tutor in the College, while also prosecuting his studies in the Theological Seminary. Licensed to preach by the Presbytery of New Brunswick, the 1st of August, 1822, he served as chaplain of the House of Representatives of the United States during the session of 1822-23. On the 10th of September of the latter year, he was ordained to the work of the ministry and installed pastor of the McChord Church, by the Presbytery of West Lexington.

<sup>1</sup> Memoir of Mrs. Breckinridge, 21, 22.

## 2. SERMONS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

In 1823, Dr. Miller preached and published a sermon,<sup>1</sup> which is interesting as it marks the commencement of an observance, which has since been continued, and regarded with very great interest, by multitudes in the United States. The following advertisement prefaces the publication:—

“The circumstances which led to the preparation and delivery of the following Discourse, were these. A circular communication having been received, by an individual in *Princeton*, from a distant and highly respected Brother, announcing that a number of persons, in different parts of the *United States*, had agreed to set apart Thursday the 27th of February last, as a day of special Prayer and Fasting, for the particular purpose of imploring a Revival of Religion in the Colleges of our Country;—the Faculty and a large number of the Students of *Nassau Hall*, together with the Professors and Students of the Theological Seminary in *Princeton*, promptly resolved to unite in the observance. The day was observed accordingly. As a variety of considerations prevented the delivery of an appropriate discourse at that time; and as the author happened to be the first of the preachers stately ministering in the College-Chapel, who occupied that pulpit, after the day alluded to; he deemed it proper to embrace the opportunity afforded him, of endeavoring to revive and deepen the impression made by the preceding solemnities. Whether he did right in complying with a request to print what he delivered, the reader must judge. His prayer is, that it may be useful.

“PRINCETON, *March 13th*, 1823.”

Such was the first “Day of Prayer for Colleges.” It may have been less in accordance with Scripture teaching, than with prevailing modern religious tendencies, that the accompaniment of *fasting* has been so generally, perhaps quite universally, dropped.

To Dr. Griffin Dr. Miller wrote on the 12th of May, 1823,

“We are going on pretty much as usual—wanting larger funds, and, above all, much more grace, for the discharge of our momentous duties. Pray for us, that we may be more holy, more faithful and more useful.

<sup>1</sup> “The Literary Fountains Healed: a Sermon, preached in the Chapel of the College of New Jersey, March 9th, 1823. By Samuel Miller, D.D., Professor in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, Trenton; 1823.”—2 Kings ii. 21.—8vo. Pp. 42,

‘My health has been delicate and rather declining for two years past. I am now, thanks to a kind Providence, in tolerable comfort, but am daily admonished that I am growing old and infirm.’

The “Arch Street Presbyterian Church” of Philadelphia, between Tenth and Eleventh streets, was dedicated in 1823. Dr. Miller preached upon the occasion.<sup>1</sup> Denying, in this sermon, that to any place or edifice can now be attributed intrinsic holiness, and disapproving, therefore, of the idea that a church can be “consecrated;” he commends, however, “the practice of opening houses of public worship with appropriate religious exercises”—that is, their “dedication;” and on the ground of the “association of ideas,” maintains, that after a house has been so opened, “it is not desirable or proper, in ordinary cases, to employ it for any other purpose,” than the worship of God. As to church-building in general, he remarks,

“To expend millions upon a single place of worship *now*, while thousands of poor around us are suffering for bread, and while a great majority of our race are still covered with Pagan darkness, and perishing for lack of knowledge,—appears so unreasonable and criminal, that I hope we are in no danger of going to that extreme. But another, and, perhaps, a much more common extreme, especially in *our* church, taken at large, is, contenting ourselves with mean and uncomfortable houses in which to worship God. \* \* No worshipper ought ever to be willing to live in a better house than that which he, with others, has devoted to his Maker and Redeemer. And while, on the other hand, that splendour and magnificence of architecture, which is adapted to arrest and occupy the mind, and to draw it away from spiritual objects, ought carefully to be avoided; and avoided, not merely on the score of *expense*, but of *Christian edification*; so, on the other hand, that simple tasteful elegance, on which the eye is apt to rest with composed satisfaction; that studious provision for perfect convenience and comfort, which is calculated to place every worshipper in circumstances favourable to tranquil, undivided and devout attention, ought to be always and carefully consulted by every congregation, that is able to accomplish what is desirable in these respects.”

<sup>1</sup> “A Sermon, delivered June seventh, 1823, at the Opening of the New Presbyterian Church, in Arch street, in the City of Philadelphia, for the Public Worship of God. By Samuel Miller, D. D., Professor in the Theological Seminary at Princeton. Philadelphia: 1823.”—2 Chronicles vi. 41.—8vo. Pp. 32.

In a note upon the foregoing passage, the author says,

“It is a law of our mental, as well as of our physical nature, that two classes of emotions cannot be in a high, certainly not in a governing, degree of exercise at the same time. Whenever, therefore, we assemble for the worship of God in situations in which we are constantly surrounded and addressed by the most exquisite productions of art, which arrest and engross the mind, we are, plainly, not in circumstances favourable to true spiritual worship. Would any rational man expect to find himself really devout in *St. Peter's* at *Rome*, even if the most scriptural service were performed within its walls, until he should have become so familiar with the unrivalled specimens of taste and grandeur around him, as to forget or cease to feel them? Or, would any one be likely to “make melody in his heart to the Lord,” while the most skillful and touching refinements of music saluted and ravished his ears? Thrilled and transported he might be; but it would rather be the transport of natural taste, than the heavenliness of spiritual devotion. There never was a sounder maxim than that delivered in the plain and homely, but forcible language of the celebrated Mr. *Poole*, the learned compiler of the *Synopsis Criticorum*, \* \* —“the more inveiglements there are to sense, the more disadvantage to the spirit.” No one, of course, will consider this maxim as intended to teach, that, in order to promote the spirit of true devotion, it is necessary or desirable to be surrounded with that which is mean, irregular, or disgusting to the mind of taste. On the contrary, the fact is, that such mean and disgusting objects tend to arrest and draw away the mind in an opposite and painful manner; and are thus, perhaps, with respect to many persons, quite as unfriendly to the exercises of calm piety, as the utmost fascinations of art can be.”<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Miller preached a sermon in 1823, before the Synod of New Jersey, just constituted by the division of the Synod of New York and Jersey, which the Synod requested for publication, ordering five hundred copies to be printed.<sup>2</sup> In regard to slavery he said,

“— on the general subject of slavery, it is not necessary to enlarge before this audience. All who hear me will be ready at once to grant, that, considered in itself, it is unjust,

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 21-23.

<sup>2</sup> “A Sermon, Preached at New-Ark, October 22d, 1823, Before the Synod of New Jersey, for the benefit of the African School, under the care of the Synod. By Samuel Miller, D.D., Professor in the Theological Seminary at Princeton. Trenton: 1823.”—Isaiah lxi. 1.—8vo. Pp. 28.

unreasonable, inhuman, contrary to all the maxims of sound policy, as hostile to the best interests of those who inflict, as of those who suffer the injury, and especially altogether unworthy of a Christian and a Republican community.”

“—— no advantage, in this great concern, is, in my opinion, to be gained by indulging in contemptuous or acrimonious language respecting our Southern Brethren, who are more largely conversant with the evil in question, and more immediately and deeply concerned than ourselves in applying a proper remedy. We sometimes hear language in the Eastern and Middle sections of our country, in regard to the inhabitants of the principal *Slave States*, as they are called, which is calculated deeply to wound feelings, and, of course, by no means adapted to the promotion of harmony. Is this fraternal? Is it wise? Is it politic? I really think not. I know not that we have any reason to consider our Southern Neighbours as more friendly to slavery, in theory, or as a system, than ourselves. They freely acknowledge the deplorable character of the evil as it exists among themselves. They lament it; they mourn over it; and give every evidence that they desire, as sincerely as we desire, to apply some adequate remedy to the acknowledged calamity. Are they even essentially more to blame for the existence of slavery among themselves, than the inhabitants of the Northern and Eastern States? I apprehend they are not. \* \* \*

“It cannot be denied, indeed, that our Southern Brethren are very sensitive—extremely, perhaps excessively sensitive—on this subject. But, all things considered, can we wonder at this? Have they not *reason* to feel deeply on the subject? Would it not be an indication of blindness and stupidity truly wonderful, if they did not feel deeply? Were *we* in their situation, have we reason to believe that we should manifest less even of morbid sensibility in reference to an object so highly interesting in its aspect? Let us, then, ever be ready to make allowance for their feelings, to treat them with delicacy and respect, and carefully to avoid all language which may tend to excite unkind sentiments, or to exhibit the appearance of a divided country. The evil to which we refer is a NATIONAL EVIL; and there ought to be a NATIONAL FEELING and a NATIONAL EFFORT respecting it. Nor is this exhortation to cultivate a conciliatory spirit in relation to such a subject, to be considered, by any means, as a mere dictate of worldly prudence. I verily believe, judging from the language of the New Testament, that if the apostle *Paul* were now on earth, and were to travel in the Southern States, and to find the laws

and the condition of the country what they are, he would uniformly preach and converse on this subject in a manner, which, though by no means temporizing, would be considered as kindly, forbearing, and inoffensive by all classes of the people."<sup>1</sup>

Subsequently, in this discourse, Dr. Miller recommends gradual emancipation; efforts to elevate the intellectual, moral, religious, social and political condition of the blacks; and African colonization. He condemns, strongly, conspiracies and insurrections on their part, to regain freedom, as a mad and criminal attempt; and urges upon every American citizen the duty of endeavoring to repair the wrongs of Africa.

The Evangelical and Literary Magazine of Richmond, conducted by Dr. John H. Rice, says,

"This is a sermon, on a very interesting subject, by a writer whom one is always glad to meet. And we can assure our readers that the perusal of the discourse will fully repay them for the time and money they may expend on it. We can only mention now, that the Southern people are treated with great kindness and delicacy, in discussing this ticklish subject: we find no reproaches, no bitter and provoking terms, but that state of good feeling, which we delight to see among brethren and gentlemen in the Middle and Northern States, towards the people of the South. And we are glad to bear our testimony to the undeniable fact, that a spirit such as we have mentioned is increasing; local feelings are wearing away; and Christians *there* speak of us *here* in terms of fraternal affection, well *calculated* to win every heart not hardened by obstinate and long indulged prejudices. This is as it should be: love will at length characterize all the disciples of Christ. May God hasten it in his time."<sup>2</sup>

This sermon was by no means one of the ablest productions of its author, but is of special interest, as illustrating the change of opinion and feeling which afterwards came over some portions of the Presbyterian Church. Dr. Miller abated nothing of the decided condemnation of slavery, which he had pronounced more than twenty-five years previously; but he employed language of studied conciliation; and this his Southern brethren were then ready to applaud. At a later period, they would have been more

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 4-7.

<sup>2</sup> 1823. P. 616.

likely to stigmatize it as an impertinent interference with what Northerners had no right to touch.

The African School, in behalf of which the sermon just mentioned was delivered, seems to have continued in existence until 1826, then to have been abandoned, and its funds, by agreement of the two Synods of New York and New Jersey, transferred to an African Education Society formed in that year at Newark.

On the 23rd of October, Dr. Miller wrote to Mr. Sprague.

‘I thank you, my dear Sir, for your sermon, received the day before your letter arrived. Allow me to say, that I have perused it with more than common pleasure, and that I by no means regret, (as you feared I would,) that you have published it. It is seasonable, well executed, and will, I hope, be useful.

‘It rejoices my heart to hear that the Lord is visiting your congregation with his rich grace. Go on, my beloved young Brother!—preach the truth as it is in Jesus; study more and more to exemplify it in your life; and be much on your *knees* before God for your people, as well as on your *feet* addressing them, and you will find a blessing—a rich blessing. The Lord be with you, and make you a chosen vessel for promoting his glory!’

To the Rev. Jared Sparks Dr. Miller wrote,

‘Dear Sir.

Princeton, October 27, 1823.

‘It was not until the evening before the last, on my return from a journey of considerable length, that your letter of the 18th of September, together with the volume which accompanied it, was put into my hands. I thank you for the respectful strain of your letter; and I accept, with suitable acknowledgments, your “Inquiry into the comparative Moral Tendency of Trinitarian and Unitarian Doctrines,” in a series of letters addressed to me.

‘I have no complaint to make of your having transgressed the limits of either decorum or moderation in your manner of addressing me in this work. I lament, indeed, the deep and vital error with which it abounds, and to the support of which it is devoted. And, though some of its language appears to me to be quite as liable to criticism, on the score of severity, to say the least, as any, even the most severe, that I had employed in opposing Unitarianism; yet, on the supposition that you are in the right as to the substance of your sentiments, (and I have no doubt you think yourself so,) it would not be easy, so far as my recollection serves me, to convict you of frequent or gross

offence against the laws of decent discussion. Concede to me the advantage of the same just allowance, and our accounts, as controvertists, may, I think, be easily and amicably balanced.

‘It is not my present intention to make any public reply to the “Letters” contained in the volume which you have been so obliging as to send me; not because I have no respect for the talents and learning of the author; nor because I consider the work as destitute of such ingenious and plausible statements as are calculated to lead astray the unwary; but because I cannot perceive that a single important point is set by you in a light demanding further public notice; because the state of my health, and other plans and enterprizes forbid me to enter the lists with any of my assailants; and because there is no end to controversy. As I expect, however, in a short time to put a second edition of my “Letters on Unitarianism” to the press, I may be induced by what you have written, to extend my discussion, and to fortify my arguments in a few cases; but without a formal reference to any particular work.

‘Here then, my dear Sir, I bid you a respectful but melancholy adieu. Be assured I have not, and never had, toward you, an unkind feeling. On the contrary, I have the most sincere and ardent desire to promote, as far as it may be in my power, your temporal and eternal welfare. But when I see you, with endowments rendering you capable of highly valuable services to the Church and to the world, groping in darkness concerning the plan of salvation, and exerting yourself to the utmost to propagate those fundamental errors, which must, if persisted in, conduct both yourself, and all whom you persuade to embrace them, to eternal perdition—when I see this, ought I not to be grieved? It *does* grieve me to the bottom of my heart. I have as firm and unwavering a conviction that this is really the case, as I have of my own existence. It has pleased God to open my eyes on the preciousness of Christ, as a divine Saviour—as the Lord my righteousness, and the Lord my strength. Here I rest with a confidence which nothing else can inspire. And never, I am persuaded, will you know that sweet repose of soul, that humble joy and peace in believing, which flow from this confidence, unless it please God to open your eyes in a similar manner, and to bring you to an experimental acquaintance with that “truth as it is in Jesus,” which your pious ancestors embraced and enjoyed. That you may be made to know and rejoice in this experimental acquaintance with the gospel of the grace of God has been, and shall be again, my earnest prayer.



‘You may, perhaps, be ready to say, that this mode of speaking indicates a degree of confidence, on my part, which nothing can justify. But in vain will this objection be urged against one whose consciousness conspires with the plainest declarations of Scripture in supporting his confidence. In vain will you tell a man that a certain delightful article of food, which he has often tasted, does not possess the sweetness and other qualities which he ascribes to it. He *knows* it does; while you, perhaps, have never taken it into your lips.

‘The only time you ever heard me preach, I had a subject which some of my hearers supposed, and you, possibly, may have supposed, to be directed against yourself personally. I have never allowed myself thus to abuse clerical privileges. I should think it unworthy of a Christian and a gentleman. That sermon had been prepared and preached, a few weeks before, in Princeton, and was afterwards preached in Baltimore without the alteration of a single word. Nor had I the least suspicion, until after the whole service was closed, that you were in the audience. As I never allow myself to keep back the truth because a particular individual is present; so the practice of turning the eyes of an audience on an individual, by preaching *at him*, never entered into my system.

‘Pardon the freedom which I have indulged in this letter; and believe me to be, with unfeigned wishes for your temporal and eternal happiness,

‘Your Sincere friend,

‘The Rev’d Jared Sparks.

Sam’l Miller.’

To the Rev. Joseph Sanford,<sup>1</sup> who had left the Seminary but eight months previously, had subsequently married, and had already lost his wife, Dr. Miller said, in a letter of condolence, dated the 19th of December, 1823,

“My dear young brother, perhaps the Lord, by thus early trying you in the furnace of affliction, intends to prepare you for a course of *peculiar devotedness to his cause*, and of *peculiar usefulness*. If so, will you not have reason forever to praise him for it? If so, will not one of the most mysterious dispensations that has lately come to my knowledge, prove to be full of light, and mercy, and joy in the end?”

Dr. Miller was now, perhaps, near the height of his efficiency as a professor, and of his general influence upon the Theological Seminary, and was not without encouragement in the appreciation of his labors by the students. The First

<sup>1</sup> See Baird’s Memoir of Sanford, 121, for the whole letter. 4 Sprague’s Annals, 655.

Class of 1823-4, addressed to him an earnest request, in which many of the members of the lower classes afterwards joined, that he would prepare a complete Ecclesiastical History, and also a work on Church Government.

'We are emboldened,' they say, 'by the consideration, that we have heard enough from you already to convince us, that you have the materials to complete a history of the Church, without much additional filling up. You may then comply with our request, without going through that labor of investigation and writing, which the commencement of an undertaking so vast would require. \* \* Allow us, Sir, to remind you of the growing extent of that church, in whose service you have been and are acting so beneficial and responsible a part; of the number of those whose eyes are turned to you for so inestimable a gift as that which we are now soliciting; and the especial eagerness with which it would be hailed by numbers in every section of our nation, who would receive it as a message of love from one whose memory they hold so dear; and who, in the perusal of its pages, would have numberless impressions revived which time had effaced, and would almost feel themselves transported to the spot, where they have spent so many happy hours, and received so many useful instructions.'

Upon the back of the petition from the First Class, dated January 6, 1824, Dr. Miller wrote,

'To this respectful application I was constrained to return a negative answer. If I had begun such a work ten years before, I might have hoped for time and strength to accomplish it. But it was now too late.'

To the Rev. Charles C. Beatty,<sup>1</sup> on the 16th of February, 1824, Dr. Miller wrote,

'I congratulate you, my dear Sir, on your happy settlement at Steubenville, and your prospects of comfort and usefulness. My daily prayer is, that the Lord may direct and strengthen you in your arduous labors, and crown them with abundant success. I hope you will never be permitted, for one hour, to lose sight of the blessed fact, that *it is not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of God*, that the labors of the most faithful ministers are rendered truly useful. I called this a *blessed fact*; and truly it is delightful to think, that the success of our ministry does not depend upon our own weakness, but is in infinitely better hands than ours, and will be so ordered as

<sup>1</sup> Since, D.D.

to promote the glory of his name, whose we are and whom we serve.

‘It did not surprise me to find, that you had experienced some difficulties at Steubenville. As I had no doubt you meant to be faithful, I should have wondered if you had not found difficulties. In such a world as this, where the carnal mind is in enmity against God, and where the business of doing good always has been, and always will be up-hill work, the minister of Christ must not expect to labor without opposition. \* \*

‘I have no doubt you have been, and are, not a little perplexed by Mr. Jennings’s habit of inviting Methodists, of almost all characters, freely to his pulpit. \* \* yet it is difficult to give advice on such a case, without knowing a great variety of particular facts, with which I am unacquainted. All that I can say on the subject, at this distance, and with my ignorance of circumstances, may be comprised in the following general remarks:—

‘1. If I were situated as you are, I would not be governed, in inviting men into my pulpit, by the name which they bore, but by the spirit and character of each individual. Many Methodist preachers \* \* I would not invite; but others who are mild, prudent, more nearly orthodox, and who have such a sense of delicacy and propriety as to avoid saying anything to your people that would give offense, or be likely to do harm—such I would occasionally invite—just often enough to stop people’s mouths, and to prevent their taking up the notion that I meant to invite none who bore the Methodist name.

‘2. While I took this course, I would say little on the subject to anybody. If you keep your mouth shut, and go steadily, quietly, and silently forward, on the plan that I have advised, you will have but little trouble. But if you allow yourself to say much on the subject, even to your most intimate friends, you may rely on it your difficulty will be increased. It is impossible to talk on such a subject, without having our remarks misunderstood and misrepresented. If we undertake to say what we will do, and what we will not do, we shall probably give offence. But if we do the very same thing, without saying a word about it, the probability is we shall give no offence.

‘3. While you pursue this course, preach the gospel faithfully and warmly, without meddling, by name, with other denominations; and visit your people diligently from house to house, *paying particular attention to the young people*; and I shall not fear for your ultimate success.

‘You ask, whether a Methodist preacher, who thinks that Dr. Priestley was a good man, and is now in heaven, ought to

be invited to your pulpit. I cannot answer this question, without knowing more of the man than your letter furnishes me with. If he appeared to be a pious man, and friendly to all the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel; and if I had good reason to believe he would never throw out any such absurd and strange inconsistencies to my people, I think I should invite him—if there were no other objection in the way. If, however, he not only held such an opinion concerning Priestley, but was also fond of publishing it from the pulpit, I certainly would not invite him into a pulpit of mine. Yet while I refrained from inviting him, it would be in silence, as I said before.

‘ \* \* Our seminary goes on to flourish, as to the number of students; but is greatly embarrassed for want of more ample funds, in regard to which its progress is very slow. But it is good to wait the Lord’s time. When it is best we should have funds, they will come.’

To the Assembly of 1824, the Board of Directors of the Theological Seminary made a special report in relation to the funds of the institution. The permanent funds of every kind amounted to \$44,574.66, and a debt of \$11,000 had been incurred by loans to meet, from year to year, a deficit in the current revenue. Special agents to solicit contributions were recommended.

It was when Dr. Miller was travelling in New England—probably in June 1820—that he became acquainted with the Rev’d Asahel Nettleton;<sup>1</sup> and he seems to have entertained, from the first, a very high respect and affection for this truly great, and justly renowned evangelist. We find him, on the 19th of May, 1824, writing to Mr. Nettleton, and after acknowledging the reception of a presentation copy of “Village Hymns,” and strongly commending that collection, adding,

‘I hear often of you, my dear Brother, though not as frequently from you as I could wish; and have been truly sorry to learn that your health has been so much impaired. I trust, however, that with all your debility of body, your spirit has been made strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might; and that the precious work of the Lord which you have been permitted to witness and to rejoice in, has been a cordial to your heart. I trust it has really gladdened my heart to hear of those triumphs of our Master’s grace, which have taken place around you. Oh that you and I might be allowed to witness them more fre-

<sup>1</sup>D. D. from 1839. See 2 Sprague’s Annals, 542.

quently, and to enter more deeply into their genuine spirit and sweetness!

‘Our seminary is going on as usual—every year increasing in the number of its pupils, and I hope not without tokens of our Master’s presence in the best sense. But, alas! if I am not deceived, it sometimes does grieve me to the very heart to think how far short our pupils, as well as their teachers, fall of that supreme, ardent devotedness of soul, which ought to be manifested, with growing fervour, every hour that we live. Dear Brother, pray for us, that, in this school of the prophets, that Holy Spirit of sanctification and of zeal, which we daily pray may be poured upon all the churches, may be poured out in his most plenteous effusions.’

‘Mrs. Miller and myself would be greatly gratified to see you under our roof.’

### 3. LECTURE ON CREEDS AND CONFESSIONS.

The Rev. John M. Duncan, pastor of the Presbyterian church, Tammany street, Baltimore, having been appointed a director of the Seminary, delivered, as the preacher before the Board, Faculty and Students, upon the day that he took his seat, a discourse, which he afterwards published, pointedly condemning all creeds and confessions. The next Introductory Lecture—that of the summer session—was given by Dr. Miller, who, with tacit reference to Mr. Duncan’s address, chose “Creeds and Confessions” as his subject. In the afternoon of the day on which it was delivered the students held a meeting, at which they unanimously resolved to request a copy for publication.<sup>1</sup> Through their committee they said, “In making this request, the Students would not wish to be considered as expressing any opinion upon the merits of the general question; but as influenced solely by the desire that the whole subject may come fairly before the public.” This lecture, with some slight alterations, and an addition of six pages relating to the proper extent of creeds, was republished by the Presbyterian Board of Publication, as a small volume, in 1839.<sup>2</sup> It still pre-

<sup>1</sup> “The Utility and Importance of Creeds and Confessions: an Introductory Lecture, delivered at the Opening of the Summer Session of the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church, Princeton, July 2, 1824. By Samuel Miller, D. D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in the said Seminary. *“In necessariis unitas, in non necessariis libertas, in omnibus charitas.”—Augustin.*”—8vo. Pp. 84.

<sup>2</sup> “The Utility and Importance of Creeds and Confessions: addressed particularly to Candidates for the Ministry. By Samuel Miller, D. D. *“In necessariis unitas, in non necessariis libertas, in omnibus charitas.”—Augustin.*”—18mo. Pp. 119.

served, perhaps from oversight, the language of a "seminary" "lecture" to "pupils," although addressed on the title-page to "Candidates for the Ministry" in general. The Christian Advocate characterized it as presenting a "masterly view of the subject." It said,

"Nothing, in our judgment, could be more reasonable than the publication of this lecture, which we certainly consider as the ablest production of its author; although his ability before was far from being questionable. \* \* It well became a professor in a theological seminary, to guard his pupils against the sophistry and specious pretenses of these innovators; especially as their Coryphaeus had given him such a special call to the service: and we do hope that the publication of his lecture will be extensively useful. \* \* We are satisfied that all who need conviction on the subject of which it treats, will, if they read it carefully and candidly, find what they need. Some, we are aware, are beyond conviction, and from any one of this corps, we should exceedingly like to see an *attempt* to answer this lecture."<sup>1</sup>

High church Episcopalians, no less than their Papal exemplars, manifest a characteristic fondness for mere human authority, and are specially addicted to quoting the "Fathers" in support of their tenets. It was hardly to be expected, however, that they would be found appealing, in any controversy upon their hands, to one of the Princeton "Fathers," and, least of all, that Dr. Miller would be the authority of their choice. Yet a writer in the New York Christian Journal for November, 1824, seized upon the "Lecture on Creeds and Confessions," as a god-send, to bolster up Bishop Hobart and the High-church party in their policy of refusing to assist in the dissemination of the Bible without the Prayer book; and this writer's communication was considered so important, that, after its appearance in the Journal, it was issued on a separate sheet for much wider effect. Dr. Miller had suddenly been discovered to be very "eminent and judicious," by those who had certainly been at no small pains, to persuade the religious public, that they thought him just the reverse. The writer in question remarks,

"I have lately been much gratified by the perusal of a lec-

<sup>1</sup> 3 Vol., (1825,) 86.

ture, delivered before the students of the Presbyterian Seminary at Princeton, by the Rev. Professor Miller, entitled, "The Utility and importance of Creeds and Confessions." As it contains much sound argument, clothed in very forcible language, on a subject which, I apprehend, is yet to produce dissensions in the christian world, I have thought proper to transcribe some of the most important passages for insertion in the Journal. The doctrines contained in this Lecture, are materially the same as those which have been maintained and acted upon, for years, by Bishop Hobart and other judicious Episcopalians in the United States. Those gentlemen will learn with satisfaction, that not only the professors at Princeton, but the highest authority in the Presbyterian communion, to wit, the General Assembly,<sup>1</sup> have, within a few months past, given their sanction to principles which have heretofore drawn upon consistent Churchmen the obloquy and indignation of other denominations, and even of some of "their own household." Bishop Hobart and his friends will have nothing to fear hereafter from men who profess to circulate the Scriptures "without note or comment;" and who accuse such of their opponents as advocate the distribution of the Book of Common Prayer, in conjunction with the Bible, of being "guilty of the Romish error of impugning the sufficiency of the Scriptures as a rule of faith."

After giving a number of extracts from Dr. Miller's lecture and the minutes of the Assembly, and comparing them with Bishop Hobart's published opinions, the writer says, "After such explicit language from one of the most eminent and judicious Presbyterians in our country, which agrees with the sentiments of the General Assembly of his Church, it is to be hoped that the question will forever be put to rest, whether it is expedient for Churchmen to unite with other denominations in disseminating the Scriptures. \* \*"

To this article Dr. Miller replied, in the Christian Journal, as follows:—

"Mr. Editor,—As I am not a subscriber to the Christian Journal, and seldom see any of its numbers, it was by accident, and only within a few days, that I met with the number for last month. In turning over its pages, I was not a little surprised to find a communication subscribed "*Catholicus*," and entitled, "Presbyterian sentiments on the best mode of disseminating the truths of Scripture,"—in which a most extraordinary construction is put on the leading opinions expressed in my Introductory Lecture on "Creeds and Confessions," and some

<sup>1</sup> Minutes 1824, pp. 211, 212.

no less extraordinary inferences drawn from that construction. My first impression was, that no public notice of this communication, on my part, was required. The representation which it gave of the doctrine of the Lecture appeared to me so manifestly unwarranted, and, indeed, I must say, such an extravagant perversion, that I thought it might safely be left to the good sense of every reader. But, finding that some persons really seem to form a different estimate of this publication from that which I should have expected; that measures have been taken to give it circulation in a detached form, beyond the ordinary sphere of the Journal in which it originally appeared; and that some of my friends think it ought not to pass unnoticed; I beg leave to occupy a single page of your miscellany with a brief reply to the singular remarks of *Catholicus*. If nothing had been in question, Mr. Editor, but the merits of my humble Lecture, you certainly would not have heard a syllable from me on the present occasion. But it would really grieve me to be thought an enemy of Bible Societies, or capable of intentionally uttering a word hostile to their universal establishment and triumph. Nor did it ever occur to me that there was any more connexion between my doctrine concerning "Creeds," and such hostility, than between my belief in Presbyterian parity, and the heresy of Socinianism. And whether the efforts of your correspondent, to represent me as agreeing with his diocesan, do not betray the weakness of a bad cause, I shall leave to the consideration of discerning and reflecting readers.

"It is neither my province nor my design to enter into any discussion concerning the correctness of Bishop Hobart's opinions. But I must be allowed strongly to deprecate being supposed to agree with him in reference to Bible Societies. If I have understood the scope of what has been said and written against that gentleman in relation to this subject, it is—not that he is zealously attached to his own church; not that he admires and loves the Book of Common Prayer, and is earnestly desirous of putting it into the hands of every human being to whom it can possibly be conveyed. For all this I have never heard him blamed by any one: but for being unwilling to unite with any society, the object of which was to circulate the word of God ALONE. Now, as to this point, I totally differ from him, both in principle and practice. I consider the Scriptures as the ONLY infallible rule of faith and practice; and as a SUFFICIENT rule for all who approach them with humble and honest hearts. I am, therefore, perfectly willing to co-operate with any and every person in sending them, without note or comment, to every son and daughter of Adam. I consider it as a privilege



and an honor to be a member of the American Bible Society, and of every other Bible Society within convenient reach: and my impressions of the importance of these societies, in promoting the best interests of the world, is so far from being impaired, that it is daily becoming deeper.

“In full consistency, as it appears to me, with all this,—when I go into the pulpit, I think it incumbent on me, not only to recommend the Bible, in general, to my hearers, but also to declare to them *how I understand it*. When called upon to assist in ordaining a minister, I deem it indispensable to ascertain, by appropriate measures, how the *living teacher* whom I am about to aid in sending forth, is likely to explain the Word of Life which we commission him to preach. And when an opportunity is presented, I do not fail to recommend and circulate the Confession of Faith, and the form of Government and Discipline of my own Church. But I should abhor the thought of withholding a Bible from an ignorant, destitute fellow-creature, until I could accompany the delivery of it with my own formulas and articles. Just as soon should I think of withholding a piece of bread from a starving beggar, until I had previously engaged him to come under the government of my own family. I am quite willing to trust the Bible alone in the hands of every inhabitant of the globe; and to leave the question, whether they shall be connected with this or that denomination, to their own serious and deliberate decision, aided by that enlightening and sanctifying Spirit, who leads his people into all necessary truth. If I believed, indeed, that the peculiarities of the Church of which I am a member were essential to salvation; or that it was impossible for a serious inquirer to understand the fundamental doctrines of Scriptures, without the assistance of my formularies and expositions, my conduct would be different. But, as I believe neither, I am, of course, not embarrassed with any of the consequences of such belief. It is time enough, in my opinion, when persons make inquiries with a view to join a particular denomination, or put themselves in the way of being taught its peculiarities, to meet them—if candidates for private membership, with those views of doctrine and order;—or if aspirants to the ministry, with those “Creeds and Confessions”—the reception of which appears to me indispensable to the attainment of ecclesiastical concord and edification. Thousands and tens of thousands who will never have an opportunity of coming within the pale of my own Church,—and who might not be disposed to do it, if they had,—may yet be willing to receive Bibles from *any* hands, and may be forever benefited by them. Ought I to withhold from them the precious

gift? I dare not do it. And I am so far from seeing an inconsistency between this decision, and the doctrine which I have taught concerning Church "creeds," that they appear to me to illustrate and strengthen each other.

"I am, Sir, yours respectfully,  
Samuel Miller."

"Princeton, Dec. 24th, 1824.

It was certainly a desperate expedient, to attempt to make capital for the Romanizing opponents of Bible Societies out of the opinions of one, who was well known to be among the firmest friends and most active supporters of those institutions. Self-blinded, at best, must they have been, who would see no difference between insisting on creeds for denominational protection and extension, or as convenient text books, and insisting upon them as necessary accompaniments of the Bible—between, on the one hand, simply desiring and striving that all might understand the Holy Scriptures in a certain way, deemed the right way; and, on the other, refusing to give the Scriptures without some earnest of their being so understood. But the "Fathers" have often suffered thus from professed disciples. From holding back God's Word, until our comments can go with it, there is but a short step to discouraging, or even prohibiting, its circulation altogether. Rome says, the comment—the creed—alone is sufficient: why trouble the people with the text, when they are not to interpret it for themselves? On High-church principles, the Book of Common Prayer is all that any one need be "troubled with;" and is certainly preferable to the Scriptures, where both cannot be had: nay, the latter is only a dangerous book without the former.

In curious contrast with this High-church laudation of the Lecture on Creeds, and a more honorable testimony to its merits, was a critique which came from the depths of Socinianism. Not many months after that lecture was published, *The Unitarian Miscellany* of Baltimore expired. Dying agonies should, perhaps, never be severely judged, and especially not in this case, if the *Miscellany* was dying of wounds received in its recent conflict with Dr. Miller; but some of its "last words" may, at least, be given as a specimen of "Liberal Christianity." In the farewell number, the Lecture on Creeds, or rather its author, was thus noticed:—

“In the first place, *heretic* is a word which comes to his lips as readily, and is dealt about as generously, as if he were the head of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church himself. Indeed, *we never think of him now*, that he does not present himself to our mind, *with a triple crown on his head, and a couple of great keys in his hand.*”

“*All the liberality and candour*, for which Unitarians would ever be distinguished, does not require them to be abused in this way, without sending back a bold and honest word in reply. At any rate, we will not do so ourselves. We will say to Dr. Miller, that all his talk about “corrupt opinions,” and “indifference to truth,” and “awful gulphs,” and “awful ravages,” *is miserable cant*, and is not worth a serious refutation. We will say to him, that of *all the theological writers* of the present time in this country, he has the distinction of being *the most bitterly and perseveringly illiberal*; that we know not of what kind of fame he may be ambitious, but if he continue much longer in the course which he is pursuing, *he will be regarded by all the moderate and judicious, and he will go down to posterity, as THE ARCH-BIGOT OF HIS DAY*. If that is a reputation which he covets, he is in a fair way of acquiring it. *And these are our last words to Dr. Miller.*”<sup>1</sup>

“Liberal Christians” will certainly suffer in Christian character, until they have learned a little more of him, “Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatened not.” And those, who regard real liberality as true enlargement of mind, will hardly discover it in the theory, that he who sincerely believes a doctrine to be destructive of man’s eternal interests, must, nevertheless, not so declare. It has always, indeed, been a favorite idea with these “Liberals,” that men are not accountable for their belief; but certainly they were disposed to hold Dr. Miller, before their own tribunal, to a pretty strict account.

#### 4. DEATH OF ELIZABETH MILLER.

During much the greater part of her life in Princeton, Mrs. Miller, with some other female members of the church,—at times only one other,—kept up a weekly evening female prayer meeting, at the houses, each in its turn, of those who participated, excepting when peculiar circum-

<sup>1</sup> See 8 Lit. and Evang. Mag., (Richmond, Va.,) 134.

stances, for a longer or shorter period, made some one of these houses the only convenient place. In July, 1824, Dr. Miller writes to his wife, who was sojourning with their invalid daughter, Elizabeth, at Schooley's Mountain, that the ladies had met in her bed-room the evening of her departure.

Mrs. Miller's visits to Schooley's Mountain, while justified in her mind chiefly by the claims of health, were always made occasions of effort for the good of those with whom she came in contact. During this visit, when she and her daughter Elizabeth might both have been expected to be wholly engrossed in the vain struggle of the latter with disease and languor, they were both in fact planning for the cause of Christ in the neighborhood of the Heath House, where they found pleasant accommodations, but constantly had reason to deplore the lack of religious privileges within the easy reach of the surrounding settled population and the summer guests. The Presbyterian Church at Hackettstown, four miles off, and that at German Valley, somewhat nearer, but perhaps not more easily accessible, were the chief resorts of worshippers from the Mountain, but were, of course, too far away for those who had no particular religious zeal. Mrs. Miller and Elizabeth suggested to Mr. Marsh, their enterprising and estimable host, himself sincerely interested in the religious condition of the neighborhood, the erection of a small place of worship, near the boarding house, for the accommodation of both residents and visitors, and to be under the supervision of the Rev. Joseph Campbell, pastor of the Hackettstown Church. Elizabeth manifested so much interest in the undertaking, and her wasted form and alabaster complexion added so much to the impression of her saintliness, that the success of the enterprise was by some attributed chiefly to her prayers. Mrs. Miller promised to interest, if possible, some of her Philadelphia acquaintances, especially those who frequented the Mountain, in the project, as well as to contribute herself; and, accordingly, she wrote, soon after Elizabeth's death, mentioning it to Alexander Henry, Esquire, whose name, coupled with his large hearted Christian benevolence and zeal for the church, will be held in everlasting remembrance. He

heartily seconded her proposal, and materially aided in the undertaking. Dr. and Mrs. Miller regarded their part in the work as a thank-offering for the peaceful and happy death of their departed daughter. The deed of the building was for some reason executed to the Trustees of the Theological Seminary. Mr. Marsh wrote, in April, 'With the exception of four or five persons, the whole neighborhood is engaged heart and soul in furthering the project, and it has been already remarked, that never before in this part of the country has a public building been erected with so much unanimity, and with so much zeal.' On the 24th of August, 1825, Mr. Henry wrote,

'Just returned from my summer's jaunt, I cannot omit stating to you the pleasure felt by professing Christians in seeing so neat and eligible a building erected near the two boarding houses on Schooley's Mount. Much did I wish to have the pleasure of meeting you there. I think my heart would have joined with yours in thankfulness to the Father of mercies, for putting it into your heart, and that of your dear departed daughter first suggesting the idea, and then for the efficient means contributed. \* \* On Sabbath, the 8th of August, the building was opened in the afternoon by Mr. Campbell. His sermon was solemn and impressive. \* \* There is every reasonable expectation, that divine service will be regularly held, all the season, in the afternoon of every Sabbath, and occasionally during the week.

'The building is on a very prominent piece of ground \* \* its dimensions are forty by thirty-five feet; it is built of stone and plastered, with a cupola intended for a bell. \* \* It has two stories. The upper room is intended for a day-school during the week, and a Sunday-school.

To Miss Elizabeth Sergeant, Dr. Miller wrote on the 6th of September,

'At the date of the last letter to you, our dear Elizabeth, though deemed in a very critical situation, was yet thought in danger only on account of her previous extreme feebleness. She continued very much in that situation until yesterday morning, when, for the first time, she gave decided evidence, that she was rapidly sinking under the power of disease. \* \* The arrival of the closing scene, however, has been even more speedy than we then anticipated. About half after two o'clock this afternoon, she expired with the most perfect ease and

tranquility that you ever witnessed. Thus, after the weakness and the sufferings of near two years, has our beloved child, we humbly trust, exchanged a world of sin and sorrow for fulness of joy and pleasure for ever more. We have many things to comfort us on this mournful occasion. He who gave, and who had a right to take away, has resumed the gift under many circumstances for which we have reason evermore to praise him.'

Every death in the family, solemn and impressive as it must have been in any possible circumstances, was rendered doubly so, by a studied effort, on the part of Dr. and Mrs. Miller, to make the death-scene an occasion of deep religious, as well as natural sensibility. When Elizabeth was found to be dying, the whole family were assembled in the chamber, and, bowing around the bed, were led in earnest supplication, by her father, that Jesus would be near and very gracious to her in her departure. As all rose from their knees, she gently expired. Her mother, the while watchfully bending over her, remarked, at the moment, that the spirit seemed to have tarried, to catch the last breath of that prayer on earth, ere it returned to God who gave it. Assured that it had, indeed, taken its flight, all kneeled again, immediately, at the father's bidding, to pray, no less earnestly, for a blessing, with the affliction, to every survivor.

#### 5. MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS.

To Dr. John H. Rice, Dr. Miller wrote,

'My dear Brother, Princeton, January 31, 1825.

'I have several times, of late, felt as if we were, somehow or other, suffering our fraternal intercourse to wear out. I am anxious to "brighten the chain." Receive then, a few lines, written in haste, as a testimony of an earnest desire to renew our correspondence. If you cannot be profited by anything that I can say, I am well persuaded that I can derive both pleasure and profit from the slightest epistolary effusions of your pen.

'Since I saw you, we have consigned to the dust the remains of our dear daughter Elizabeth, whom you noticed as so emaciated and feeble. Her latter end was peaceful, and we have no doubt that she has exchanged ours for infinitely better society. But still we feel as parents; and her vacant place at our

table, and in our domestic circle, often reminds us of what we have lost.

‘I hope you will be able to say, when you reply to this letter, that your health is completely restored, and that Mrs. Rice and yourself are revelling (I use the word in a good, christian sense) in the salubrities, the comforts, and the usefulness of Prince Edward. It will give us all great pleasure to be told that this is the case.

‘Allow me to thank you heartily for your review of Bishop Ravenscroft; for, if I mistake not, the style unequivocally discloses that it is yours. It is as clear, strong, and satisfactory, on the score of talent, as it is excellent in respect to its spirit. It is, in fact, I think, everything that could be wished. I feel indebted to you for it. \* \*

‘Do you know that the same man has been lately preaching a sermon before the Bible Society of North Carolina, in which he went full length with Hobart in denouncing Bible Societies; that he has since defended his sermon in the public papers; and that the sermon itself is about to be printed, or probably is printed before this time? I most sincerely hope you will give it a searching and faithful review. I do not know a subject, by writing on which, in your best manner, you would be likely to do more good. Such a spirit, I think, may and ought to be put down in the South. It could not be supported in New York, were it not backed by the ample funds of Trinity Church. For my part, I cannot see wherein this anti-Biblical doctrine differs, at all, in its essence, from the Popish doctrine on the same subject; and I could wish to see this set in a strong light. In his newspaper vindication, he lays it down as a principle, that the fundamental position of the Bible Societies is, that the *only* proper way to propagate gospel truth is by circulating the Bible without note or comment. Now he knows, that the great mass of the patrons of Bible Societies, in the United States, and certainly the most zealous, active, and influential among them, hold to the importance and necessity of a gospel ministry; and fully believe that the living teacher, as well as the written word, is indispensable to the regular organization and the successful extension of the Church of Christ. Allow me to request, as a favor, that you will speedily take up this subject, and give Ravenscroft, *et id omne genus*, a thorough castigation in your good, christian way. It may do them good as long as they live, and certainly will be likely to do the cause of truth good.

‘We have nothing new. The number of students in our Seminary is a little rising a hundred. We shall be glad to hear that yours is flourishing, \* \*

‘P. S. Dr. Livingston, of New Brunswick, died on the 20th instant, very suddenly. He lectured the day before, and appeared as well as usual; retired in his ordinary health, and at eight o’clock next morning was found dead in his bed! It was ascertained that he had not been dead more than an hour.’

For Dr. Livingston Dr. Miller, to the end, had entertained the utmost affectionate regard, keeping up carefully with him a brotherly intercourse. On one occasion he urged his aged friend to pay him a visit in Princeton. “What would you do with me in Princeton?”—asked the Doctor, rather sharply. “Sit at your feet,” returned Dr. Miller, “and learn Theology.” The venerable man was, in a moment, completely disarmed. “May God’s blessing rest upon you!” he said, extending his hands. To the published Life of Dr. Livingston, by Alexander Gunn, Dr. Miller contributed, under date of the 15th of November, 1828, a long letter, recording his interested recollections.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Miller wrote to Dr. Green,

‘Rev’d and dear Sir, Princeton, April 30, 1825.

‘You probably remember that a committee was appointed by the last General Assembly,<sup>2</sup> of which you are a member, and I, unfortunately am chairman, to consider and report on the subject of some improvement in the mode of conducting the business of the Assembly. Have you thought of this matter? As you were present during the discussions on the subject, I should be greatly gratified to know what has struck your mind. I really have not thought of anything beyond what was suggested last year. As to appointing a subordinate board to try appeals, etc., it does, I confess, appear to me altogether contrary to principle; so that I should be, according to my present views, against even proposing such an alteration in the constitution to the Presbyteries.’

During the early summer of this year, Dr. Miller visited Western New York and Niagara Falls. The trip was evidently for health and recreation, and occupied from the 9th to the 27th of June inclusive. His itinerary illustrates the entire revolution which travelling has undergone, as to its modes, since that day. Driving from Princeton to New Brunswick, he went to New York City, and thence to Albany, by steamboat; to Schenectady, then, by stage-

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 511–525.

<sup>2</sup> See Minutes, 1824, 203; 1825, 276; 1826, 28, 32, 37–40.



coach, and to Utica by canal. His adventures on the latter extort from him the marginal exclamation, 'Highly interesting day!' By stage-coach, again, he went forward, through Vernon and Manlius, to Auburn; thence, through Seneca Falls, Waterloo and Geneva, to Canandaigua; from Canandaigua to Rochester; thence to Lewistown; thence to the Falls; thence to Black Rock and Buffalo; thence through Batavia and Avon to Canandaigua; whence he returned as he had gone. The first Sabbath of his absence, he preached twice in the Cedar street church, in New York City, where he had also preached, on Saturday, the lecture preparatory to the communion; the second Sabbath, at Niagara Falls; the third, in Jersey City.

Dr. Miller delivered, in 1825, a hastily prepared discourse before "The Literary and Philosophical Society of New Jersey," which the Society published.<sup>1</sup> At very short notice he had been called to take the place of Chief Justice Kirkpatrick, President of the Society, from whom an address had been expected. This discourse was assigned to the forenoon of the day, in the afternoon of which the Honorable Samuel L. Southard delivered the first annual address before the "American Whig" and "Clisophic" Societies of the College of New Jersey, according to a plan then recently adopted by those Societies.

To Mr. Sprague, Dr. Miller wrote on the 19th of October,

'It is unnecessary to say, that offering advice on such a subject as that on which you address me, is, at all times, a delicate and difficult business. I will write, however, with paternal freedom to one, who, I know, will receive kindly whatever I say, assured that it is well meant, and assured, also, that if it should be wholly disregarded, he who offers it will not experience a single wounded feeling. \* \*

'I. \* \* if I regarded chiefly your talents as a sermonizer, or as a composer and deliverer of sermons, I should advise you, without much scruple, to go to New York. It is my candid opinion, that, on this score, you have no particular reason to be apprehensive of danger in removing to a city. But,

<sup>1</sup> "A Discourse, delivered in the Chapel of Nassau Hall, before the Literary and Philosophical Society of New-Jersey, at its first Annual Meeting, September 27, 1825. By Samuel Miller, D.D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, and Corresponding Secretary of the said Society. "*Manus desunt poscentibus arvis.*"—Svo. Pp. 39.

‘II. I do not see how you can contrive to visit New York, in compliance with the invitation, without exposing yourself to extreme danger. The probability, I think, is, that if you visit the city, you will be called to settle there; but it is possible you may not be; and, if not, will not the whole thing be known to the public, and inevitably injure you among the people of your present charge? Unless you can be certain of accomplishing your visit, without the object of it being known, or even suspected, which I fear will not be possible, the step will certainly be a very hazardous one. \* \*

‘III. Your health, if I understand the matter, though now pretty good, is generally delicate, and requires constant nursing and care. Now, whether you know it or not, the danger of going into a great city with such a state of health, is greater, far greater, than any one, who has not made the experiment, can imagine. In the place of your present residence, you have occasion, every day, to move about in the pure air of the country. You can ride on horseback, and take a sufficient amount of pleasant and refreshing exercise. This is so mixed up with your sedentary labors, as to serve as a constant prop to your constitution. In the city, it would be otherwise. You would not be able to keep a horse. The same amount of labor there would be far more exhausting than in your present situation. But you could not get along with the same amount of labor which you now perform. Your mind and body would be obliged to be much more constantly and painfully on the stretch of exertion; and, after spending a little while in the vitiated air of the city, you would have less elasticity, and less strength to exert than you now have. You can have no conception, until you have tried it, how exhausting ministerial labors in a great city are—amidst the ten thousand distracting interruptions which occur, and which, instead of relieving, under the pressure of toil, tend to derange and shatter the nervous system. There is no point concerning which I am more confident, than that *no young man, in delicate health, ought to venture into a large city.* \* \*

‘\* \* if you were my own son, I should, on the whole, rather discourage such a removal at present. If your health should be pretty good four or five years hence,—after you shall have prepared a hundred and fifty or two hundred more sermons, and could afford to devote the first year or two to exercise and clerical recreation,—then, and not till then, do I think it would be safe for you, with your delicate constitution, to settle in a city.’

About six months later, Mr. Sprague had a unanimous call from the Cedar Street Church in New York, one of the elders of which wrote to Dr. Miller, begging him to exert his influence in favor of an acceptance of the invitation. Dr. Miller then wrote,

‘Although my fears concerning your health in the city remain unchanged, *that*, as matters now stand, is my only difficulty. You and those friends who are intimately acquainted with your constitution are the best judges of this matter. \* \*

‘May the Lord enlighten and guide you, my dear sir, in reference to this momentous decision! *No one will more cordially rejoice to see you settled in New York than myself.*’

In 1825, Dr. Hodge established “The Biblical Repertory,” a periodical designed to assist ministers and candidates for the ministry in the criticism and exegesis of the Bible, by, chiefly, the republication of selections, often translated for this purpose, from the writings of distinguished foreign scholars. With the beginning of the fifth volume, in 1829, his plan was modified and enlarged; the work was made, for the most part, original; the whole range of theological and religious subjects was brought within its scope; and the title page presented it as “The Biblical Repertory and Theological Review. Conducted by an Association of Gentlemen in Princeton, N. J., and Vicinity.” In 1837, “Princeton” was substituted for “Theological.” The “Association” embraced, among others, Dr. Hodge’s colleagues in the Seminary; and, from 1830 to 1842 inclusive, Dr. Miller contributed some twenty-five articles, which can now be distinctly traced to him—in all about four hundred and forty-four pages. In 1829, the Repertory, in its new form, was recommended by a printed circular, signed by clergymen of both the Old and New School parties,<sup>1</sup> who soon afterwards, in the current of ecclesiastical affairs, found themselves divided into two opposing bands. At this time, evidently, the causes of subsequent separation had no very potential influence; but they were just ready to reveal themselves in active, agitating operation.

<sup>1</sup> “Ashbell Green, Samuel Miller, Archibald Alexander, John H. Rice, Ezra Fisk, Ezra Stiles Ely, Francis Herron, Thomas Cleland, Samuel Hanson Cox, Thomas H. Skinner, James Hoge, Henry R. Weed, William Nevins.”

Dr. Miller, in November, 1825, delivered the Introductory Lecture at the opening of the Winter Session, an outline of which was published.<sup>1</sup> He discussed the question, “*Why are there, at present, so few ministers of the Gospel really eminent in their profession?*” “Why is it,” he asks, “that there are, at this time, in our country, so few ministers of that real, commanding, professional eminence which is within the reach of multitudes; nay, which is, humanly speaking, within the reach of EVERY MAN OF GOOD SENSE, of FERVENT PIETY, and of PERSEVERING DILIGENCE? Why is it, that we so seldom see a clergyman who is, at once, a good *scholar*; an able *theologian*; an instructive, interesting, and impressive *preacher*; a faithful, laborious *pastor*; and a meek, humble, fervently pious, polished, and benevolent *christian gentleman*?” He took for granted, that such ministers were more rare, then, in proportion to the whole number, than they had been seventy or eighty years previously. The “prevailing mediocrity of ministerial character,” he attributed to (1) a “prevailing mediocrity of piety;” (2) a “prevailing imperfection in the elementary scholarship of those entering the sacred profession;” (3) “the want of mature and adequate professional study;” (4) “the want of opportunity of forming the character and manners;” (5) the fact that candidates did “not point high enough in their aims”—did “not set before them a standard of professional eminence sufficiently elevated;” (6) the fact that the attention of so many was “divided between their ministry and secular employments;” and (7) the fact that ministerial life had become “less studious and contemplative” than formerly. He exhorted the students, therefore, (1) to cultivate deep piety; (2) to retain and extend their academical acquirements; (3) to study theology closely for at least three years; (4) to cultivate carefully the temper and manners of christian gentlemen; (5) to aim high; (6) to improve social opportunities; (7) to be punctual as to Seminary duties; (8) to make no engagements interfering with effectual study; (9) to take a fourth and fifth year at the Seminary if possible;

<sup>1</sup> “Outline of the Introductory Lecture delivered at the opening of the present Session. By Professor Miller,” 1 Am. Magazine, 11. Princeton: 1826.—8vo. Pp. 11. Published also in successive numbers of 2 Western Luminary, Lexington, Ky., 1826.

as a provision for which he suggested the creation of *fellowships*; (10) to take care of their health; (11) to resolve to do all in their power to elevate and adorn the ministerial character. These suggestions are, certainly, as important now, as they were forty years ago.

To Dr. Miller's published lecture on *Creeds and Confessions*, Mr. Duncan replied, in about six months, in a work of which the former took no notice, firmly intending to pass it by in silence, until "A Gentleman of Baltimore," nearly a year after its publication, made some friendly inquiries of him in regard to the matter. This appeal drew him out in a pamphlet "Letter to a Gentleman of Baltimore"<sup>1</sup>—not an answer, however, to Mr. Duncan's book, but a statement of reasons why he should attempt no answer, with remarks upon some collateral points. This brief publication will perhaps be esteemed, upon comparison with Dr. Miller's other writings, as, in point of style and thought, among the most vigorous of all. A critic in the "American Magazine of Letters and Christianity"<sup>2</sup>—probably its editor, the Rev. Thomas C. Gibson—remarked,

"We could speak, in addition, with great pleasure, of the literary merits of this performance. It is, in that point of view, even apart from the dignity of the subject, worthy of the highest regard. Besides its powerful flow of argument, cleared of all extraneous matter, and bearing down directly, and rapidly, and decisively on the point in view, it is characterized, throughout, by the greatest perspicuity, and much elegance of style; and though marked by frequent pleasantry, and sometimes by a certain archness of manner—each, however, in perfect keeping with the whole—it exhibits a spirit in every respect gentle, forbearing, and generous. As a model of controversial writing, more exact and faultless than any we remember to have ever seen, we commend it especially to the notice of our clerical readers."

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, at once, upon its formation in 1789, had recognized its duty to superintend and foster Presbyterian home missions. A

<sup>1</sup>"A Letter to a Gentleman of Baltimore, in reference to the Case of the Rev Mr. Duncan. By Samuel Miller, D.D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government, in the Theological Seminary, at Princeton, N. J. The wisdom that is from above is FIRST PURE, then peaceable.—James iii. 17."—Dated January 25, 1826.—8vo. Pp. 91.

<sup>2</sup>I Vol., 172.

year later, the fulfilment of this duty was attempted by the appointment of a Committee of Missions; which, thenceforward, was one of the stated committees of the judicatory. In 1816, a Board of Missions—the first board of the Church—was established; but it maintained, for a long time, only a precarious and languishing existence. At the end of the twelfth, its receipts were little more than half what they had been for the first, year.<sup>1</sup> The simple reason of this was a growing doctrinal defection in the Church, and a growing disposition, therefore, to favor voluntary union associations, instead of ecclesiastical boards, even for the work of extending the Church itself. The whole influence of Congregationalism, too, was thrown into the scale of opposition to separate Presbyterian effort.

The New York Missionary Society has already been noticed.<sup>2</sup> In 1809, a number of young men of different denominations in that city formed the “Assistant New York Missionary Society,” as an auxiliary to the older association, of which, however, in 1816, it was made entirely independent. Directly after this separation, the Young Men’s Society, not without long discussion, refused to employ the Rev. Samuel Hanson Cox,<sup>3</sup> because of his Hopkinsianism; the immediate consequence of which was the formation of a rival body—the “New York Evangelical Missionary Society of Young Men,” and its unanimous decision that Mr. Cox should be its first missionary. This controversy, like that about the Education Societies, proved most prejudicial to the efforts of the General Assembly, and of all who regarded missions, whether home or foreign, as the appropriate work of the Church in its organic capacity.

The “United Domestic Missionary Society of New York” was formed upon the voluntary plan, “by delegates from ten smaller and local societies,” in 1822, and, four years afterward, changed in name and Constitution, became the “American Home Missionary Society.” Dr. Spring remarks,

“The late venerable Dr. Miller and Dr. Alexander, of Princeton Seminary, in a letter addressed to the Corresponding Secretary, dated Princeton, March 6, 1826, say: “We rejoice to hear that there is a plan in contemplation for forming a Do-

<sup>1</sup> Baird’s Hist. of the New School, 311.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. I. p. 104.

<sup>3</sup> Since D.D.

mestic Missionary Society on a much larger scale than has heretofore existed. Our prayer is that the God of all grace may rouse the spirit of the nation on this subject."<sup>1</sup>

It is not probable that Dr. Miller, in thus bidding God speed to the society in question, intended more than he had intended, when he rejoiced in the establishment of Andover Seminary, yet expressed his firm conviction that the Presbyterian Church must soon have a divinity school of its own. His principle had been, and continued to be, to give a wide liberty to evangelical effort in the choice of its agencies and means, and to welcome others as co-laborers, although their charities did not flow in the same channels with his own. Nay, he could co-operate himself with different organizations, at the same time, for accomplishing the same grand result, endeavoring thus to harmonize their efforts, or prevent hostility between them. Not many years, however, had passed, before, as we shall see, he became, and not groundlessly, suspicious of the American Home Missionary Society, as employing its comparatively large means, to advance Congregationalism and "the New Divinity," at the expense of the Presbyterian Church and its standards—in other words, to give triumph to the New-School party.

By the General Assembly of 1826, Dr. Miller, Dr. John McDowell, and Dr. M'Auley were appointed special commissioners to the General Association of Connecticut, to attempt the removal of a new cause of alienation. The Ninth Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia had called Mr. John Chambers, a licentiate, to be their pastor. Upon his application to be taken under the care of the First Presbytery of Philadelphia, to which the church belonged, it was found that, somehow, he had obtained licensure, without subscribing the Confession of Faith in the usual form; and when asked, whether he was prepared now to subscribe it, he answered, "I am not." The Rev. John M. Duncan, of Baltimore, had been his pastor and tutor. Unable to obtain ordination in the Presbyterian Church without adopting the Confession, he took letters of introduction from Mr. Duncan, Dr. James P. Wilson and Dr. Thomas H.

<sup>1</sup> Spring's Reminiscences, 266. For further information, in regard to the general subject glanced at in these latter paragraphs, see the whole chapter in Dr. Spring's work, and Dr. Baird's Hist. of the New School, Ch. xx.

Skinner, by their advice, to Dr. Taylor, Dr. Bacon and others, of New Haven, who had him ordained by the Association of Congregational Ministers of the Western District of New Haven county. He returned in triumph to Philadelphia, and founded, with a large majority of the Ninth Church, "The First Independent Church" of that city. For thirty-four years, the General Assembly had been in correspondence with the General Association of Connecticut, and it had certainly been understood, that ministers and candidates passing from one to the other could do so only with clean papers. The Presbytery of Philadelphia had therefore regarded the act of the ordaining Association as irregular, and referred it for consideration to the Assembly, which appointed the special commissioners before mentioned.

In a letter to Dr. John H. Rice, of the 8th of June, 1826, Dr. Miller says, in regard to this appointment,

'I calculate to go, with the leave of Providence, in a few days to Connecticut, for the purpose of attending the General Association as a commissioner of peace. *My voice is still for peace.* But I am very feeble, and not very fit to undertake anything which requires five minutes extra thinking, or the extra writing of a single line.'

The committee thus appointed met, finally, a similar committee of the Association, in New York City, on the 1st of August. The latter would not touch the case of Mr. Chambers: they had been directed only to confer upon terms of correspondence and intercourse in general. The result of all was, that two new rules were adopted, one of which declared, that receiving candidates, licentiates or ministers, without clean papers, should "be deemed irregular and unfriendly." An implied, instead of an express, confession of previous irregularity and unfriendliness, was thus made and for peace' sake accepted.

In 1826, the Rev. John Breckinridge accepted a call to be Dr. Glendy's colleague in the pastorate of the Second Church of Baltimore. Dr. Miller preached the installation sermon, which, at the request of Dr. Glendy and his people, was published.<sup>1</sup> In the "National Preacher" for December,

<sup>1</sup> "Christian Weapons not Carnal, but Spiritual: A Sermon delivered in the Second Presbyterian Church, in the City of Baltimore, October 13, 1826; at the Installation of the Reverend John Breckinridge, as Colleague with the Rever-



of the same year, two other sermons of his made their appearance.<sup>1</sup>

Of the Baltimore discourse the Christian Advocate said,

“This is a long sermon but a very good one—sensible, instructive, convincing, seasonable, pious, and practical. The preacher has seized a *special* occasion to deliver truths *generally* interesting and highly important to all ministers of the gospel; and he has made his familiarity with ecclesiastical history happily auxiliary, in several instances, to the striking illustration and enforcement of the truths he inculcates.”<sup>2</sup>

and John Glendy, D.D., in the Pastoral Charge of the said Church. By Samuel Miller, D. D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government, in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey. Princeton Press: 1826.”  
2 Corinthians, x. 4.—8vo. Pp. 55.

<sup>1</sup> “The Evidence and Duty of being on the Lord’s Side: Two Sermons, etc. By Samuel Miller, D. D., Princeton, New Jersey.”—Exodus xxxii. 26.—8vo. pp. 16.

<sup>2</sup> 5 Vol., (1827,) 35.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVENTH.

### HABITS AND MANNERS.

1826, 1827.

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#### 1. RURAL PURSUITS.

BROUGHT up upon a farm, as he had been in Delaware, Dr. Miller had readily taken to rural life again in his suburban summer retreats upon Staten Island, at Harlem, and at Bloomingdale. So too, when, in Princeton, he became possessor of a place of his own, he entered with hearty relish, for health's sake, for relaxation and for comfort, into those country pursuits which his means afforded, and to which circumstances invited. He had formed a decided taste for husbandry, which, gratified as it was sparingly, without interfering with his professional studies or responsibilities, ministered greatly to the enjoyment and general welfare of the whole family. His correspondence was by no means confined to matters strictly theological and ecclesiastical: he often solicited and received information, from his brethren in the ministry and others, respecting agriculture and kindred subjects. Here is a long epistle from Dr. John H. Rice, giving very minute and curious information about the salting of bacon in the best Virginia style. The following extract from a letter of Dr. B. Fiske, of Worcester, Massachusetts, dated April 1, 1826, introduces a long account of his management of *six* acres of land, on which he had been living for thirty-five years.

'The size of my paper, I hope, will allay your fears, that the questions embraced in your letter would be an intrusion, and that their consideration would be attended with reluctant inconvenience. They were propounded at a convenient season, and when I needed something to counteract the dispiriting influence of a March wind. To the circumstance that you have

but recently turned your attention to the subject of agriculture, and have not yet become *warm* in your new vocation, is it to be ascribed, that you seem not aware, that those who have a taste for this employment, and the means to indulge it, soon become enamored of their *hobby*, and are ready to mount whenever their favorite is brought to their door. I now, on my part, have to fear, that you will be fatigued—I hope not disgusted—with the jaunt on which I am about to lead you.

‘Having been born and bred the son of a country “clergyman,” the late Dr. Fiske, of Brookfield in this county, I early became instructed in the science, and soon became attached to the practical concerns, of a farm; and gave as much of my time to the business as could be spared, consistently with acquiring the education to which I was destined. My father from necessity was a farmer, and became a good one. Indeed, fifty years ago, the clergymen of the town were almost the only scientific, and generally the best practical, farmers in it. That *their hands should minister to their necessities* seemed a contingent of their settlement. If the parish furnished a parsonage, their salaries were, in consequence, so restricted, that they were compelled to labor for the support of their growing families. If they purchased domicils, they were generally under the necessity of paying for them from their produce, or from scanty stipends. In both cases their farms were small, and their skill was exerted to render them productive. My father was one of the above description. He was not inattentive to his studies and parochial duties, but his recreation and exercise were on his farm. When he settled in the ministry, he became indebted to his parish for sixty acres of good land. He soon built a house, chiefly on credit; and became a housekeeper the first year. By the prudent management of his salary,—short of \$400,—a moderate *outfit* at his settlement, and the income of his farm, he discharged his debts, gave three sons an education at Cambridge University, and made ample provision for the other children. Though strictly economical in the management of his affairs, he lived up to the style of the day; and amply sustained the clerical reputation for *hospitality*. After leaving college, I became a physician; and in the year 1790, took possession of the little spot I now cultivate. From a state of exhaustion I put it into profitable condition; but made it a secondary object until 1815, when I retired from public and social employment on account of a defect in my hearing. From that period, I have given my principal attention to the silent, but solacing concerns of my early and favorite employment, grateful for a resource which can convert so great a calamity into so small an evil. Such

are the vicissitudes and deprivations to which we are exposed in life, that I would inculcate it as the duty of every parent, who has the opportunity, to initiate his sons, so that *in all their gettings they should get understanding* in husbandry. I am gratified to perceive, that efforts are in train to make this acquirement one of the rudiments of a public education. I speak feelingly, Sir; for, without this employment, I should now lack the alimant which could sustain either my corporal or mental vigor; and with it, I feel but little solicitude who is President or Governor; and would almost compound with any man for either office, upon condition that he would not disturb me in my retreat. Having accomplished my erratic excursion, I am dismounted at the place of starting.'

When Dr. Miller built his dwelling house, he secured, for its site, a lot of something less than an acre. A goodly portion of this was devoted to a front lawn and flower garden. Here shade trees of various kinds, evergreens and deciduous, were planted, and, growing luxuriantly, at length almost shut out the mansion from the view of the street. On one side was a good apple orchard of choice fruit, and behind all, besides outbuildings and their yards, an ample kitchen garden. Here a number of grape arbors rose to view; peach, apricot, pear, plum, and cherry trees, in excellent variety, yielded rich supplies; strawberries, raspberries, gooseberries and currants abounded in their season; and garden esculents of almost every description were skilfully and successfully cultivated. Large and prolific asparagus beds were objects of special attention. For the most part, Dr. Miller attempted nothing beyond the oversight of the operations of tillage; but there was a constant exception to this, during the last days of winter and the spring months, in his personal care of a row of excellent hot beds, the formation of which he first minutely superintended, and which he afterwards planted, watered and otherwise managed chiefly with his own hands. His gardening was certainly very successful, so far as its immediate results were concerned; and many of his neighbors profited by it; for early plants, fruits and vegetables were always superabundant; and, taking into account the supply of the family table, the opportunity furnished of expressing kind feelings toward friends, the gratification of taste, the benefit to health, and all the

advantages of home employments, pleasures, and means of improvement thus afforded for his children, it can hardly be doubted that his grounds well repaid the expense of their cultivation, although the outlay was considerable, and there was no direct pecuniary return. Some of the most delightful home reminiscences of surviving members of the family are connected with that garden, lawn and orchard; the scenes and occupations of which were constantly forming habits and tastes, imparting knowledge and skill, suggesting ideas and exciting emotions, which have added materially to the happiness of earth, and, at least, preserved from many temptations and irregular longings, which might seriously have endangered or diminished the happiness of heaven. Those hot-beds, out of doors, so sedulously planted and tended, the nursery of the vegetable grounds, were a picture of home, the nursery of both church and state; and gave their simple, easy lessons and illustrations of truth to the home hard by, within doors, which imitated and rivaled their order, and received double benefit, corporeal and spiritual, from their products.

Subsequently, Dr. Miller added to his grounds about fourteen acres of farm land, immediately adjoining, and partly inclosing, the original purchase; and united farming, in a small way, to gardening. He had, however, little or no additional time to devote to this extension of territory and business; and the garden, now considerably enlarged, perhaps suffered somewhat, and the farm still more, for want of his personal attention. But, as his sons grew up around him, he could throw part of the burden upon them; while they had a wider range at home, and altogether, it is probable, the new purchase was an immediate family advantage. Mrs. Miller, indeed, sometimes, now in a laughing, again in a serious, mood, questioned the gains of farming, and, finding a large house particularly troublesome, and good servants hard to obtain, often declared that the dwelling must have been intended for a tavern, and would doubtless one day attain its manifest destiny. She bore, however, faithfully her own full share of the burden, becoming as assiduous in her moderate, though sometimes oppressive dairy, as her husband was in his garden; and, though her entrance, properly speaking, upon country life

was so late, she acquired no little skill in her department. Doubtless she sacrificed comfort too much to that dictum of careful, anxious housekeepers, that the mistress's eye and hand must be everywhere. Whenever health permitted, even to old age, she was, generally, the first of the household up in the morning, and the last, at night, to visit every part of the dwelling, to see that all was safe.

One great advantage that the children reaped from the manner of their home life was that, partly of choice, partly as a matter of training, and partly through the occasional emergencies of such an establishment, they learned every appropriate homely art. Mrs. Miller had, indeed, some peculiar notions in regard to the training of her sons; and she systematically taught them all to knit and sew—accomplishments for which they have not been, in riper years, entirely ungrateful; however their boy-companions, when the carefully kept secret of home employments with the needle leaked out, may have twitted them with being “girls.”

Probably Dr. Miller's feeble condition and repeated illnesses in New York, with the hints that his brother Edward's medical experience furnished, had impressed upon him the necessity of constant attention to health; and had convinced him of the truth so seldom practically learned, that this, like everything really valuable, is to be secured by diligent toil alone. Valetudinarianism thus imposing a special duty, country scenes and his own tastes combined to make that duty a delight; and systematic, frequent, out-door exercise became the pleasurable habit of his life. His hygienic principle, as regarded both fulfilling professional appointments and taking exercise, was to wrap up well, guarding especially his feet, and chest, and throat, then disregard weather, unless quite stormy.

Soon after he settled in Princeton,—as early at least as the year 1816,—Dr. Miller added a horse and carriage to his establishment. Early and carefully, by way of recreation, his sons were taught to drive, and both sons and daughters to ride. The carriage—altogether an unpretending affair—was, however, very commodious in shape and size, and added materially to the means of family recreation and enjoyment. It was greatly delighted in during

its earlier days, though, in a venerable old age, called, somewhat irreverently, considering its years and service, "the scow." Dr. Miller took long, and almost daily walks, chiefly for exercise, and rides or drives nearly as frequent. Besides the benefit to his own health which resulted from this habit, it was made, under the guidance of wisdom and affection, a most important adjunct to family training and discipline, and most efficiently promotive of family welfare. In the pleasure of his walks and rides as many as possible of the household shared. Almost daily, for years together, Dr. and Mrs. Miller might be seen taking their noon or afternoon walk, in this direction or that—commonly away from the village rather than through it, unless better walking, or an errand, required the latter direction. And generally they were accompanied by a little troop of rosy-faced, and in summer, bare-armed, children, always within sight, but otherwise allowed considerable latitude in their gambols. Both of them were attentive and delighted, though not very scientific, observers of nature; and they imparted to all the children more or less of a taste for rural scenery and pleasures.

A simple variation of their method was to drive out, especially of a mild afternoon, packing with them into the carriage as many of the children as it would hold; and those who saw it leave the door, with its load of old and young together, and who did not know that the latter, when they came to the foot of a hill, relieved the horse of their part of his burden and walked up the ascent, may have considered the poor animal sometimes too heavily tasked. But, by-and-by, another horse shared his labors, and after farming began, part of the time, a third. Of a Saturday afternoon, the carriage was often, in the proper season, called into requisition for a fishing excursion to "Worth's Mill," or "Pretty Brook," not quite two miles distant. There Father and Mother would sit or wander about in the shade for hours together, talking, reading or meditating, but ever ready to make a suggestion, or give a helping hand to the little ones, who angled, with success according to their years, for minnows. Every few weeks, a forenoon drive of ten miles to Trenton, for shopping, afforded a highly relished change of scene and amusement

for as many as the carriage would hold comfortably, for so long a drive.

To riding on horseback Dr. Miller had been from boyhood inured. During his early years, this exercise was doubtless as common in Delaware as through the South generally; and he ever retained his fondness for it, reluctantly becoming convinced but a few years before his death, that his waning strength was unequal to the effort which safety in the saddle required.

## 2. "CLERICAL MANNERS AND HABITS."

In April, 1827, Dr. Miller published his work on Clerical Manners and Habits<sup>1</sup>—perhaps the most popular and widely circulated production of his pen, if we except his tracts on Presbyterianism and Baptism. It had no doubt occupied his thoughts, more or less definitely, for a number of years; and the subject which it unfolded had, evidently, been with him a life-long and favorite study. His observation of successive classes of students in the Seminary had, certainly, deepened all his impressions of the importance of much more attention to this subject, on the part especially of ministers of the Gospel, than they usually gave, or considered needful. There can be no doubt, that democratic ideas, democratic institutions, and democratic usages have tended to lower, in this country, the standard of personal refinement and good manners, and to discourage the cultivation of elegant and polite habits. A proper reaction against the unnatural restraints, the burdensome etiquette, the heartless formalities, the puerile conceits and niceties, the hollow pretences and fictions, of courts and aristocratic saloons, has gone, however, to the extreme of depreciating true gentleness, and that Christian deference to the feelings of others, of which fashionable politeness has been rightly characterized as only an imitation, or imperfect copy. Refined manners are the natural outgrowth of morals and religion, and to exhibit and cultivate them in their proper connexion and relation is the best means of eradicating the spurious and unwholesome

<sup>1</sup> "Letters on Clerical Manners and Habits: addressed to a Student in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, N. J. By Samuel Miller, D.D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in the said Seminary."—12mo. Pp. 395.



offsets of worldliness and unbelief. To this object Dr. Miller's work was intended to contribute. These "Letters" had passed to a third edition in 1835, and have since been put upon the catalogue of the Presbyterian Board of Publication, for permanent issue.<sup>1</sup>

To the subject of personal habits and manners, the author had, beyond doubt, paid much attention both theoretically and practically. From his earliest youth, he appears to have been led to set a high value upon refinement and courtesy in social intercourse. What particular instruction he had received, and whom he had taken for a model, as to these points, it is impossible, as before intimated, now to determine. It may be remarked, that when his native state and earliest acquaintances were called to mind, he often spoke of the best society of Delaware as distinguished, in his boyhood, for taste, polish, and social culture, mentioning, particularly, by name, different families and individuals pre-eminent in these respects. His father, educated in Boston, could hardly have lacked, in early life, patterns, or even lessons, of politeness; but nothing is known of his manners, excepting that, on occasions of ceremony, his presbyterial associates seem generally to have put him forward, if not foremost. Passages have already been quoted, in which the mother was spoken of, by her husband, as 'of a disposition remarkably obliging to all who came in her way;' and, by her son, as 'courteous and benevolent in [such] a very uncommon degree, [that] she endeared herself to all who knew her.'

A few quotations from the writings of Dr. Sprague and others, in relation to Dr. Miller's own manners, may not be out of place, if thrown together here, although testimonies from other sources, to the same effect, may appear, incidentally, in other parts of the volume.

<sup>1</sup> The range of this work may be understood from a brief synopsis. I. Introduction: Importance of the subject—Prejudices—Value and attainment of Good Manners. II. General Characteristics of *Clerical Manners*: Dignity—Gentleness—Condescension—Affability—Reserve—Uniformity. III. *Offensive Personal Habits*. IV. Conversation. V. Religious Conversation. VI. Visiting: Pastoral Visits—Social Visits. VII. Habits in the Seminary generally. VIII. Habits in the Study. IX. Habits in the Lecture room. X. Habits in the Pulpit and in the House of God. XI. Conduct in Church Judicatories. XII. Female Society, Marriage, etc. XIII. Dress—Style of Living—Pecuniary Concerns. XIV. Miscellaneous Councils: Punctuality—Early Rising—Health—Politics—Clerical Recreations—Concern about Popularity—etc. etc.

"Dr. Miller \* \* had much more than common advantages in respect to personal appearance. Of about the middle size, he was perfectly well proportioned, with a fine, intelligent and benignant countenance, which would not be likely to pass unnoticed in a crowd. His manners were cultivated and graceful in a high degree, uniting the polish of Chesterfield with the dignity and sincerity of a Christian minister. He was remarkably exact in his attention to little things; and, though this may have sometimes given him, to a certain extent, an air of formality, it had undoubtedly much to do in giving a finish to both his manners and his character. His work on "Clerical Manners" could never have been written by one who was less considerate and exact than himself; and, indeed, but for his exceeding modesty, one might almost suppose that in writing it he was taking his own portrait. He was never thrown into any society so polished but that he was entirely at home in it; and while he was as far as possible from being enslaved to worldly usages, or cultivating a habit of too indiscriminate worldly intercourse, he never thought it beneath him to appear on all occasions as the accomplished Christian gentleman."<sup>1</sup>

"\* \* it was impossible for him to be otherwise than bland and courteous even towards an adversary. Not a small part of his writings are, in a greater or less degree, of a polemical character; but they are generally marked by great caution and dignity, and I have never heard a more hearty tribute paid to him as an author, than by one eminent man who held with him a somewhat vigorous controversy."<sup>2</sup>

"Dr. Miller's person, though not above the middle size, was uncommonly symmetrical and dignified. His countenance spoke in no equivocal language of the benignity and generosity of his spirit. His manners were the simple reflection of the fine qualities of his intellect and heart. He might pass you in the street as a stranger, and yet you could not fail to recognize in him the polished gentleman. Perhaps his rigid regard to all the forms of polite society, so far as they were justified to his conscience and sense of propriety, gave to his manners an air of more than common precision; but there was nothing that was designed to inspire awe, or fitted to produce embarrassment. Always self-possessed and perfectly at ease, and on all suitable occasions cheerful and abounding with anecdote, he was welcome to every circle; while yet he never forgot, or suffered others to forget, the decorum that was due to his char-

<sup>1</sup> 3 Sprague's Annals, 602, 3.

<sup>2</sup> 3 Sprague's Annals, 604.

ter and office. Persons of every age and profession, the oldest and the youngest, the most intelligent and the least informed, were edified by his wisdom, entertained by his humour, and charmed by his bland and attractive address."<sup>1</sup>

"It is impossible to remember Dr. Miller, without thinking of him as a Christian gentleman. Without an approach to stiffness, he was urbane and elegant in all the forms of the best society, with which indeed he had always mingled. He was cheerful and cordial in his greetings, lively in conversation, and fond of social intercourse. It was to this that the founding and continuance of a clerical association was due, in which he and his ministerial friends met at one another's houses during many years. He was the charm of mixed companies; being rich in topics of discourse, and happy beyond most men in apposite anecdote and historical reminiscence. Indeed we have never known any one who could give such magical effect to little ebullitions of humour, which repeated by the lips of others seemed to lose all their aroma."<sup>2</sup>

"Some allusion has been made to the character of Dr. Miller in its social aspect. One of the first ideas suggested by the mention of his name, in any company where he was personally known, is that of a Christian gentleman. Accustomed from his childhood to the best society, his manners were marked with a dignity and polish which no artificial tutelage could have imparted. Equally free from the foppery which makes a man contemptible, and the stateliness which makes a man ridiculous, "there was a uniformity, an urbanity, and a vigilance in his dignity, which plainly showed that it was not the result of temporary effort, but the spontaneous product of a polished, benevolent, and elevated mind."\* He saw no reason why piety should be divorced from politeness, nor why an ambassador for Christ should not be a gentleman. So far from it, he was persuaded that ministers of the gospel were imperatively bound to pay due attention to matters of etiquette and personal address, since the neglect of this must unavoidably abridge their usefulness. He had not overlooked that concise precept, which too many of all classes deem unworthy of their notice, "Be courteous." Recognizing its apostolical authority, he exemplified it with a felicity which few men of any profession have attained in an equal degree.

"It was this in part which made him so delightful a companion. Rarely indeed does an individual carry with him,

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Sprague's Commemorative Discourse, 12, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Life of Dr. A. Alexander, 577, 8.

\* Miller's Life of Dr. Rodgers.'

into the social circle and the more private intercourses of friendship, such ample and varied resources. Manners of the utmost dignity and blandness were, in his case, associated with an exuberant fund of information always at command, an affluent vocabulary, a refined taste, a genial humour, an unflinching cheerfulness, and a goodness of heart which revealed itself in a thousand nameless and undefinable ways in the whole texture of his conversation. Without the least tinge of pedantry, he instructed while he pleased his visitors; and augmented their store of valuable knowledge, without any ostentatious parade of his own. If his presence imposed a restraint upon vulgarity and vice, it did not check the flow of innocent mirth. His vivacity, however, never degenerated into levity, nor his wit into coarseness. Nor did he ever allow himself to forget his high character as a minister of Jesus Christ. He possessed the happy art of making religion appear lovely even to those who had never learned to love it. The fragrance of a true piety was about him in every scene of social enjoyment; and many a family has felt, on his leaving them, as the Shunamite did about Elisha, that they would like to build a "little chamber" for him on the wall, and secure him for a frequent guest."<sup>1</sup>

"Through his whole career, both of youth and old age, he was a model of ministerial propriety. In his daily walk and conversation, sobriety, gravity, urbanity, gentility, courtesy, politeness and considerate good-will to all, found their harmonious and beautiful living illustration. No man possessed, in happier combination, the *fortiter in re et suaviter in modo*. Of medium stature and well proportioned, with a fine intelligent, benignant face, that at once won the regard of a stranger, unusually prepossessing in his personal appearance even to old age, always neat and elegant in his attire, proverbially systematic and methodical in all his habits and pursuits, in manners the perfect embodiment of a Christian gentleman—the very Chesterfield of the church—he was yet a man of the highest type of piety—humble, prayerful, zealous, self-denying, and intensely devoted to his Master's cause."<sup>2</sup>

A late editorial notice, in a Baptist newspaper,<sup>3</sup> of Mr. Leonard W. Jerome's recent gift to the College of New Jersey, of five thousand dollars, as the foundation of an annual prize for the "first gentleman" in the graduating class, contains the following paragraph:—

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Boardman's Tribute, etc., 16, 17, 18.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Halsey's Great Preachers and Pastors. *North-Western Presbyterian*. August 22, 1868. P. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Watchman and Reflector*—Boston, 1867.

“Mr. Jerome says, that ‘*a due regard for the feelings of others*’ is the foundation of a gentleman. We would add another stone to the foundation by quoting the old definition of politeness—‘*true kindness, kindly expressed.*’ And, as we write, there rises before us one, whom we regret that the students of Princeton cannot know as their living example; who in character and manner always showed that he not only regarded the feelings of others, but felt for them a kindness which he kindly and invariably expressed. We refer to the late Rev. Dr. Miller. Some called him the Chesterfield of the American pulpit. He was more; for in spirit, in life, in tone, in manner, he was the highest style of a man, a Christian gentleman. They may find, however, in his ‘Hints on the Formation of Clerical manners,’ many suggestions which will enable them to compete for the prize to be given to ‘the first gentleman of his class.’”

Professor Stuart of Andover, wrote to Dr. Miller as follows:—

‘Rev. and dear Sir,

Andover, 6 June, 1827.

‘I have obtained the loan of your recent publication, for two or three days, and devoured the whole, almost at a meal. I must say, that I have never read anything of this nature, which gave me equal pleasure and satisfaction. It does honor to your head, and heart, and style and manners. It is not Chesterfield; but something at which Chesterfield was partly aiming, but which no one except a Christian could attain. “*Omne tulit punctum,*” I must say of your book; and I may add, “*qui miscuit utile dulci.*” I do insist upon it, that every clergyman in our country shall have a copy; and we have taken measures, here, to have a copy put into the hands of every student in our Seminary. The work will live, when you and I are dead; and speak to the honor of its author, and to the good of his successors in the sacred office.

‘The style is of that pure, chaste, unambitious nature, which does not woo the reader “with painted cheeks and flaming ribands.” It is not unworthy of the pen of Cowper. I have lighted upon only some five or six words which I think should be excluded. *Item* belongs only to books of account; and some others I have marked. But they are scarcely worth naming.

‘Above all, the spirit of the book, through and through, is Christian—altogether so. It is impossible that it should not do good.

‘How you could contrive to handle the matters in your *third* letter, so as never once to descend from entire gravity and decorum, I scarcely know. Again I say, “*Omne tulit punctum.*”

'The particular object of this letter is, to inquire, whether you would have any objection to our making a *tract* here of your third letter, printed in an attractive manner, with a handsome cover, and distributing it in every college and academy in New England. Some slight alterations, for such a general purpose, may perhaps be requisite. Will you make them (in case you accede to the proposition); or shall they be entrusted to us? And are there not some more particulars, which (for such a tract) you might add to advantage?

'Be so kind as to let me know your feelings in respect to these questions, and believe me to be

'Yours with much respect and affection,

'Moses Stuart.

'P. S. On further reflection, I am clearly of opinion, that, if any alterations or additions are made, you should yourself make them.

M. S.'

Mr. Wisner wrote,

'I was exceedingly gratified with hearing you were about to publish such a book, and I entertained high expectations respecting it, which were not at all disappointed on the perusal. I have heard the professors at Andover, and several other clergymen in our quarter, who had read the book, express their opinions of it; all, with one exception, in terms of high commendation. The exception was one of our genteel, tippy Unitarian ministers of Boston, who thought it was too minute, and calculated to make the people think, that ministers in general must be a set of boors. But he knows nothing about ministers, except as polished, literary, fashionable, gentlemen.'

Dr. Greville Ewing, of Glasgow, in a letter of the 1st of December, 1828, said,

'Your Letters on Clerical Manners and Habits, of which I had read a review, I now see to be a work of very great importance. It quite engrosses my attention. It supplies what was truly a desideratum in theological education. I hope to derive much assistance from it in superintending a small seminary, with which Dr. Wardlaw and I are connected.'

In the North American Review appeared a critique on this work, which Princeton tradition ascribes to the late Dr. Joseph Addison Alexander, who, when it was written, had not yet completed his twentieth year. The following extract is a specimen of the more laudatory portions.

"Dr. Miller has a happy talent for the composition of a book. His method, though running out too much into detail, is very

perspicuous. His style is marked by an elegant simplicity, and is always intelligible. Generally flowing with the easy sweetness of Doddridge, Newton, and that class of writers on experimental religion, it occasionally rises to the more artificial, condensed, and elevated strain of Hannah More. His English is of the purest kind, and his selecter expressions uncommonly felicitous. Even in his more personal controversies, there is little that is rough, discourteous, Warburtonian. All is as smooth as oil; though, as Burke once described the reproof of a certain righteous man, it is often the oil of vitriol. No man surpasses him in the art of saying severe things in a soft and tender way, and with a kind of helpless, unconscious simplicity. The affectionate pressure of his hand becomes unawares a rigorous grasp. His knowledge of human nature is deep; not arising merely from the varied trials and conflicts of experience, but also from strong natural sagacity, and the habitual study of his own heart. Admirable are his precepts on managing and regulating one's own prejudices, weaknesses, and virtues; delicate and skilful his tact in teaching us how to deal with those of others. Some portions of the present volume breathe a lofty and refreshing morality, however the fastidious may be displeased with several apparently coarse and trifling topics. We would recommend its perusal to readers of every class, as well as to the divine, or theological student."<sup>1</sup>

Some critics charged the work with being too minute in its details, especially as to offences against propriety too gross and palpable to need mention; but as one of his reviewers remarks,

“General statements usually make but a slight and evanescent impression on any, and they make the least of all on the young. Young persons must be told of *individual things*, and have line upon line and precept upon precept, if we would hope to do them good.” He adds, “We have ourselves felt deeply the conviction, as we were reading the volume, that the author, while writing it, was swallowed up, if we may so express it, by *a desire to do good*.—Aiming at this, he disregarded every consideration that seemed to interfere with his main object. At a book thus written, and ably written, the critic may carp, and the witling may sneer, but the wise and the good will commend, and many who receive benefit will bless, the writer.”

The same reviewer concludes thus:—

“Since its publication, a very competent critic has remarked,

<sup>1</sup> Vol. xxviii. (April, 1829), 506.

that not only clergymen, but all men of liberal pursuits, may profit much by a careful perusal of these letters. But we hesitate not to say, that every theological student or young minister of the gospel in our country, who shall voluntarily neglect to read them, will not have availed himself of one of the best aids that he might have used, for knowing his duty, and for inciting him to its faithful discharge."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 6 Christian Advocate, (1828,) 127, etc.



## CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHTH.

QUIET YEARS.

1827-1831.

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### 1. STATE OF THE CHURCH.—THE COLLEGE.

SORES were festering, and fever was rising in the Presbyterian body; but Dr. Miller could not believe that the alarm which some felt was well founded; he did not regard the order or purity of the Church as endangered; and, hence, while ready to co-operate in every measure designed to promote simply and directly what he considered Orthodoxy, and strict Presbyterianism, he opposed, steadily, as yet, all interference with the opinions or practices of those who were currently charged with New England errors. There were flying distempers, but no settled, much less any dangerous, disease in the system. He had been familiar with Hopkinsianism and Voluntary Societies all his ministerial life: they had not yet impaired seriously the soundness or vigour of his beloved church; and of their ever doing so he doubted, well nigh, the possibility. Whatever lack of discernment it may argue, in the opinion of some who now see that he was mistaken, such, certainly, was his conclusion at this time; and troubled thoughts about the future did not disturb his peace. The exacting, weary toils of his early professorship were over; he had found time for again voluntarily laboring as an author; and perhaps we may call a few years, just now, "quiet years," as truly as we may any portion of his life. At fifty-eight, he was beginning to talk of old age, but as yet really not so much to feel, as to anticipate, its approach.

On the 11th of April, 1827, a committee, of which Dr. Miller was chairman, was appointed to examine into the

state of the college of New Jersey. On the 27th of September following, a report of considerable length, from the pen of the chairman, was presented. The average number of students was only about eighty; and the expenses of the institution exceeded by several hundred dollars, annually, its receipts. Application had often been made, without effect, to the legislature of New Jersey for aid; and appeals to private liberality had been, as yet, little more successful. Some of the trustees entertained an idea that the professors' salaries might be curtailed. To venture on, without shortening sail, they feared might prove disastrous. The following extracts from Dr. Miller's report exhibit the principles, which, happily, yet not without a short experimental abandonment of them, prevailed in the management of the College.

'In regard to any eligible plan for *lessening the expenses* of the college, your committee feel equally at a loss. However difficult it may be to continue to pay the present salaries of our officers, there seems reason to fear, that, if they should be reduced to any such extent as would be worth considering, the risk of endangering the respectability of the institution, and of failing to command, or to retain, such an array of talent in the faculty, as is absolutely essential to its prosperity, would more than counterbalance the value of the proposed saving. If the college is to be supported at all, it must be, in the opinion of the committee, *not* by reducing the provision for the comfort of its officers, which would only diminish the probability of the places being suitably filled, but by using all the means in our power to render the course of instruction and the order of the institution such as to command a high degree of public confidence, and thus attract a larger number of pupils.'

The committee after recommending the constant presence of one or more of the tutors in the college edifice, particularly upon the Sabbath, continue,

'As connected with this subject your committee cannot but call the attention of the board to an ancient usage of the college, to provide convenient and comfortable rooms in the college edifice, for the accommodation of the professors, for the purpose of study, so that they may be there during the day as steadily as circumstances will permit. Experience does but too well evince, that the presence of the tutors only is not sufficient to secure that degree of order essential to the proper regulation of the house, and to the maintenance of the necessary discipline

of the institution. To this may be added the practice of regular visitation by the professors in the rooms of the students, which duty ought, in the opinion of the committee, to be distributed among them by the faculty, so that each should have his proper share of the labour.

‘Your committee are also persuaded, that, as the students are very properly required to attend morning and evening prayers in the college chapel, it is not only proper but important, that all the members of the faculty who lodge in the public edifice should regularly attend morning prayers with the students; and that the whole faculty, as far as practicable, attend in the evening. Few things are more adapted to make an unfavorable impression on the minds of the students, than any apparent want of punctuality in attending to this duty on the part of their teachers.

‘Your committee have reason to believe, that it would contribute to the maintenance of good order in the refectory, if besides both the tutors’ being always present, the President and professors should, in turn, as often as circumstances will admit, one at a time, also give their attendance at meals.’

This report was adopted, and another committee, of which also Dr. Miller was chairman, was appointed, ‘to take into consideration the whole state and arrangements of the College, and report thereon.’ They presented, on the 9th of the following April, a second report, from the pen of Dr. Miller; which, however, under the influence of a continued and alarming diminution of the number of students, and an increased pecuniary deficit, recommended, as unavoidable, a temporary reduction of salaries,—the President’s to \$1600, and each professor’s to \$1000, per annum,—commencing six months from that time. But, at the close of the year, two professors resigned their chairs; and the experiment proved so injurious, that in September, 1830, the salaries were augmented; soon after which, the faculty was strengthened by additions; temporary loans of money were obtained; an appeal was made to the friends of the institution; aid was promised to indigent students; somehow, crowding on sail “raised the wind;” and, within a few years, an additional college edifice, for the accommodation of students, was requisite, and its erection was successfully undertaken. “There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Proverbs 11,

## 2. CORRESPONDENCE.

In regard to Mr. Sprague's proposed volume of discourses to young people, Dr. Miller wrote, on the 30th of August, 1827.

'Another idea has also frequently occurred with force to my mind, when questions like the present were under discussion. \*  
\* Even supposing that there were a much less real call for such a work than there is, still a new one might be much more extensively circulated, in a particular neighborhood, where the author is known and beloved, than any old one could possibly be. \* \*

'I. Be not in haste to put the work to press. Prepare it at your leisure, digest it well, let at least two years elapse, from this time, before you begin to print.

'II. Make as complete a collection of all printed essays, discourses, etc., for young people, as you can possibly procure. Every one of them will serve to contribute something to the enlargement of your plan, and to render your discourses more rich, dense, pungent, and adapted to your great purpose.

'III. Communicate your plan, and some, or, if convenient, all of your discourses in detail, to the friendly eyes of a *few* of your brethren in the ministry in your neighborhood. I say a few. Do not make confidants of many in this business, or their different and conflicting opinions will perplex rather than aid you.'

On another subject Dr. Miller added,

'I think with you, that it is truly desirable to have some of our most respectable candidates settling in New England, for the sake of promoting union and fraternal affection among the evangelical ministers of the United States. I hope such settlements will frequently occur in future, and that this happy fruit of them will be abundant and manifest.'

From New York city, where he was attending the annual meeting of the American Board of Foreign Missions, Dr. Miller wrote to Mr. Wisner, on the 13th of October, 1827,

'May the Lord bless you and yours! We live in a wonderful day; a day which calls for much zeal, labour and fidelity on the part of all God's people, and especially his ministers. Let *us* watch and pray that we may be found faithful, active and indefatigable to our latest breath. What a precious Mas-

ter do we serve! What a blessed work is that in which we are engaged!

Dr. Miller delivered the introductory lecture, at the opening of the Seminary term in November of this year, choosing, as his subject, 'The Importance of the Gospel Ministry.' It was afterwards published<sup>1</sup> by request of "The Society for Inquiry on Missions," composed of the students.

The Rev. James W. Moore, who had recently left the Seminary, and was settled in Little Rock, Arkansas, having written to Dr. Alexander and Dr. Miller, requesting advice, the latter replied for both, on the 12th of January, 1828, Dr. Alexander adding a brief endorsement of his colleague's views. This reply was in part as follows:—

'I desire, my dear young Brother, to unite with you in praising the Lord, that he has been pleased to smile upon you, and give you seals to your ministry. Truly you ought to lie in the dust of humility, while you praise him, that, in his sovereign and condescending wisdom, he has made the labours of a poor sinful man, effectual to the saving benefit of some of his fellow men. Verily, the treasure is in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be seen by every one to be of God, and not of us. Happy will it be for you, my young Friend, if you are enabled to see this truth in a strong and clear light habitually, and to cherish those practical sentiments which ought ever to flow from it. A minister of the gospel is never so likely to be blessed and honored of God, as when he lives under the deepest impression of his utter inability to render his own ministrations effectual in a single instance; and unceasingly and importunately looks to the God of all grace to crown them with his blessing. \* \*

'With regard to the young lawyer, concerning whom you cherish the hope that he is a sincere convert to the love and obedience of the truth, \* \* it will readily occur to you, that we know too little of his character, attainments and circumstances, to give advice with any real intelligence. One question is, Has he been long enough hopefully a *Christian*, to put to a suitable test the reality, fixedness and decision of his religious character? Another very important query relates to

<sup>1</sup> "The Importance of the Gospel Ministry; an Introductory Lecture, delivered at the opening of the Winter Session of the Theological Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey, Nov. 9, 1827. By Samuel Miller, D.D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in the said Seminary. Princeton, N. J. 1827."—Svo. Pp. 56.

that preliminary *literary furniture*, which is indispensable to the pursuit of the study of Theology to any advantage. And, although the account which you give of his intellectual character is strongly favorable, yet intellectual vigour, you well know, though important, cannot possibly supply the place of elementary knowledge. \* \* [That he] has never graduated \* \* is a small matter, if he really possess, substantially, the knowledge which is usually found in a graduate: nay, if he possess the leading branches of that knowledge, he may proceed with tolerable success. If then, in your judgment, he has acquired, no matter where, such an amount of the *languages* as will enable him to pursue, with any degree of advantage, the course of study in this Seminary, encourage him to come on. \* \*

‘If you and this gentleman, after due consultation, should be of the opinion that his preliminary education is not sufficient either for our rules, or for his own advantage, in studying Theology, suppose he were soon to come on, and to spend a year in Princeton in \* \* academical studies. It would lead to a little delay in the prosecution of his theological course; but would, in my opinion, be much more than an equivalent for this disadvantage.’

Dr. Miller always discouraged a hasty entrance upon a theological course. His published introductory lecture, to be noticed hereafter, upon the importance of mature preparatory study for the ministry, though treating of the professional training alone, exhibited, of necessity, principles applicable to every stage of education. One of his pupils said, in after years,

‘I was somewhat advanced in life when I studied with a view to the ministry, and therefore felt inclined to omit a regular course in college. I wrote to Dr. Miller, asking his views upon the subject, and inquiring how students generally stood in the Seminary, who had not pursued a college course. His reply was such as any one acquainted with him would expect. He said, emphatically, that neither the wants of the church, nor advancing years, would justify a superficial preparation for entering the theological seminary.’

Mr. Wisner wrote for permission to publish in his new magazine, the “*Spirit of the Pilgrims*,” Dr. Miller’s letter to Dr. Codman, an extract from which has been given on a previous page.<sup>1</sup> After granting this request, Dr. Miller added, in a letter of the 20th of February, 1828.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Vol. 292, 293.

‘Will you allow a man who is growing old, and who, whatever may be his lack of practical wisdom, has seen more than a score of years beyond your number, to offer one suggestion respecting your new magazine?’

‘It is this—that, in my opinion, it will be wise to keep out of view, as much as possible, the points of polemical discussion bandied about among the Orthodox themselves; and to exhibit the great doctrines of the Gospel under an aspect practical, solemn, and adapted to take hold of the conscience and the heart. Whenever you address men in a polemical tone, and with the refinements and spirit of polemical speculation, they will seldom fail to listen to you with a corresponding feeling; nay, with a sort of captious, pugilistick watchfulness—with a disposition to parry and thrust—which is greatly removed, as it appears to me, from the desirable state of mind. But, when you speak in the tone and spirit of the Bible, addressing directly and tenderly the conscience and the heart, as well as the understanding, your hearers will be apt, unconsciously, to be off their guard, to lay themselves more open to your stroke, and, of course, to receive it in all its plenary force. I add no more: a word is sufficient. \* \*

‘Be pleased to put down my name as a *subscriber* to the “Spirit of the Pilgrims.”’

The following brief extracts are from a long letter which appeared in the “New-Jersey Sabbath School Journal” for March, 1829, with only the explanation, that it had been addressed, by Dr. Miller, to a clergyman of that State, by whose permission it was published:

“Rev. and dear Sir,                      Princeton, September 10, 1828.

“When you requested me, the other day, to express, in writing, my opinion of the *Sabbath School* system, as pursued in the United States, I was, I confess, in some degree surprised. I had been under the impression that all the enlightened and reflecting part of the community were already so deeply convinced of the utility and importance of that invaluable addition to the other benevolent institutions of the day, that all further *reasoning* in its behalf was unnecessary. If this be not the case, I regret the fact; and am ready, most cheerfully, to contribute my mite toward the promotion of what is so extremely desirable as a correct and universal public sentiment in reference to this subject.” \* \*

“I once thought there was no good reason why the children of intelligent, pious parents—parents able and willing to instruct their own children—should be sent to the Sabbath School; being

under the impression that everything in the way of tuition could be quite as well, if not better, done for them at home. But I have altered my mind on this point. I would urge children of all classes to attend. I think it my duty to send my own children, not merely for the sake of example, and to stimulate others, whose children may be less favorably situated, to do the same; but also from a persuasion that my children are really likely to be better managed, and in some respects better instructed, in a well conducted Sabbath School, than under my own roof. \* \*

“In truth, I am of the opinion, that every minister ought to consider the sheet-anchor of his hopes, not only for the Church and the State, but also for his own personal comfort, usefulness and popularity, as lying, under God, peculiarly with the *children* and *young people* of his charge. If I could be so far forgetful of my allegiance and duty to my Divine Master, as to pursue, supremely, my own personal comfort and popular acceptance, I could not, I am persuaded, take any other course so well adapted to the attainment of my object as that of paying unwearied attention to the rising generation; mingling much with them; and taking a deep interest and an active part in every lawful institution intended to promote knowledge, virtue and piety among them.”

One of the foregoing extracts might seem to imply more than Dr. Miller intended. It is the one referring to his own children. All know that parents, too often, make the Sabbath School an excuse for neglecting religious instruction at home; but against such neglect the ordering of his own household was a constant protest. Explaining his words by his practice, we must conclude that he only meant to represent the Sabbath School as an important auxiliary to family training, and as likely to secure some benefits, which really cannot be so well secured at home. Thus, the various incitements which association in study supplies may often be greatly multiplied in the Sabbath School.

The following are extracts from letters to Dr. Sprague of the 6th and 8th, respectively, of October, 1828.

“I have only time, at present, to say, that my attendance at the meeting of the “Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions” was truly gratifying. I wish you could have been present to witness the harmony, the christian affection, the increasing energy, and the growing patronage of that noble institution; an institution, which, I trust, is destined to share largely with our



brethren on the other side of the Atlantic, in hastening on those days, when the knowledge and glory of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters fill the sea.'

'I cordially congratulate you on the recent collegiate honor with which you have been crowned. I am sure you will do me the favor to believe, that I rejoice in all your honors, as well as all your comforts and usefulness. A venerable clergyman, now no more, said, when he had received a similar honor, "I hope this event will produce no other effect, than to make me more deeply humble, and more emulous to excel in true piety, in ardent zeal, in active labor for Christ, and in every qualification which ought to adorn the character of a devoted christian Doctor." I do not allow myself to question that you will, from the heart, adopt the same language. To be dubbed a Doctor of Divinity is, in itself, a little thing; but the smallest things may be made great in their effects on our own minds, if properly improved, and really sanctified.'

About the year 1828, Dr. Lyman Beecher received a call to Philadelphia, in regard to which Dr. Miller wrote to him a letter which appears in his *Autobiography*.<sup>1</sup> This letter, which follows, will be mentioned again in the sequel.

"Before this letter reaches your hands, you will have been apprised that the church of which our friend Dr. Skinner was lately the pastor has given you a unanimous call to become their minister.

"Some are disposed to smile at this measure as a sort of desperate effort at retaliation for robbing Philadelphia of Dr. Skinner. Others view it as a plan by no means hopeless. But ALL, so far as I know, in this region, would *most cordially rejoice* in the success of the application, and hail your arrival in Philadelphia as an event most devoutly to be wished by all the friends of Zion within the bounds of the Presbyterian Church.

"My dear Brother, I beg, with all the earnestness which I am capable of feeling or uttering, that you will not either lightly consider or hastily reject this call. I do seriously believe that, however painful the step of removal to Philadelphia might be, both to the friends of religion in Massachusetts and to yourself, the residue of your days could not possibly be disposed of (so far as human views can go) in a manner so much calculated to unite the friends of Christ in the South and West with those in the East, and to introduce a new era of harmony, love, and co-operation in the American churches.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Vol., 133-135.

“It is not only a matter of immense importance that the individual church in Philadelphia which gives you this call should be supplied with a pastor wise, pious, peaceful, prudent, and acceptable, as far as possible, to all parties; but, if *you* will come to that place, I am most deeply persuaded that you will have an opportunity of diffusing a most happy and reviving influence all around you to a degree which very few men in our country have ever had; that you will be likely, humanly speaking, to bring together feelings and efforts which are now widely separated, and, in fact, to give a new impulse to all those great plans which I know to be near your heart.

“By removing to Philadelphia, unless I utterly miscalculate, you would not be likely to subtract very essentially from your usefulness in Massachusetts. You might still, by means of writing and occasional visits, continue to do there a large portion of what you now do, while your usefulness and influence in the Presbyterian Church, from New England to New Orleans, might, and probably would, be increased ten fold. I have no doubt that, by the acceptance of the station to which you are called, your opportunity for doing good in the American churches would be doubled, if not quadrupled at a stroke.

“Say not that these things are mere matter of human calculation. They are so; and yet, I think, the Book of God and human experience furnish an abundant foundation for them to rest upon. The truth is, we want nothing for the benefit of our eighteen hundred churches, next to the sanctifying spirit of God, so much as an individual in Philadelphia (our ecclesiastical metropolis) who should be active, energetic, untiring, comprehensive in his plans, and firm and unmoved in his purposes and efforts.

“Will you not cast yourself on the Lord’s strength and faithfulness, and come and help us to unite all our forces in one mighty effort, in the name of our heavenly King, to promote his cause at home and abroad?

“With the cordiality of a brother, and the freedom of an old friend, I conjure you, when such an open door is set before you, not to refuse to enter it. As to your reception among us, I hope I need not say that it would be, *universally*, with *glad hearts* and *open arms*. May the Lord direct and bless you.”

The following letter was written to a daughter who, on a visit to Baltimore, was just recovering from an alarming illness.

‘My dear Sarah,

Princeton, April 8th, 1829.

‘Although, on receiving your letter, last evening, the appearance of your handwriting confirmed our best hopes, and

all that had been said in our letters from Baltimore, with regard to your returning health, there was another aspect under which I regarded it as affording some cause of regret. I have seen such little things affect a convalescent state, that indeed I trembled over the effort you had made in writing; and although Mary wrote to you yesterday, I feel as if I must, to-day, send you a cautionary letter. I have observed that an over effort of mind was more apt to produce a relapse, than a little bodily fatigue: you must not, therefore, my dear child, read much more, for some time, than your Bible; and I am reluctant to add, after all the kindness of your friends, for which I am glad to find *you* so grateful, that you must not have many visitors or much conversation. I need not caution you against the indulgence of your appetite, which will probably be very urgent after so long a restraint, because, if you commit any error, it will probably be on the other extreme. I want you now to feed yourself a little, that you may regain some of your lost strength.

‘But most of all the thought presses upon my heart, that you will let this last impressive call pass away unimproved. You have slighted many before, and quieted, I have no doubt, many a suggestion of the Spirit, by saying, “Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, etc.” My dear Sarah, did you ever leave a piece of temporal business, that you thought of some importance, unfinished, on account of some trifling interruption, with the feeling of perfect certainty that you would have more than enough time to attend to it in future; but that time never came? I have *often* done so, and have *often* trembled, since I have seen the sure reality of everlasting things, at the thought, that so I might have left my preparation for eternity. Every thing which I have before mentioned as calculated to injure your returning bodily health, may likewise hinder the attainment of health to your immortal spirit. Oh that you felt far more than I now do, that “*Now* is the accepted time, and now the day of salvation”; and with one gathering up of your mind would resolve to seek till you find. I was so concerned for you yesterday, that I could not help interesting the ladies at our little prayer meeting, in the evening, for you; and Mrs. Wilson seemed to make the case so much her own, that I could not help hoping, that “two had been agreed” on this subject.

‘Farewell! I desire to commit you, for time and eternity, in faith, into better hands than my own; although I think I *can* say, that I *am* your

‘Sincerely affectionate mother,  
‘Sarah Miller.’

## 3. PUBLICATIONS.

In 1829, again, we find the students of the Seminary requesting a copy of Dr. Miller's Introductory Lecture for publication. It was published accordingly.<sup>1</sup> A short extract will exhibit its occasion and design.

“\* \* The friends of this Institution have often remarked, with surprize and regret, how very small a portion of those who study here can be prevailed upon to remain for three years, and to complete the regular course. Seldom, if ever, I think, have we been able to persuade as many as *one-half* of any class to continue their studies to the close of the prescribed period. Many study but half the usual time; others not more than a third part; and some, after spending with us a single short summer session, have gone forth, and announced themselves to the churches as pupils of our Seminary. Against this great, and, I fear, undiminishing evil, the *Professors* have, from time to time, raised the voice of solemn remonstrance; the *Board of Directors* have, once and again, recorded their pointed testimony; and the *General Assembly* have expressed their utter disapprobation, in terms which might have been expected to be decisive in their influence on all considerate minds. Still the deplorable evil in question continues to prevail. Presbyteries either give it their direct countenance, or cannot be prevailed upon to set their faces, with sufficient firmness, against it; and short sighted or infatuated young men, setting at naught the counsels of experience, and urged on, either by inconsiderate friends, or their own impatience, ascend the pulpit, and undertake to teach others, while they need to be taught themselves “the first principles of the oracles of God.”

“I shall not, at present, detain you with any comments on the tendency of this practice to injure the Seminary itself; to render it both less useful, and less respectable, in the eyes of an enlightened religious public, \* \* more especially, because there are other considerations, still more momentous, on which I consider it my duty now to enlarge.”<sup>2</sup>

The Lecturer urges more thorough preparation on the grounds (1) of our obligation “to serve Christ with the very best faculties and attainments that we possess, or

<sup>1</sup>“The Importance of Mature Preparatory Study for the Ministry: an Introductory Lecture, delivered at the Opening of the Summer Session of the Theological Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey, July 3, 1829. By Samuel Miller, D.D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in the said Seminary. Princeton Press: 1829.”—Svo. Pp. 42. <sup>2</sup> Pp. 5, 6.

can possibly acquire;" (2) "of the extent, difficulty, and importance of the various departments of knowledge which are necessarily included in" a proper theological course; (3) "that he who does not lay a good foundation in the beginning, will never be likely to supply the deficiency afterwards;" (4) of the importance of thoroughness, "not merely for the purpose of storing the mind with knowledge, but also for the purpose of that intellectual and moral discipline, which is of no less value to a minister of Christ than theological learning;" (5) of "the opinion and practice of our Fathers in all past ages;" (6) "that the present state of the world, and especially of our own country, calls for more various and profound knowledge in ministers of the Gospel, than was demanded in former times;" (7) "that learning is, at present, at a low ebb among the Clergy of the Presbyterian Church;" (8) "that our country, and especially some parts of it, stand in need of nothing, at this moment, (next to the sanctifying grace of God,) so much as a large supply of truly able, pious, and well-trained ministers of the Gospel." Dr. Miller had delivered the substance of this lecture at the opening of the winter session, November 9th, 1821; and he remarks, "I cannot anticipate, beloved Pupils, what effect this earnest appeal may produce on your minds; especially when it was productive of so little sensible effect on your predecessors, eight years ago."

Professor Moses Stuart, on the 16th of September, wrote,

'I received by mail a copy of your Lecture on a full course of theological study, for which I desire to thank you in no ordinary way. I have never seen the subject treated so much *ad unguem*, or the details of it so well arranged and filled out. I could almost thank those young men, who, by refusing to hearken to your counsel, given some years ago, have "provoked you to the good work," which you have now performed. There is evidently an energy in the whole performance, which is seldom found in things of a similar nature, and which does great credit to your feelings and your understanding. We all feel here, that the lecture should be circulated through our whole country. I have given my opinion to Mr. Cornelius, that he had better beg permission to insert it in his Journal of Education, which will diffuse it very widely. In my judgment, our

American Education Society ought to make a *tract* of it, and fill our country with it. It is a noble effort, on one of the most important subjects that can be named, in regard to prospects of usefulness, which open before students for the ministry. There is not a word in the whole which I could wish subtracted or altered; nor do any additions seem to be requisite. I repeat my most heartfelt thanks for this important and excellent service.

At the installation of the Rev'd William B. Sprague, D.D., as pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church of Albany, Dr. Miller, by invitation, preached in 1829. The session and trustees of the church, for themselves and the congregation, requested a copy of his sermon, and it was published.<sup>1</sup>

Speaking, in this discourse, of the "deplorable lack of doctrinal information among the mass of the people," Dr. Miller said,

"A *second* reason for the undoubted deficiency of doctrinal knowledge, even in the church, may, perhaps, be drawn from *the light and ephemeral character of what we may call the religious literature of the day*. Have not religious *newspapers*, and other light *periodical publications*, in a great measure taken the place of the larger and more instructive works before alluded to?—publications which, by their *number*, have left little *time* for other reading; and by their superficial *character*, little *taste* for reading of a more deep, solid, and connected kind. Is it not manifest, that the mass, even of the hopefully pious, have a large portion of their reading time so much occupied, and their taste so much formed, by the details of religious intelligence; by the exciting eloquence of anniversaries; and by the pungent discussion to which new projects and controversies give rise; that they have seldom much relish for the calm study of evangelical truth, or even for the retired and prayerful perusal of the Scriptures? What proportion of private Christians at the present day, with all the multiplication and almost universal circulation of weekly and monthly journals, which profess to diffuse religious knowledge, would be able, think you, to defend their creed against a plausible adversary, or to give an intelligent "reason of the hope that is in them?" I am afraid a

<sup>1</sup> "Holding fast the Faithful Word: a Sermon, delivered in the Second Presbyterian Church, in the City of Albany, August 26, 1829; at the Installation of the Reverend William B. Sprague, D.D., as Pastor of the said church. By Samuel Miller, D.D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government, in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey. Albany: 1829."—Titus i. 9.—8vo. Pp. 49.

very small proportion indeed. Nay, is there not some reason to fear, that even ministers of the Gospel, in many cases, have their reading too much confined to the passing periodical works of the day; if not to the exclusion, at least to the lamentable diminution of that profounder and more mature study to which the spiritual teachers and guides of the people ought to be ever habitually addicted?"<sup>1</sup>

In regard to Christian union Dr. Miller remarked,

"It is one of the glories, my friends, of the period in which our lot is cast, that professing Christians of almost every denomination have come together, and are more and more coming together, for the purpose of uniting their efforts to send *Bibles*, religious *Tracts*, the living *Missionary*, and the system of *Sabbath-schools*, throughout the world. I repeat it, this is one of the great glories of the day in which we live. Every minister, and every Christian, who is so happy as to live at this day, ought to be thankful for it as a great privilege; to enter into the spirit of the hallowed co-operation; and to cheer it on by his example, his exertions, and his substance, as well as by his prayers. If there be a minister or a professing Christian, who looks coldly upon these great plans of Christian benevolence, and refuses to put his hand to the work,—“I judge him not;” but he really seems to me to stand very near, if not actually in, the ranks of those who “will not come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty,” and who are placed in no very enviable eminence in the sacred history.

“Be it remembered, however, that one fundamental principle of this noble union is, that all the denominations which are parties to it, promise neither to compromit, nor to invade the peculiarities of each other. \* \* The practical language of their union is to the following amount: “We will agree to act *together*, for the sake of acting with *more strength*, and upon a *greater scale*. To a certain extent, we are entirely united, both in principle and practice. To that extent we can cordially co-operate without difficulty. And, as to the peculiar doctrines which the pious *Presbyterian*, the pious *Episcopalian*, or the pious *Methodist* may wish to see circulated within the limits of his own denomination, let the Pastors and Teachers within the respective bounds of each, take care, in addition to the general measures, which are not sectarian, to provide for conveying that appropriate instruction which each may deem desirable and important.”

“This is fair, honourable, and Christian-like. But let me

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 15, 16.

request you to take particular notice, that the faithful and happy execution of this admirable plan, not only *allows*, but really *requires*, that each particular denomination, engaged in carrying it on, be careful not to neglect, or even slight, either of its parts. \* \* each party is bound, by an implied pledge, to be diligent in instructing its own population, and especially its own children and young people, in its own peculiar views of truth and order. If this be not done, \* \* the next generation will grow up in a great measure unindoctrinated.”<sup>1</sup>

On the 1st of September, after his return from Albany, Dr. Miller wrote to Dr. Sprague,

‘On the last day of my journey home, I contracted, in some way unknown to me, a severe cold, which has greatly incommoded me during the last three days. I am, however, now, through divine goodness, getting much better. My system of *starvation* succeeds admirably.’

Dr. Wisner, proposing to prepare a memorial of his church, the Old South, of Boston, requested information concerning one of his predecessors, Dr. Samuel Blair, from Dr. Miller, who, in a letter dated the 27th of March, 1830, communicating all the facts which he had been able to collect, remarked.

‘\* \* Truly, when I first read your letter, I could hardly have imagined what a complicated and difficult thing it would prove to collect facts concerning a man so much distinguished as Dr. Blair was. But so it is;—and, if any one, sixty or seventy years hence, or even thirty or forty, should wish to know some facts concerning you or me, they will, perhaps, have to hunt for them very laboriously, and, it may be, unsuccessfully. Oh, how poor a thing is posthumous reputation! And, on the other hand, how infinitely, how absorbingly important that honour which cometh from God!’

In 1830, Dr. Sprague published a volume of Lectures to young people, to which, at his request, Dr. Miller prefixed an Introductory Essay. Of this essay the Spirit of the Pilgrims said, It “is conceived with great felicity, and is happily adapted to answer the purpose for which it was designed.”<sup>2</sup> In regard to the volume, Dr. Miller wrote, on the 22d of April,

‘You ought not to be your own publisher, certainly, unless

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 22-24.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Vol., (1830,) 473.



you could undertake to be your own *retail vender*, which would be neither practicable nor proper for you.'

The Rev'd William D. Snodgrass, D.D., pastor of the Murray street Presbyterian Church in the city of New York, in concert with other clergymen of that city, made arrangements for a course of Sabbath evening lectures in his church, each by a different preacher, in the Spring of 1830. These discourses, thirteen in number, were all afterwards published in a single volume, and have been known as "The Murray-street Lectures." The sixth was by Dr. Miller: "The Rejection of Revealed Truth referable to Moral Depravity"—founded upon Hebrews iii. 12.

#### 4. GATHERING CLOUDS.

The earlier and more quiet progress of New-Schoolism in the Presbyterian Church has been already adverted to, so far, especially, as it was connected more or less directly with Dr. Miller's life and opinions. And now commenced an earnest and deeply agitating struggle, in which he was soon almost of necessity involved, and in which he took the liveliest interest. His course through this conflict, it may be premised, did not satisfy either of the parties, properly so called, that divided the Church. He was accused by more thorough partizans, now from one side, and now from the other, of timidity, vacillation, inconsistency, a failure to support his friends, or opposition to needful reform. His being, in principle, an Old-school man was, perhaps, never doubted; yet unquestionably, at times, both the Old and New-school regarded his course as favorable to the plans of the latter; who, upon their final defeat, were particularly disposed to complain of his disappointing their expectations.

It is evident that, in the trying circumstances of this case, the position of a professor, in a theological seminary supported and controlled by the whole Church, demanded peculiar caution and moderation—a fact which both parties discerned, however dimly, and both, decidedly enough, though each but partially and in its own interest, expressed. To be opposed by a public servant of this kind seemed to each particularly objectionable, and all the more because a professorship gave special influence and power. These, of

course, involved special responsibility. Every man is accountable according to his capacity and opportunities. But Dr. Miller did not believe in the doctrine, often advanced in deprecation of an opponent's efforts, that a professor in such an institution ought to be always a silent, well nigh uninterested spectator of the Church's intestine struggles. If he has a larger congregation than the ordinary pastor,—even the aggregate of all the congregations of the Church,—that distinguishes him from the other, not as to the nature of his rights and duties—only as to their importance, and the measure of responsibility involved.

No doubt Dr. Miller did change, somewhat, his views of the Church's need, though not his principles, during the course of this great struggle; but to care more for being right, than for being consistent, was hardly a fault. He may have been less discerning than some others, or have had less opportunity of knowing, as to some points, the exact state of things; and, in candor, probably, it must be admitted, that he judged, not error, but certain erring brethren, too leniently; that he was slow to believe personal friends, especially, capable of such a departure from the truth, and such a misconstruction of their ordination engagements, as were charged upon them; that he entertained too favorable a view of the Church's actual condition; and was not sufficiently awake to the necessity of unusual measures for its purification and defence. It always happens, however, in the heat of conflict, that cautious, moderate men please neither side, and are blamed for what really deserves approval and praise.

New England theology of about the shade of Dr. Dwight's sometimes with a little deeper tinge, under the name of "moderate Hopkinsianism," had been hitherto tolerated, as we have seen, though not without objection, in the Presbyterian Church. One chief evil of this tolerance was, that the door stood open, to an indefinite extent, for the ingress of new errors. No effectual alarm, however, was sounded, until Taylorism, or the New Haven Theology, came into notice, and was believed to have effected a lodgment within the walls.

"In the year 1829," says Dr. Spring, "a different turn was given to these discussions by the novel and unscriptural specu-

lations of the Rev. Nathaniel W. Taylor, D.D., who occupied the chair of theology in Yale College. I had published a "Dissertation on the Means of Regeneration," an enlargement of the annual discourse preached before the directors and students of our own theological seminary at Princeton. I was requested by a large number of students to publish it; and without the least thought of eliciting any new views upon the subject, acquiesced in their request. It was reviewed in the *Christian Spectator* in the spirit of fraternal kindness, and even commendation; but it gave rise to a full and unexpected development of some novel views from the pen of Dr. Taylor, that excited no small alarm among evangelical ministers, and that became the subject of a prolonged and sharp discussion."<sup>1</sup>

The first Presbyterian minister, against whom the charge of having adopted New Haven errors was judicially made, was the Rev. Albert Barnes. He had not only been Dr. Miller's pupil for three years<sup>2</sup> in the Seminary, but as the accomplished private instructor, a part of that time, of several of his children, had occupied a high place in his esteem, and been brought into relations with him of particular friendship and intimacy. He was pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Morristown, New Jersey, when, during the winter of 1829-30, the First Church of Philadelphia had its attention particularly directed to him as a candidate for its vacant pulpit. This church had continued for more than a year, first through Dr. James P. Wilson's infirmities, and then by his formal resignation, without a pastor, and suffering, as it was, seriously from such a condition of things, proved sensitively jealous of any interference with its rights, real or imaginary. Mr. Barnes had not preached for the congregation, but a few of its members had heard him; and a sermon, entitled "The Way of Salvation," which he had delivered in Morristown a year before—the 8th of February, 1829—and which was printed early in 1830, was circulated freely by some who favored giving him a call, as a means of securing that end. But the discourse fell into the hands of critics as well as of admirers; and soon it was noised abroad that it was chargeable with serious error; also that Dr. Green

<sup>1</sup> 2 Pers. Reminiscences, 23. For an account of the earlier developments of the New Haven Theology, and its after issues, see Dr. Baird's *Hist. of the New School*, chaps. XII. XIII. etc.

<sup>2</sup> 1820-23.

and some others intended, on this ground, if a call should be given, to resist its prosecution. Dr. Green disclosed this intention to Dr. Miller, who made, on the 20th of March, the following reply:—

‘\* \* I have revolved again and again in my mind what you say with respect to your intentions, when the Presbytery meets, if a certain event shall occur; and I now feel prepared to tell you, with all frankness, that I think such a course will by no means be the wisest that can be adopted. I am perfectly aware, my dear Sir, that I am about again to express opinions, which, as in some former instances, will impair your confidence in my firmness as well as my judgment. This I shall regret. But the same conscientious regard to duty, and to what appear to me the vital interests of the Church in Philadelphia, impels me to say, that, with my present views, if I were a member of the Presbytery, and if a call for Mr. Barnes were laid before that body, I should utterly oppose a motion to refuse to allow it to be prosecuted. My reasons are these:—

‘1. I have, to-day, unexpectedly, had an opportunity of conversing with two persons—clergymen—one of them a decided Confession of Faith man, and the other nearly so; both of whom, somewhat to my surprise, assure me, that Mr. B. does not adopt the peculiarities of the New Haven theology, and that he is not more at variance with our Confession of Faith than Dr. —, if so much. I had thought otherwise.

‘2. The situation of the Washington Square Church is deplorable and perplexing in the extreme. I have reason to think that there is the utmost danger of their being torn in pieces and scattered, unless they make some tolerable choice soon.

‘3. As sure as you refuse to allow the people to prosecute their call, if they make out one, they will, with highly excited and revolted feelings, break off from the Presbyterian Church, declare themselves independent, call their man in spite of you, bring him to Philadelphia with a spirit which will render him tenfold more hostile, active and mischievous than if he came in the usual way. Thus all the evils which you fear will be immensely multiplied and extended. Whereas, if Mr. B. (provided he is willing to go to Philadelphia at all, which I very much doubt; and I am confident he will not except in consequence of a unanimous call) should be treated kindly, and received courteously, he may, I think, be quite as much conciliated as Dr. —. Unless I greatly mistake, this will be better, far better, than to run the risk of tearing the congregation to pieces,

and, then, instead of preventing their obtaining their man, cause them to get him, with every circumstance of theological excitement on their part, and of febrile stimulus on his, to build up a new and separate interest in the city.

‘I write this, my dear Sir, in haste of the extremest kind, as the mail is about to close, and I am anxious to tell you my feelings without loss of time. \* \* If they are wrong, forgive them; but I am as sure as I am of my own existence, that you will find them all realized, if you take the step contemplated.

‘Though we cannot agree always in opinion, I am, my dear Sir,

‘Very cordially and respectfully yours,  
‘Sam’l Miller.

‘P. S. If you knew how many letters I have been under the necessity of writing within the last twenty-four hours, you would not wonder that I now write in a sort of anguish of haste, and have not time to read what I have written.’

Dr. Green and those who acted with him disregarded the advice thus given; and amiable and thoroughly conscientious as that advice was, it would be hard, consistently with true Presbyterian principles, to condemn their course. He, in particular, was sometimes accused, with acrimony, of unchristian bitterness; sometimes represented as in his dotage; but, while it need not and cannot be denied, that this, like every other controversy, engendered some reprehensible asperities, which, however, were exhibited on the New-school side quite as freely, to say the least, as on the Old; and while the regularity and wisdom of their particular measures must repeatedly be questioned; it may be maintained with confidence, that the history of Presbyterianism in the United States presents no example of more clear-sighted and consistent fidelity to the truth, or of a more christian spirit in its maintenance, than Dr. Green and his coadjutors manifested. Nor were they the “heresy hunters” which some accused them of being. Not only, said they with great force—not only has Mr. Barnes preached and published serious error, and that too in a bold, aggressive, and determined way; but the very sermon in which he has done this is selected, industriously circulated, and thrust before us, as the very ground on which his friends plead for calling him to Philadelphia, and introducing him to our most immediate Presbyterial fellowship. How can we overlook what is thus forced upon our notice?

Ten days later, Mr. Barnes wrote to Dr. Miller, asking his advice, which was given in the following letters:—

‘My dear Sir,

Princeton, April 7, 1830.

‘Your letter of March 30th did not reach me till the 3d instant, a few minutes before I stepped into my gig, to go to New York, to preach, last Sabbath evening, one of the Murray-street Lectures. I did not get back until last afternoon; and was obliged, almost as soon as I entered my door, to resume official duties, which rendered it impossible for me to write by the evening’s mail.

‘I had heard of the call to Philadelphia, before the arrival of your letter; and had felt much interest in your decision of the question which it called you to consider; feeling, as I have always done, since I first knew you, a very cordial desire, that your comfort, and honor, and, above all, your usefulness, might be more and more extended.

‘I feel great diffidence, however, not to say embarrassment, in attempting to utter a word, that shall bear the aspect of advice, on this occasion. I am not, indeed, prepared to give decisive advice either way. I know, it is true, much concerning your present charge, and the church to which you are invited; but I do not know facts enough, in minute detail, concerning either, to be able to make up my mind, with entire decision, what course you ought to take.

‘As to your *personal* adaptedness, on the score of *intellectual* and *literary* qualifications, for a charge more refined and improved than that which you now possess, I have no doubt; and, as to this point, have no apprehension of failure, if you accept the call. I think, too, that our large cities not only urgently need, but imperatively demand, men of mental activity and studious habits such as yours. Nay, I am persuaded, that unless some such men, men who have a little experience in the ministry, will consent, at the expense of many sacrifices, to quit other positions, and go to those cities, the interests of the Redeemer’s kingdom must essentially suffer. Large and important as the congregation of Morristown certainly is, it is, in my apprehension, much easier to supply it with a popular and useful pastor, than the First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia.

‘In a word, I should have no doubt that you ought, without hesitation, to pluck up stakes and go to Philadelphia, if I could be satisfied with regard to two points; on neither of which do I know enough to be able, with confidence, to pronounce.

The *first* is, your *social* adaptedness to the peculiar character and wants of a city congregation: in other words, whether you have that affable, visiting turn, which has always appeared to

me highly important, and, indeed, in a measure, indispensable, in drawing and keeping together such a congregation; surrounded as they are with such a variety and attraction of talent. It is true, Dr. Wilson is no great visitor; but he is so truly extraordinary a man; so perfectly unique in his character; that no experience in favor of another, from his habits, can be safely drawn. What your peculiar tact or habit in this respect may be, I know not; and should, therefore, speak blindly if I offered an opinion.

'The *second* is the platform on which you stand with regard to theological sentiment. You know that the church which has called you occupies the edifice in which the General Assembly annually meet; and that, from the circumstance of its being the first Presbyterian Church ever erected in what is now the United States, it may be said to be the "mother of us all." Now, if your convictions of truth and duty will allow you, in case you go to Philadelphia, to unite in helping forward the cause of the Presbyterian Church, in tolerable accordance with her public standards; if you can see your way clear to fall in with the brethren there in harmonious and affectionate co-operation (I do not mean in petty peculiarities, but) in the great interests and efforts of our church, as such; then I think you may be eminently useful in Philadelphia, and ought to go thither. But, if your convictions should be such as to render this course impracticable, I am inclined very strongly to suspect, that a residence there would be by no means very comfortable; and that your usefulness there would not be so great as where you now are. You will forgive me, my dear Sir, for making this free exposition of my views. You have solicited them, and I give them with paternal and most affectionate freedom. I, of course, claim no authority over your conscience; yet that which I deem important, in reference to the case in hand, must be stated candidly, if I undertake to speak at all. If I knew what your sentiments in detail are, at this time, I should be better able to judge and advise in the case under consideration; but not knowing, certainly, how this matter is, I am constrained to doubt. If Dr. Taylor, of New Haven, with all his present sentiments, were to ask me whether he ought to accept a call to that church, I should have no difficulty in saying, that he had better not. War and discomfort would be the result. May God bless and direct you, My dear Sir, on this trying occasion!

'I am very sincerely and affectionately yours.

'Samuel Miller.

'P. S. I write this letter in extreme haste, and in the midst of incessant interruptions; and have not time to read it over. But

you may rest assured it is written with the warmest wishes for your welfare and happiness; and that it would give me the greatest pleasure to see you in Philadelphia, if you can be there on the principles which I have stated.

‘My dear Sir, Princeton, April 13, 1830.

‘When I wrote to you the other day,—which I was obliged to do in extreme haste, or not at all,—I forgot to state as I wished to do, and now take an opportunity of doing, that I think you ought, by all means, to visit the city of Philadelphia, and to give the people, as well as yourself, an opportunity of mutual conference and intercourse for a few days. The fact is, the First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia is not only a very important congregation, but is in a very peculiar and delicate state. A disappointment, and especially a disappointment connected with any disturbing and agitating circumstances, might be deeply injurious—possibly almost fatal. I really hope, therefore, that you will go on, see for yourself, and take a view of the whole ground. May the Lord direct and bless you!

‘Very sincerely and cordially yours.

‘Rev. Mr. Barnes.

Samuel Miller.’

Dr. Miller’s answer clearly foreshadowed, as not improbable, at least, the very difficulties which afterwards occurred. The second letter was prompted, evidently, by an earnest concern for the welfare of the First Church in Philadelphia. In accordance with the advice thus given, Mr. Barnes visited Philadelphia, and the result was his acceptance of the call.

From the 9th of April to the 14th of May inclusive the sermon already mentioned—“The Way of Salvation”—was made a subject of review in successive numbers of “The Philadelphian,” a Presbyterian newspaper, edited by Dr. Ezra S. Ely; the Rev. William M. Engles<sup>1</sup> and Dr. James P. Wilson alternately impugning and defending the doctrine of the discourse. Pending this controversy, on the 20th of April, the Presbytery of Philadelphia met, and, upon application of the First Church, for leave to prosecute its call before the Presbytery of Elizabeth Town, to which Mr. Barnes belonged, a warm discussion arose, which occupied large portions of four successive days. By a vote of thirty-seven to ten, it was decided proper to plead error in the sermon as a bar to granting the application; but at last, by

<sup>1</sup> Afterward D. D.



twenty-one to twelve, that leave should be given to prosecute the call. This decision, with different members of the majority, rested on different grounds. Most of them, perhaps, admitted, that the sermon contained error, or things which had a suspicious look, or were unhappily expressed; but some thought that a little skillful interpretation and explanation might put all in a satisfactory light; some denied the right of presbytery to investigate the doctrinal views of a minister belonging to another body; and some urged, chiefly, that Mr. Barnes had the confidence of many excellent men, and was an exemplary christian and successful preacher of the gospel. As far as possible, the majority avoided direct doctrinal discussion. The alarm was sounded, that the First Church, if denied its request, would secede, or at least would no longer contribute to the Board of Missions, of which Dr. Green was President, and one of his earnest coadjutors, the Rev. Joshua T. Russell, General Agent.

On the 18th of June, the Presbytery of Philadelphia convened, in special session, "for the purpose of considering the reception of the Rev. Mr. Barnes, and to do what might be deemed proper in his installation." At this meeting, Dr. Ely, though one of Mr. Barnes's friends, moved that an opportunity should be given to ask of him such explanations of his doctrinal views as any of the members might deem necessary; but his motion, by a vote of eighteen to twenty, was negatived, on the grounds, variously taken by the majority, that the applicant's orthodoxy had been already sufficiently discussed and established, and that his certificate from the Presbytery of Elizabeth Town was final. Doubtless the majority had a right to rule as to this matter, and to receive Mr. Barnes without examination, as they did then by a vote of thirty to sixteen. But at once charges of error were tabled against him as a bar to his installation. The moderator, however, decided that this was a matter not within the scope of the special call upon which the Presbytery had convened, his decision, though afterwards admitted by all to have been clearly wrong, was sustained, and Mr. Barnes was installed.

The minority complained to the Synod of Philadelphia, which condemned the Presbytery for "not allowing the

examination of Mr. Barnes in connexion with his printed sermon, previously to his reception as a member of presbytery, and especially before his installation as pastor; and ordered that judicatory “to hear and decide” upon the complainants’ “objections to the orthodoxy of the sermons of Mr. Barnes, and to take such order on the whole subject as” was “required by a regard to the purity of the Church, and its acknowledged doctrines and order.” Unhappily this decision did not single out and condemn the only act of presbytery which had been illegal—the refusal to entertain the charges tabled against Mr. Barnes.

In obedience to the injunction of Synod, the Presbytery of Philadelphia, in which, meantime, the minority had become the majority, entered upon an examination of Mr. Barnes’s sermon; and a minute drawn up by Dr. Green, exhibiting its errors, was, after full discussion, adopted. The closing paragraph of this paper gives a general idea of the whole proceeding.

“The Presbytery express their deep regret, that Mr. Barnes should have preached and published a discourse so highly objectionable, and so manifestly, in some of its leading points, opposed to the doctrines of the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of the Presbyterian Church; they earnestly recommend to Mr. Barnes, to reconsider and renounce the erroneous matter contained in his printed sermon, as specified in the foregoing decisions of Presbytery; and with a view to afford time to Mr. Barnes for reflection and reconsideration, in reference to the errors of his sermon, and for opportunity for such of the brethren as may choose to converse freely with him on the subject, the Presbytery do suspend their final decision on the case, until the next stated meeting.”

A committee, of which Dr. Green was chairman, was afterwards appointed to communicate this judgment to Mr. Barnes, and to “converse with him freely and affectionately,” “in the hope and expectation that the interview” would “result in removing or diminishing the difficulties” that had arisen. Mr. Barnes, taking the ground, that the whole proceeding was unconstitutional, declined hearing the committee, as a committee, though he received its members courteously, and conversed with them. The Presbytery then referred the whole case for adjudication, and the minority complained of what had been done, to

the General Assembly. Here the matter rested from the beginning of December until the meeting of the Assembly in May, 1831.

It would seem to be perfectly clear, and the principle has been again and again asserted by the highest authority in the Presbyterian Church, that its judicatories, while empowered to try and condemn persons chargeable with error, may also judge, abstractly, of opinions in any way propagated. The form of Government gives expressly the right "to resolve questions of doctrine or discipline seriously and seasonably proposed," and "to condemn erroneous opinions which injure the purity and peace of the Church."<sup>1</sup> But, in condemning opinions, without trying their author or propagator, must it not be done in a wholly abstract way? Mr. Barnes, undoubtedly, might have been subjected to regular process, and, if proved to be in error, dealt with accordingly. But could he be, without personal process, condemned in loose connexion with the condemnation of his discourse? Was it lawful, in such a proceeding, to involve him personally at all in the decision? Had the Presbytery any right even to decide that Mr. Barnes was the author of the sermon before them?—any right to call upon him, as if convicted of error, to recant? The judgment of the majority, so far as it took a personal direction, was plainly unconstitutional.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Chap. x., 8.

<sup>2</sup> The General Assembly of 1810, in condemning a book, carefully abstained from involving the writer in their sentence; designating the work only as one "entitled "The Gospel Plan," of which William C. Davis is stated in the title page to be the author." This is the clearest, most decisive precedent on record, and is so manifestly in accordance with right principle, that nothing ought to avail to cast doubt upon it, or set it aside.

The errors alleged to be contained in the sermon were chiefly the following:—1. A *denial of the imputation of Adam's first sin*:—"The notion of imputing sin is an invention of modern times." (p. 7.)—"Christianity does not charge on men crimes of which they are not guilty. It does not say, as I suppose, that the sinner is held to be personally answerable for the transgressions of Adam or of any other man \* \* Such a charge \* \* would be most clearly unjust." (p. 6.)—"Neither the facts, nor any proper inference from the facts, affirm, that I am, in either case, personally responsible for what another man did before I had an existence." (p. 7.)—"Christianity affirms the fact, that in connexion with the sin of Adam, or as a result, all moral agents will sin, and sinning will die." "The drunkard commonly secures, as a result, the fact that his family will be beggared, illiterate, perhaps profane or intemperate. Both facts are evidently to be explained on the same principle as a part of moral government." (p. 7.)—2. The *maintenance of the sinner's plenary ability to fulfill all God's requirements*:—"Christianity \* \* does not say, as I suppose, \* \* that God has given a law which man has

The summer of 1830 brought with it severe affliction. Mrs. Breckinridge had come with her three children, to spend a few weeks at "home," when one of her brothers was brought from boarding-school with the scarlet fever. The disease spread in the family; several suffered from it more or less; in one case it proved fatal. Elizabeth Breckinridge, the oldest child, was taken down, and soon passed away, but not without giving evidence, though but six years old, of an intelligent trust in Jesus as her Saviour.

##### 5. LETTERS UPON THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

In the year 1829, John Esten Cooke, M.D., of Kentucky, left the Methodist E. Church, of which he had been for eighteen years a devoted and active member, and joined, "upon conviction," the Protestant Episcopalians. This was, of course, to him a very important event; and he concluded that a "decent respect" for the opinion of those whom he had left, "as well as a proper regard for his own character for consistency and uprightness," rendered "it not improper that he should state the reasons

no power to obey. \* \* Such a requirement would be most clearly unjust." (p. 6.)—"It is not to any want of physical strength, that this rejection [of the gospel] is owing, for men have power enough in themselves to hate both God and their fellow-men, and it requires less physical power to love God than to hate him." (p. 14.)—On these subjects Mr. Barnes, it was inferred, held substantially the views of Dr. Taylor.—3. The *denial of a limited atonement*.—"This atonement was for all men. It was an offering made for the race. It had not respect so much to individuals, as to the law and perfections of God. It was an opening of the way of pardon, a making forgiveness consistent, a preserving of truth, a magnifying of the law, and had no particular reference to any class of men." (p. 11.)—"The atonement, of itself, secured the salvation of no one." (Ib.)—4. Mr. Barnes openly declared his self-absolution from all fealty to the Confession of Faith:—"It is not denied that this language varies from the statements which are often made on this subject, and from the opinion which has been entertained by many. And it is admitted that it does not accord with that used on the same subject in the Confession of Faith, and other standards of doctrine." (p. 6.)—"The great principle on which the author supposes the truths of religion are to be preached, and on which he endeavors to act, is, that the Bible is to be interpreted by all the honest helps within the reach of the preacher, and then proclaimed as it is, let it lead where it will, within, or without the circumference of any arrangement of doctrines. He is supposed to be responsible not at all for its impinging on any theological system; nor is he to be cramped by any frame-work of faith that has been reared around the Bible." (p. 12.)—Some seven years before, he had solemnly declared, as an indispensable condition of being ordained a minister of the Presbyterian Church, "I do sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures." Form of Government, Chap. xiii., 4.

which induced him to make the change ;” which accordingly he did in an octavo volume of two hundred and sixteen pages, entitled “An Essay on the Invalidity of Presbyterian Ordination,” which is chiefly an attempt to answer Dr. Miller’s Letters on the Christian Ministry. Six weeks’ study had sufficed to convince him of the validity of prelatical claims, and eight weeks’ to prepare him to begin to write in their defence: the book mentioned was the result. It was reviewed by the Rev. John C. Young, in 1830, in “The Presbyterian Advocate,” published, as Dr. Cook’s work also was, at Lexington. The reviewer remarks,

“We have read some of Dr. Cooke’s medical Essays with pleasure and profit. As far as our limited acquaintance with works of a similar kind would enable us to judge, we considered them the productions of a man of talents, who had studied well the subjects on which he undertook to write. We cannot say as much for his present Essay. A man may be a very good physician, and a very indifferent theologian :—a man may write very well on subjects with which he has been conversant all his life, and yet write very crudely on one which he has examined but *six weeks* before he commenced delivering to the world his views upon it.

“We have found in this essay no new arguments of any importance ; and we have seen the same arguments presented by other writers in a more lucid and systematic order. Indeed, after the “judicious Hooker,” the laborious Bingham, the ingenious Hammond, the zealous Dodwell, and the learned Potter have brought the fruits of years of research to their task, and yet have failed to convince the world of the DIVINE RIGHT OF EPISCOPACY ; we would *scarcely expect* that this *mighty work* would be accomplished by a man who could bring to the attempt no critical skill in the original languages of scripture, no deep acquaintance with ecclesiastical antiquities, no long and laborious investigation of the controversy,—nothing, in short, which would enable him to throw any new light on a subject, which had been examined and exhibited in all its bearings, by the ablest men who have ever worn the Episcopal Mitre.—A writer, under such circumstances, must be contented to copy, in a great measure, the facts and reasonings of those who have preceded him. And this we, accordingly, find to be the case in the present instance.”<sup>1</sup>

“No man lays claim to infallibility. When therefore any

<sup>1</sup> P. 49.

man is charged, either directly or indirectly, with dishonesty or disingenuousness, we are not at liberty to treat the charge as an *absurdity*. Still, if the accused enjoy a high reputation for piety, integrity and candour, such a charge bears on its front the marks of *improbability* and *injustice*, and, generally, we do not consider it worth the trouble of an investigation. Acting on this principle, we, for a considerable time, treated with neglect the charge of disingenuousness and misrepresentation which has been *virtually* advanced against Dr. Miller in an Essay entitled "The Invalidity of Presbyterian Ordination. By John Esten Cooke, M.D." We have long known Dr. M., and known him to have always sustained a character distinguished for learning, piety, amiableness and candour. There are few men with whom we have met, whom we would not as soon believe to be guilty of intentional unfairness as Dr. M. We were led, however, to an examination of the attack upon the character of a man, for whom we entertain so high a respect, by the request of others; and the result of our examination has been to furnish us with further proof of a fact, which considerable acquaintance with controversial writings had previously taught us, that an honest and honourable man may grievously mistake and misstate another's arguments.

"Dr. Cooke honestly thinks and endeavours to show, that Dr. M. mistakes and misstates the views of the writers he professes to quote. We, on the other hand, think that Dr. Cooke mistakes and misstates the arguments of Dr. M.; and this we will attempt briefly to show."<sup>1</sup>

The charges made by Dr. Cooke and others amounted, as we shall see hereafter, simply to this—that Dr. Miller, in professedly quoting what bore upon one point, which he had immediately in hand, did not also quote continuously what they thought was strongly in their favor, but upon another point; and that, with the best critics upon the Letters of Ignatius, he considered them an authority on some subjects, but not on behalf of Prelacy, for the support of which he believed them to have been corrupted.

The chief result of this attack, and others, so far as Dr. Miller was concerned, was that, in the month of October, 1830, he published a second edition—both volumes, as first and second parts, in one—of his letters, of more than twenty years before, upon the Christian Ministry.<sup>2</sup> Speak-

<sup>1</sup> P. 145.

<sup>2</sup> "Letters concerning the Constitution and Order of the Christian Ministry: addressed to the Members of the Presbyterian Churches in the City of New

ing, in the "Preliminary Letter," of the original volumes, he says,

"They have both been out of print for a number of years; and although frequent inquiry has been made for them, it was not supposed, until lately, that the demand was sufficient to warrant a second edition. Recent circumstances, however, have led to the belief that a new and corrected impression would be seasonable, and not unacceptable to the friends of primitive truth and order."

Again he remarks, "as the original publication of the following Letters was prompted by unprovoked and violent attacks, and was made merely in *self-defence*; so their appearance in this new form is occasioned by a similar cause. After reposing in quietness for more than twenty years, they have been, recently, again called up to public view, and subjected to attacks marked by great vehemence and confidence. Of these attacks, it is not deemed necessary to take any further notice than to say, that their violence and their offensive imputations have created a new demand for the work, and thus afforded an opportunity of presenting it again to the public in a more convenient form. This is the only reply that I at present intend to give to any recent assailant. And I hope that every candid reader, after attentive consideration, will be of the opinion that more was not called for.

"In preparing the work for a second edition, I have revised the whole with as much care as my circumstances allowed. And, although the further reading and reflection of twenty years have enabled me to detect some mistakes, and to reconsider and modify the statements in a few places;—yet I can truly say, that the amount of my modification has generally been, to urge my former reasonings with new confidence; to array my old authorities with additional, instead of diminished force; and, in general, to manifest what I have really felt,—a greatly augmented assurance of the soundness of my original conclusions.

"With regard to my quotations from the *fathers* and other writers, I think it proper to say, once for all, that I have endeavored to make them with all the fidelity of which I am capable. Those who are familiar with such matters need not be reminded, that, frequently, out of a folio page, not more than half a dozen lines have any direct bearing on the purpose of the extracts; and that, if these are exhibited without any uncandid wresting from their connection, the real spirit of the author

York. To which is prefixed a Letter on the Present Aspect and Bearing of the Episcopal Controversy. By Samuel Miller, D.D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey. Second Edition. Philadelphia: 1830." 8vo. Pp. liii and 485.

is set forth with sufficient accuracy. If, in any instance, in the following pages, an offence has been committed against this sound principle, it has not been done *intentionally*. It is, indeed, as common as it is easy, when an adversary is incommoded by a quotation in the way of authority, to complain of it as unfaithfully made, or as disingenuously separated from its proper connection. But of the truth of such complaints every intelligent reader must judge for himself. \* \*

“Nothing, my Christian friends, is further from my intention, in anything which you will find in the following pages, than to attack the Episcopal church. I have no hostility to that denomination of Christians. \* \* I have not the least doubt, indeed, that Prelacy is an unscriptural error; an unwarranted innovation on apostolic simplicity: but such an innovation as a man may adopt with zeal, and yet be an excellent Christian, and an heir of eternal blessedness. To all such Episcopalians as *Whitefield* and *Hervey* in former times, and as *Newton*, *Scott*, and others of similar stamp in later periods, I can cordially “bid God speed,” and sincerely rejoice in their success. Were the world filled with such men, I, for one, should be ready to say: Let their spirit reign from the rising to the setting sun! \* \*

“But when Episcopalians belong to that part of their denomination—a very small part, as I hope and trust—who not only believe that Prelacy is a divine institution, but that every other form of ecclesiastical government must be rejected as rebellion against God: when they persuade themselves, not only that the human invention which they embrace is truth, but that nothing else can be truth; that where there is no ministry episcopally ordained, there is no church at all, no ministry, no valid ordinances, no people in covenant with God, and, of course, no warranted hope of divine mercy through our Lord Jesus Christ: when, as a natural and necessary consequence of these opinions, they consider it as unlawful to indulge in any religious intercourse with non-Episcopalians; and regard it as an act of fidelity to Christ to stand aloof from all who do not belong to their own body, however pious their spirit and exemplary their lives; nay, however manifestly, in all other respects, they may bear his image, and do his will: when they think it incumbent upon them to decline every act which would imply acknowledging as brethren in Christ the most devout and heavenly-minded Christians who do not stand in their particular line of fancied ecclesiastical genealogy; and to refuse all communion and co operation with them, even in the most hallowed work of Christian benevolence: and, further, when they think it a duty to take every opportunity, in public



and private, to denounce non-Episcopalians as aliens from Christ, and call upon them to renounce their principles, and attach themselves to their sect, under the heaviest penalties: I say, when Episcopalians take this ground, it is difficult to tell wherein their principle differs from the corresponding principle of the Papists.<sup>1</sup>

## 6. RELIGIOUS FASTING.

In "The National Preacher" for March, 1831, appeared two sermons on Fasting<sup>2</sup> from Dr. Miller's pen. On this subject he held opinions, and adopted a practice, which are becoming more and more unpopular at the present day. The revulsion produced by Romish superstitions, and strengthened by a natural aversion to abstinence from food and other pleasurable indulgences, has carried many over to the extreme, as Dr. Miller deemed it, of condemning literal fasts altogether, as contrary to the spirit of New Testament worship. And not a few persons, who admit the duty of fasting, require such special occasion for it, as to render the admission of little practical effect. The views presented in these sermons are those which were much more prevalent half a century ago, than they are at present. The preacher says,

"It is not every *kind* of abstinence that constitutes a *religious fast*." "The Christian, as such, refrains from choice, denying his appetite from religious principle, and with a view to spiritual benefit. Now, when it is affirmed that occasional fasting in this sense, and with this view, is a Christian duty, it is not intended to be maintained that it is one of those stated duties which all are bound to attend upon at certain fixed periods, whatever may be their situation, or the aspect of Providence towards them. There is no precept in the word of God which enjoins the observance of a particular number of fast days in each year. It is to be considered as an *occasional*, or, perhaps, more properly speaking, a *special duty*, which, like seasons of *special prayer*, ought to be regulated, as to its frequency and manner of observance, by the circumstances in which we are placed. But, although the times and seasons of religious fasting be left, as they obviously must be, to the judgment and the conscience of each individual, it may be confidently affirmed

<sup>1</sup> Pp. vi-x.

<sup>2</sup> "The Duty, the Benefits, and the Proper Method of Religious Fasting. By Samuel Miller, D.D., Princeton, New Jersey. New York: 1831."—Daniel ix. 3.—8vo. Pp. 16.

that it is a DIVINE INSTITUTION; that it is a duty on which ALL CHRISTIANS ARE BOUND, at PROPER SEASONS, to attend."<sup>1</sup> For this opinion Dr. Miller claims full support from the light of nature, Scriptural examples, and direct and indirect Scriptural precepts.

"In estimating the benefits of religious fasting," he says, "we ascribe to it no mystical charm, no sanctifying power. We have no idea that there is any merit in macerating and enfeebling the body; nor can we regard with any other sentiment than that of abhorrence, the doctrine that abstaining from particular kinds of food ever did or can make expiation for sin, or serve in any form, as the price of our acceptance with God." The benefits which he then mentions are (1) the "natural and significant expression of our penitence for sin"; (2) "keeping under the body and bringing it into subjection"; (3) rendering "the mind more active, clear and vigorous"; (4) that fasting, well conducted, "ministers to the bodily health"; and (5) may be made "systematically subservient to the purposes of charity."<sup>2</sup>

"The *frequency* with which every individual Christian ought to fast, and the *extent* to which he ought to carry his abstinence, on each occasion, are questions concerning which no definite rule can be laid down." "The whole subject is left, as the subject of almsgiving is left, to every man's conscience in the sight of God." "That degree of abstinence which is salutary and not uncomfortable to one, would be deeply injurious as well as painful to another. The great END of the duty is to be regarded. God "will have mercy and not sacrifice." "It is manifest that the tendency in general is to *deficiency* rather than *excess* in this important duty. For one who injures himself by the excessive frequency or protraction of his seasons of abstinence, thousands, it is probable, either wholly neglect this self-denying duty, or perform it in a most superficial and inadequate manner." "The abstinence in religious fasting may be either *total* or *partial*. When it is continued for a single day only, it ought in many cases to be *total*." "But when the fast is continued through several successive days,—as it sometimes ought to be, in a great physical or moral crisis of life,—then, it is obvious, the abstinence should be only *partial*; that is, aliment ought to be sparingly taken, not to gratify appetite, but merely to sustain nature. The prophet Daniel, in a period of protracted, pious humiliation, tells us, that he "ate no *pleasant* bread, neither came flesh nor wine into his mouth." Nor let any one imagine that it is not *his* duty to fast, because the abstinence of a single

<sup>1</sup> P. 146.<sup>2</sup> Pp. 150-152.

day, and even from a single meal, in some degree incommodes his feelings. This is no valid objection to the duty. In fact, as you have heard, one great design of the privation is to “afflict the soul,” to humble us under a sense of our weakness and dependence, and to remind us, by a feeling of want, of the purpose for which we submit to the privation. If no such feeling were induced, an important purpose of the exercise would be defeated. Thousands were fully persuaded, a few years ago, that total abstinence from that fell destroyer, *ardent spirit*, would weaken their bodies and injure their health. But no man ever honestly made the experiment, without finding that his fears had all been delusive. No less delusive, be assured, is the plea, that you cannot comply, in an enlightened manner with the Christian duty of fasting, without injury, either physical or moral. To those who think otherwise, I would say—Have you ever FAIRLY MADE THE TRIAL? If you think you have, MAKE IT AGAIN, in the fear of God, and with humble prayer for divine direction. And imagine not that a mere feeling of emptiness, or even of importunate hunger, must necessarily mark the approach of mischief. So far from this, they are feelings which you often *need*, for your physical as well as moral benefit; and no injury will be likely to flow from them, when carried to a *proper length*, unless unguardedly followed by an *excessive indulgence of appetite*.<sup>1</sup>

“Seasons of devout fasting ought, undoubtedly, to be observed by INDIVIDUALS, in private, with a special reference to their own personal sins, wants, and trials; by FAMILIES, which have often much reason, as such, for special humiliation and prayer; by PARTICULAR CHURCHES, whose circumstances are frequently such as to call for seasons of peculiar mourning, penitence and supplication; by WHOLE DENOMINATIONS OF CHRISTIANS, who have very often occasion to humble themselves before God on account of the absence of his Spirit, and the prevalence of some great evils in the midst of them; and, finally, by NATIONS, when suffering under the righteous displeasure of God, or when sensible that, for their sins, they are exposed to his heavy judgments.”<sup>2</sup>

As to the method, Dr. Miller argues, (1) that a fast is in vain, “unless the heart be sincerely engaged in the service”; (2) that “a real abstinence from aliment is essential to the proper and acceptable performance of the duty”—that “fasting in spirit” and “abstinence from sin” are mere evasions; (3) that during a fast, we should retire, “as

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 153, 154.

<sup>2</sup> P. 154.

much as possible, from the world, shut out its illusions, and endeavor to break its hold of our hearts"; (4) that the time should "be devoted to a deep and heartfelt recollection of our sins, and unfeigned repentance for them"; (5) that a fast should "ever be followed by genuine reformation"; (6) that "every thing like ostentation, or self-righteousness, should be put far from us"; and (7) that Christian fasting "ought ever to be accompanied with more or less of sympathy and benevolence to the destitute"; and he concludes, that, although the people of God have now as much need of fasting as they ever had, it is "an unfashionable duty," "far too much neglected."<sup>1</sup>

#### 7. CORRESPONDENCE.

In 1830, Dr. Miller, having occasion to write to the Rev. Dr. Mitchell, of Anderston, Scotland, had mentioned the great need of the Seminary library, and queried whether, at Dr. Mitchell's suggestion, some of the living authors of Scotland—Dr. Chalmers and others—would not present to the institution copies of their works. On the 28th of February, 1831, he wrote to Dr. Chalmers a letter of acknowledgment, from which the following extract is made:—

'Accordingly, last autumn, I received a communication from Dr. Mitchell, informing me that you had been good enough to present a complete copy of your publications; and the books themselves came to hand a short time afterwards. When they arrived, I found, from an inscription on the blank leaf of each volume, that they were *presents to me*. Perhaps this was a mistake of your bookseller. But, whether the fact be so, or not, I have taken the liberty of giving the books the destination originally intended by myself; and have, accordingly, presented them, in your name, to the Board of Directors of our Seminary for the public library. They were very gratefully received; a vote of thanks for them was passed; and I was directed to communicate the fact to you. It is with much pleasure that I now discharge the commission. \* \* I hope what I have done in this matter will not be disapproved by you.'

Dr. Miller writes to one of his daughters, in Baltimore, on the 19th of March, 1831,

'About six weeks ago, one afternoon, a grave looking, thick-set, and rather short old gentleman, apparently about sixty'

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 154-160.

five or sixty-seven, called on me and told me that his name was Joseph G——; that he belonged to the Methodist connection; that he had once been a travelling preacher among them, and was now, as I understood him, a local preacher; that he resided in Baltimore; that he was well acquainted with Mr. Breckinridge; that he first knew him in Richmond, Va., etc., etc.; that he had lost his pocket book and was without money; earnestly begged the loan of five dollars to carry him on to New York; said he would certainly return on or about the 15th of February last, when he would faithfully repay the loan; and added, that if he failed of doing it, I might write to his friend, Mr. Breckinridge, and denounce him as an impostor and cheat. I lent him the money, but have heard nothing of him since. I have some curiosity to know whether Mr. Breckinridge is really acquainted with such a man. \* \* He said he belonged to the family of the G——s, in Richmond, and was related to that of the G——s in Baltimore. I am so frequently applied to and imposed upon in the same way, that I feel some little interest in knowing whether this fellow was a deceiver or not.'

Upon the envelope of the original draft of the following letter, which Dr. Miller retained, an endorsement says,

'The inclosed letter was directed to the Honorable Charles Ewing, Chief Justice of the State of New Jersey, who resided at Trenton, and was one of the most esteemed members of the Presbyterian congregation of that city. He was a man of uncommonly fine talents, of the purest morals, and of an external character in every respect like that of an eminent Christian. Very few professors of religion are so exemplary as he was in all but making a public profession. He died of cholera, about sixteen months after the transmission of this letter, without having made such a profession, but in a calm and humble hope.'

'My very dear Sir,

Princeton, April 3, 1831.

'I hope you will pardon the liberty I take in this address. It is dictated by the sincerest respect, and the most cordial Christian friendship. When I saw you in my audience this morning, emotions were excited in my bosom, which it would be difficult to describe. There was something in the nature of my subject, taken in connection with your history and character in reference to religion, which moved me so deeply, that I felt as if I could not go to rest with a good conscience to-night, until I had expressed to you on paper the fullness of a heart which takes a warm interest in your welfare for this world as well as that which is to come.

‘It cannot be a matter of surprize to you, my respected Sir, that your friends and neighbours regard your character with the highest respect; that the members of the congregation with which you are connected look upon you with peculiar and affectionate interest; that many of them cherish a hope for you, which, perhaps, you do not for yourself; and that they *all* lament, that, while your conduct is far more exemplary than that of many professors of religion, you have not seen your way clear to “confess Christ” openly and decisively before men.

‘Allow me, my dear Sir, with the profoundest respect, and the sincerest good-will, to ask, Why is *this*? It is not, I am persuaded, because you are “ashamed of Christ and of his words.” I rather suppose it is because you are not yet satisfied that you are a cordial friend of the Saviour, and are waiting until you can gain a comfortable hope of your discipleship. This, if I am not deceived in my estimate, has been the state of your mind for years. Still you do not decide. Every successive year you probably anticipate a more favourable state of things. But year after year passes without any decisive step being taken. In the meanwhile life is wearing away; and who can tell but that it may terminate while you are yet uncertain, whether you belong to the enemies or friends of the Redeemer; before you have fully decided whether you will be for Christ or for the world?

‘If you ask me, what you shall do, since the doubts concerning your own state, which have hitherto kept you from a sacramental table, yet remain, and, as long as they continue to prevail, *must* prevent your appearing in the ranks of professing Christians: I answer, God forbid that I should ever recommend to any one to take such a step insincerely, or with a predominant doubt of sincerity. But I would say, act in this case just as you would act in a case, in which the temporal welfare and happiness of yourself and your family were essentially involved, in some unsettled controversy, which it was, of course, of the utmost importance you should adjust, and which was becoming worse by every hour’s delay. In such a case, I am sure, you could not rest satisfied a day, or an hour, until the matter was settled. Now, I should say, take the same course in reference to the infinitely more momentous subject of which I am speaking. No longer “halt between two opinions.” Bring the matter to a distinct and solemn crisis. Set apart a day for special prayer and humiliation, accompanied with fasting—to humble yourself before God; and importunately to ask for the Holy Spirit to shine into your heart, and to aid you in deciding “what manner of spirit you are of.” If the exer-

cises of *one* such day are not made effectual, by the divine blessing, to the termination of your doubts, observe, after a little interval, *another* and *another*, until the great question is decided. Can a more important question be conceived? Is it wise to postpone for a day its decision, when the thread of life is so brittle; and when all your relations in life render it of unspeakable importance that your example be, henceforth, as decisive and as edifying as possible? And, although it be certain that no effective step can be taken in religion without divine aid; yet it is equally certain, that we have the same encouragement to look and confidently hope for that aid, in the use of God's prescribed means, as we have to anticipate a blessing on industrious efforts to promote our temporal advantage.

'I am sensible, my dear Sir, that it may appear singular for one who has so little claim as I have, to interpose in so delicate and solemn a concern as this, which must, after all, be left between every individual and his God. My only apology must be found in the deep interest I take in your welfare and that of your family; in my strong impression of the great good you might do, if your whole weight were openly and decisively thrown into the scale of Christ; in the repeated instances which I have known of persons bearing a character not unlike your own, at last leaving the world without coming to any public decision on the most important of all questions; and, finally, in the obligation which I feel lying upon me, as an aged minister, near the end of his course, to leave no effort unattempted that may promise even the possibility of doing good. Your pastor is but a youth;<sup>1</sup> and although he never dropped a hint in my hearing respecting any special address to you on the subject of this letter; yet I can readily conceive that he would be likely to feel no small embarrassment in seeking a personal and pointed conversation on such a subject with one so much his superior in age, and so elevated in station. At my time of life, when all opportunities of doing good to my fellow-men must soon be over, I ought to be done with such embarrassment, and to be ready to risk something for the sake of promoting the best interests of a respected friend.

'I have only to add, my dear Sir, that this communication has not been prompted by any human being. It is the result entirely of the emotions which arose in my mind on seeing you in my audience this morning, and listening with so much serious attention, while I was lamenting the small success of the Gospel on the hearts and lives of men. All knowledge of it is

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. James W. Alexander—from 1843, D.D.

confined to you, myself, and our God. May he render it useful!

‘I am, my dear Sir, your unfeigned  
‘and respectful friend,  
‘Samuel Miller.’

The Rev. James W. Alexander, writing under date of the 6th of August, 1832, said,

“I returned to Princeton last night, from the funeral of my principal supporter and friend in Trenton, Chief Justice Ewing. He gave a decided testimony to the power of faith. He was not only one of the most temperate, and equable, and regular, but one of the halest men in America. You may imagine the consternation. He died of cholera, after an illness of twenty-three hours.”<sup>1</sup>

Again he said,

“There is good reason to believe that he was a subject of renewing grace long before his last illness in 1832. During this brief period of suffering, he made a distinct and touching avowal of his faith in Christ.”<sup>2</sup>

## 7. THE RULING ELDERSHIP.

It has been already seen, that, in 1809, Dr. Miller published a sermon upon the Warrant, Nature, and Duties of the Ruling Eldership. In 1831, he made this the basis of a more extended publication upon the same subject.<sup>3</sup> The latter he dedicated to the ministers and elders of the Presbyterian Church. In his address to them he says,

“The substance of the following essay was delivered, from the pulpit, in the form of a sermon, more than twenty years ago, and subsequently published. In consequence of repeated solicitation, from some individuals of your number, I have thought proper to alter its form, to enlarge its limits, and to adapt it, according to my best judgment, to more general utility. It has long appeared to me that a more ample discussion of this subject than I have hitherto seen, is really needed.”

<sup>1</sup> Forty Years' Familiar Letters, 194.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Hall's Hist. of the First Presb. Ch. of Trenton, 414.

<sup>3</sup> “An Essay on the Warrant, Nature, and Duties of the Office of the Ruling Elder in the Presbyterian Church. By Samuel Miller, D. D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey. New York and Boston: 1831.”

After two editions of this volume had appeared, it was, in 1840, adopted by the Presbyterian Board of Publication, which now issues it—in octodecimo—324 pages.

The work was re-issued in Scotland, in 1835, with an Introductory Essay by the Rev. William Lindsay of Glasgow, in duodecimo—290 pages.



“I am aware that some of my brethren do not concur with me in maintaining the *Divine authority* of the office of the Ruling Elder; and, probably, in several other opinions respecting this office advanced in the following pages. In reference to these points, I can only say, that, as the original publication, of which this is an enlargement, was made without the remotest thought of controversy, and even without advertng, in my own mind, to the fact, that I differed materially from any of my brethren; so nothing is more foreign from my wishes, in the republication, than to assail the opinions or feelings of any brother. I have carefully re-examined the whole subject. And, although, in doing this, I have been led to modify some of my former opinions, in relation to a few minor points; yet in reference to the Divine warrant and the great importance of the office for which I plead, my convictions have become stronger than ever.”

Dr. Miller's publications upon the Ruling Eldership were, as to distinct treatises on the subject, almost pioneers. The Rev. John G. Lorimer, of Glasgow, published a work on “The Eldership of the Church of Scotland,” in 1841, in the preface to which he says,

“The most complete treatise which I have seen on the subject, and to which I gladly acknowledge my obligations in the following pages, is a work ‘On the Office of the Ruling Elder, by Dr. Samuel Miller,’ \* \* But the work is large for the general reader: though republished in this country it is little known: and though as a whole most excellent, it contains sentiments on various important points which no consistent member of the Church of Scotland can approve or recommend.”

Dr. Lorimer could find in Scotland only a chapter on the Eldership in the work of the Rev. Dr. Burns of Paisley upon Pauperism; a pamphlet, rather of a hortatory kind, by the Rev. Mr. Lewis of Dundee; two articles in the Presbyterian Review for November 1834, and January 1835, “by Alexander Dunlop, Esquire, advocate—himself a noble specimen of an able and devoted Elder of the Church of Scotland;”<sup>1</sup> with “A Treatise of Ruling Elders and Deacons,” a tract “ascribed to the Rev. James Guthrie of Sterling, one of the celebrated martyrs of the Scottish Church,” put to death under Charles the Second, in 1661—a treatise which Dr.

<sup>1</sup> P. xiii.

Lorimer republishes as part of his volume. After quoting Romans 12, 6-8, and 1 Corinthians 12, 28, Mr. Guthrie remarks,

“The third place of Scripture is: “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.”—Which text doth hold forth and distinguish two sorts of Elders in the church to whom the Lord Jesus hath committed the power of ruling. One sort who do also labour in the word and doctrine, namely, Pastors and Teachers; another sort who do only rule, and doing it well are accounted worthy of double honour; and these are the Ruling Elders of whom we speak.”<sup>1</sup>

Agreeing that ruling elders are appropriately named, and that there is a clear scriptural warrant for their office, Presbyterians have always differed among themselves as to the precise terms of that warrant, and, not unfrequently, as to some of the functions of the eldership. The view above given, from the work ascribed to Mr. Guthrie, was the view adopted by Dr. Miller; who regarded the New Testament as employing the term elder for two distinct orders of church officers—distinct in ordination, and as to their duties. To the preaching-elder, or minister of the Gospel, according to this idea, belonged, indeed, all the functions of the ruling elder, and, in addition to these, the preaching of the word, and the ordination of other ministers, functions not belonging to the mere ruler. Dr. Miller certainly did much to spread this view of the office in the Presbyterian Church in this country, as also in Scotland, and wherever Scottish and American Presbyterians have exerted an influence. In opposition to it, some have contended, that ruling elders are never designated in Scripture by the term elder, but by that of deacon, or by only general terms, such as *rulers*, *helps*, *governments*.<sup>2</sup> Dr. James P. Wilson, before Dr. Miller's work was published, had ably maintained, in the *New Haven Christian Spectator*, that ruling elders were only deacons under another name; and the latter was regarded as intending in his work to answer Dr. Wilson. There have been later discussions of the sub-

<sup>1</sup> P. 31.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. 12, 8. 1 Cor. 12, 28.

ject in this country, which have, to some extent, grown out of the publications already noticed. Dr. R. J. Breckinridge, Dr. Thornwell and Dr. Adger have insisted that preaching and ruling elders are one in order and essential functions; the preaching of the word, by the call and gift of God, and the call of the people, being an unessential addition of duty in certain cases.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-NINTH.

### HOUSEHOLD RELIGION.

1831.

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#### 1. DR. AND MRS. MILLER.

THE union of effort and the harmony, at home and abroad, which characterized Dr. and Mrs. Miller's long married life, have already been brought to view sufficiently to justify an inquiry into the causes of their happy companionship. And in the course of such an inquiry, perhaps, may be exhibited to most advantage certain traits of character, by which they were respectively distinguished.

It would be a great mistake to imagine, that this harmony was that of two amiable and easy persons, both so quiet and inactive as never to come into collision; or was to be accounted for by a controlling force of character on either side. It is a very common thing for husband and wife to agree well, because one constantly and cheerfully yields to the other, as possessing the stronger, more active mind, and the more determined will. This is especially the case, where the abler party exhibits those moral qualities which inspire respect and confidence. And, of course, when control founded on such grounds is wisely exercised, and secures hearty co-operation, its results are very beneficial. The natural influence which superiors exert over their inferiors God has evidently designed for good to both. But the case before us was not of this sort.

And no less a mistake would it be to regard Dr. and Mrs. Miller as harmonious, because they were singularly alike in their natural endowments and tastes, in their education, opinions, or experience. Wide differences between them, in these respects, have already been brought to light. The early training of the one was wholly unlike that of the other;

and previous pages have made quite apparent Mrs. Miller's remarkable independence of her husband, in the formation of her religious views—those views which he would have been expected especially to influence. It may be interesting, and perhaps not uninteresting, to notice some of those points in which they differed, and of those in which they were alike, as the basis of our conclusions in regard to the cause of their general agreement.

Mrs. Miller, with, of course, far less literary and theological education than her husband, was, perhaps, his superior in mental originality, and independence of thought and investigation. With equal scholastic acquirements, she would have been, doubtless, the more vigorous thinker of the two. And, as the natural result of such a distinction, she was far less yielding than he in opinion and prejudice: a point as to which, indeed, his superior cultivation of mind gave him obvious advantage.

From nothing that he ever said, or has left behind in writing, can we infer that there was aught remarkable in Dr. Miller's religious experience. He had enjoyed the privilege of a strict Christian training, and had come, at length, into the church with, apparently, but a trembling hope of an interest in Christ. His after growth in grace and experimental knowledge seems to have been gradual, almost imperceptible, and perhaps at times, by unfavorable circumstances, especially in New York, seriously retarded. There can be no question that his spiritual progress was much more decided, constant, and vigorous after his removal to Princeton, than it had been for many years before. Doubtless, in this matter, his intercourse with Dr. Alexander was greatly blessed. At any rate, he always seemed to regard with profound respect the spiritual attainments of his colleague; and was ever ready to defer to him as the safer and more experienced guide in matters of heart religion. To Dr. Alexander, as also, if opportunity offered, to Dr. Green, he would send his own son for religious counsel. Though Dr. Miller suffered, both before and after his removal to Princeton, several very severe and threatening attacks of illness; yet his ordinary health was comfortable and even buoyant; and his religious feelings shared in the advantages of a happy constitution of mind

and body. Yet he was, at times, troubled, even down to old age, with doubts of his acceptance. Anxiety on this account, however, was seldom agitating enough to disturb his even and well balanced temperament.

On the other hand, Mrs. Miller's religious experience had been, as we have seen, peculiar and strongly marked. Her slender Christian advantages in early life, and the influence of skeptical opinions had protracted and embittered the struggle of the flesh against the Spirit. Besides, while she never, after marriage, suffered from severe, lengthened illness, she was afflicted much of her life, especially until all her children were grown up, with morbid tendencies and frequent depression of spirits. For many years after her residence in Princeton commenced, she rarely passed an afternoon without nervous head ache—often very distressing, although seldom preventing the discharge of household duties. In her own memoirs she has recognized the fact, that these infirmities had given a sombre hue to her religious experience; and yet, quite early in that experience, she laid fast hold upon a good hope, which she maintained with a singularly uniform confidence, apparently, and freedom from doubt. Her early knowledge of fashionable life, and the bitterness which this knowledge had prepared for her, had given her an unusually deep impression of the prevailing evils of society, and of the sinfulness of the natural heart; and, for the most part, she took much more gloomy views than Dr. Miller of the world and its vanities. Some accomplishments of a literary and artistic kind, which he desired his children to possess, she doubted and feared, because of what she imagined their worldly, ensnaring tendency.

Both felt it a duty and a privilege to contribute steadily and constantly to the cause of benevolence and religion; but Dr. Miller's temptation was to give too indiscriminately, upon the kind impulses of the moment, and with little investigation; while his wife's much greater caution as to this point sometimes endangered her withholding more than was meet; although to what she thoroughly approved she gave most freely. Such a difference very often, doubtless, puts domestic harmony at risk, yet, of course, not so much where both parties are acting under the strong dominion of prin-

ple, and have full faith each in the other's conscientiousness.

With Dr. Miller, faith, and reason, and conscience were probably better balanced, and more symmetrically exercised than with Mrs. Miller; yet possibly he was in danger of looking too little for constant divine guidance. She, on the contrary, was more strongly tempted than he to superstition, above all to that form of it which is theologically termed enthusiasm—neglecting too much the guidance of the natural faculties, and even the written word, for providential signs, impressions and impulses. Yet as to no real principle, in this respect, did they differ; and perhaps Mrs. Miller's life exhibited instances enough of really wonderful divine interposition, to justify the doubt, at least, whether she was not herein as nearly right as her husband. Certain it is that what all the members of the family knew of her walk with God, and of his dealings with her, gave them an unusually deep impression of her piety and prevalence in prayer. It was idle to theorize against what, in her, commanded a reverence akin to awe.

In 1827, we find Dr. Miller adopting the plan of giving, statedly, one-tenth of his income. His occasional charities doubtless, always swelled the amount considerably. The skeleton of one of his extemporaneous discourses, entitled 'Rules of Giving,' commends giving 'willingly,' 'cheerfully,' 'liberally,' 'spontaneously,' 'statedly,' 'punctually.'

A little peculiarity of one mode of Mrs. Miller's contribution to charitable objects will illustrate the two points of character last mentioned. For many years she was in the habit of laying aside in a drawer every *silver* dollar that came into her possession, as belonging to God. It looked as if she feared that she might not give enough, and desired Providence to add just what was deficient. The store thus accumulated was entirely independent of all her ordinary contributions, and, from time to time, was devoted to special objects, as they presented their claims with peculiar force to her mind. Such an object she found, for example, in the departure of Mrs. William M. Thompson, and her husband, as missionaries of the American Board to the Holy Land, in 1832. This lady, as Miss Eliza N. Hanna, had, for a number of years, with her sister, conducted a female day

and boarding school in Princeton, at which more than one of Dr. Miller's daughters had obtained a part of their education. She had been very highly esteemed; and she and her husband, just prior to embarkation, paid their Princeton friends a short visit, and were entertained by Mrs. Miller. They were soon to bid farewell, when the hoard of silver dollars—one hundred and thirty-one—was brought forth, and committed to Mrs. Thompson, for a female school in Syria under her care. This habit of hoarding for God, like all habits, seemed to increase constantly in power; until Mrs. Miller appeared to catch at a silver dollar, as if it were a God-send; so that if her husband or any of her children displayed one, she generally managed to get it in exchange for other money. Perhaps, herein, according to her own principle, she was too ready to go in advance of Providence.

Dr. Miller's idea of housekeeping was less economical than his wife's, and probably the plainness of living which happily distinguished, to the last, their mansion and household, would have been gradually and a good deal exceeded, as the children grew up, but for her vigilant opposition. Yet her husband had some very decided notions on this subject, of which he was most tenacious. For example, a brussels carpet was, in his view, a piece of extravagance not to be tolerated. And he often acknowledged that her somewhat stricter views, as to eating, and drinking, and dressing had been a great benefit to all the family, himself included.

With such differences, there were, to be sure, some most important points of resemblance between them. Not only were their fundamental views of gospel truth and gospel duty entirely coincident; they agreed, also, in being alike ardent lovers of Presbyterianism, as to both its distinctive doctrines and polity. Each had a strong will and, naturally, an impatient, if not violent, temper. With a less refined taste, and less religious principle, Dr. Miller would have been hasty and passionate, though not vindictive, or disposed to brood over his resentments; Mrs. Miller would have cherished longer enmities—would have been much less placable. But they had both equally studied to bring their own wills into complete subjection to God's will, and



were perfectly agreed, that the indulgence of hard thoughts, hard feelings, or hard words, in human intercourse, and especially between husband and wife, was a very great sin. And their views of the nature, rights and duties of the family relation were almost without a shade of difference. Placing before themselves, constantly, not self-gratification, but the faithful discharge of duty; not the pampering of the flesh, but the training of the whole being for Christ and for heaven, they had comparatively little temptation to disagree. Add to this that devoted, unwavering, and ever-growing attachment to each other, which had marked their union from the very first; and the elements of a harmonious life are quite sufficiently apparent.

When a difference of opinion arose between Dr. and Mrs. Miller, as to a point comparatively unimportant, and involving no question of conscience, he generally gave way; and he often gracefully acknowledged, that his wife's judgment had been the better. In following out his conscientious convictions, however, he was very firm; and, when he insisted, Mrs. Miller at once recognized her own well considered obligation to yield: she might expostulate, but her husband's decision was her law. And it should be observed, that their disagreements, when fully known to their children, were uniformly managed in such a Christian spirit, that neither was lowered at all in their eyes, by any reproach or imputation cast by one upon the other, or any noticeable manifestation of evil temper. Each parent's example was a changeless lesson, to every child, of love and confidence towards the other parent; and the studied respect and beautiful deference which each constantly paid to the other were an embodied statute for the life-long obedience of all who witnessed their daily walk and conversation. To their children, their very faults, amidst all that was so deeply revered, were but as those of holy men and women of old, who testified but the more clearly to God's grace, by occasional evidence of feebly lingering corruptions, which that grace had so remarkably overcome.

## 2. THE CLOSET AND THE FAMILY.

Dr. and Mrs. Miller were truly of one heart in their views of practical religion. If there was anything in which they

were fully and cordially agreed, it was in their striving to make the service and enjoyment of God the great end and business of life for both themselves and every one under their roof. Each of them had heartily adopted the determination of Joshua—"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."<sup>1</sup> Their example, their authority, their instructions, and their prayers were unreservedly consecrated to the attainment of this result. No person could belong to their household, without the assurance that they spent much time in closet devotion; and that the daily seasons set apart for this purpose were jealously guarded against abridgement and dissipation. They never, indeed, gave any one notice of their hours of secret worship, or denied themselves absolutely, at such hours, to ordinary calls; but none could fail to observe that they regularly entered into the closet, and shut the door; and that they yielded to interruptions, when there employed, with less willingness than at almost any other time. The manner of their private devotions they never disclosed. Probably Dr. Miller made comparatively little use of any devotional book excepting the Scriptures. Mrs. Miller was known to read much in Scott's Family Bible, and to use freely, though without audible singing, the "Psalms and Hymns" employed in the ordinary public worship which she attended. No sound from the closet of either ever reached an ear outside.

There was reason to believe that Dr. and Mrs. Miller seldom passed a day at home, or together abroad, without united prayer by themselves. They evidently regarded such union as a special duty and privilege, because of the special promise connected with it in God's word.

It is most certain that their religion, in the consistency of its observances, and its unceasing and controlling influence upon the life, constantly commanded the respect of all about them. That the Scriptures were to them, not the word of men, but in truth the word of God; and that they indeed ascribed to prayer an immeasurable efficacy, no one, who enjoyed any degree of intimacy with them, could for a moment doubt. Children are, perhaps, commonly, the severest critics, according to the measure of their intelligence and education, of the practical religion of their parents;

<sup>1</sup> Joshua 24, 15.

whom, in the most unguarded moments, they constantly observe; but probably it never occurred to any one in this household to question the sincerity of the christian profession of either father or mother. Indeed the devout earnestness and controlling power which their faith constantly exhibited, was, ever doubtless, with all their children, a strong argument, and, throughout the earlier years of the latter, the strongest argument which they could understand, for the verity and importance of the doctrines of Christ.

It was a settled principle of the household, so far as the example and untiring efforts of the parents could make it so, that every act, and every thing were to be "sanctified by the word of God and prayer."<sup>1</sup>

The family Dr. and Mrs. Miller regarded, as, in the beginning, co-incident with the visible Church, and as never having lost its distinct, organic existence, as that church's grand formative element. The children of every parent professing the true religion they considered, of course,<sup>2</sup> as, by birth, members of the visible Church, according to the terms of the covenant made anciently with Abraham, acknowledged uniformly by the Israelites, and handed down to the people of God, in New Testament times, as a perpetual and precious inheritance. They believed, moreover, that faithful christian parents had special encouragement to expect the salvation of their children. Perhaps there is no evidence that they went beyond the prevailing belief of evangelical christians on this point—the belief, not in an absolute promise,<sup>3</sup> but in extraordinary reason to hope, for

<sup>1</sup> 1 Timothy 4, 5.

<sup>2</sup> Confession of Faith, Ch. 25, 2.

<sup>3</sup> God's word seems plainly to teach, that the children of pious and faithful parents shall certainly be saved. This doctrine, of course, can be received by those only who believe that he is absolutely sovereign in the dispensation of his grace. The promise is made, not at all to the children, but to the parents. "I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee, in their generations, as an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee." (Gen. 17, 7.) Now, if being the God of the parents means being their Saviour, then being the God of the children means just as much. To be sure, every divine promise is made upon a condition; and the condition here, say some, is the child's faith and obedience. But the fulfillment of the condition lies upon the party with whom the covenant is made, not upon a third party. In the case before us, the covenant being with the parent, the condition is laid upon the parent alone. What the condition is, we find plainly declared:—"I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." (Gen. 18, 19.) This teaches us, in brief, that parental

the full success of parental fidelity. But in this view of God's covenant they found ample scope for a faith working by love. Reason, experience and observation accorded with the Bible in assuring them, that the child's welfare, both temporal and eternal, depended greatly upon a faithful training; and they were resolved, trusting in divine grace, that the blood of their children should not be found in their skirts. The notion that parents have little influence in determining the character and destiny of children,—that the best trained often turn out the worst,—a notion at direct variance with Scripture and common sense alike, though very popular with the thousands who would throw off parental responsibility, they regarded as abhorrent to every rational and christian sentiment.

Infant baptism they both esteemed a very precious ordinance, for the truth which it exhibited and naturally impressed, the impulse which it might give to both parent and child in the discharge of duty, and the graces of the Spirit more or less immediately connected with it as God's seal of his covenant.

fidelity is certainly followed by the fulfillment of God's promise, in turning to righteousness, the immediate descendants: the covenant is absolute, but absolute for only the first generation.

Hence, in infant baptism, the transaction is wholly between God and the parent. As an adult, when baptized, makes profession of having entered into a covenant with God; so a parent, offering an infant for baptism, makes profession of another, a further and distinct covenant. In the former case, the variable part of the engagement is, "I promise to be faithful to my own soul;" in the latter, "I promise to be faithful to the soul of my child." Of course fidelity to the Saviour lies at the foundation of both engagements. It is a popular but groundless idea, that the parent, as representing the child, enters into some engagement; and the latter is often exhorted to ratify what the former has thus representatively done—to take voluntarily upon himself the vows made in his name. But how can the child ever ratify the parent's promise of personal, parental fidelity? When the child makes a profession of religion, he recognizes the obligation, not of the latter, but of the former, covenant mentioned. The parent vows to bring up the child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. How can the child take that vow upon himself? Of various superstitions connected with infant baptism this simple and scriptural view completely and happily disposes. The transaction is one with which the child has nothing to do, excepting afterwards to enjoy its fruits. It is a transaction simply between the parents and their covenant God; and the grace properly connected with infant baptism is received by the parents, not by the child. What good can it do the child? is asked frequently by objectors to pedobaptism. None whatever, immediately, in any case where the subject is too young to be influenced by gospel-truth. The infant, after this ordinance, is exactly what is was, spiritually, before; but the parents, who have professed God's covenant with themselves for their children, are benefited, as parents, by that profession, in its proper relations, just as by any other religious profession. The strength and the grace imparted are theirs.

Twice every day, family worship was as regularly attended to as the family meals. Every member of the household, including domestics, and often day laborers, was expected to be present. In the morning, it was Bible reading and prayer, sometimes with singing: in the evening, prayer alone. The younger children Mrs. Miller was accustomed to take apart, immediately after morning family worship; and kneeling with them, she first heard their prayers said, then prayed with them and for them herself. Every Sabbath morning, she assembled all the children, for an hour previous to public worship, and, after prayer, read to them a sermon, or a portion of some practical religious work. Upon each child's birth-day, she repaired with the child, at a convenient time, to the father's study, for a brief season of united, solemn intercession suited to the occasion, and seldom failing to produce some serious thoughts. The departure of one or more of the family for a visit to distant friends, or a long journey, was often made the occasion of assembling all for special prayer. Every day, each child, until home education gave place to the day or boarding school, which was not usually until after the age of twelve, was required to commit to memory a few verses from the Bible. Each, in this way, first and last, committed all, or nearly all, of the New Testament, and much of the Old. Mrs. Miller, assisted more or less by the older children, heard this lesson; and she had some peculiar rules for it. The verses of the previous day—in family parlance, the 'old lesson'—must always be said with the 'new.' Neither was considered 'said,' if more than three words were missed. After learning the lesson, some little time must be spent, the book closed, in 'forgetting' it, before it was heard: this plan of forgetting was designed to keep it the longer in memory; for the ordeal required thorough study in the first place.

To this requirement the blessed Saviour seemed to set his own seal. Perhaps all the children were ready, in maturer years, to acknowledge their indebtedness, both intellectually and religiously, to the practice. But one attestation of its advantages was peculiarly touching. When Edward was sinking in consumption, and began thoughtfully to attend to "the things which belonged to his peace;"

and his mother, striving to present the Saviour in his sufficiency and glory, and in his wondrous condescension and sympathy, had directed her son's thoughts to some passages in the Epistle to the Hebrews; she found, one morning, almost to her alarm at first, he was so feeble, that he had just committed to memory, besides a hymn, the whole of the opening chapter of that Epistle. "Oh" said he, "I once learned Hebrews through, and now it seems fresh in my memory: it comes back without any effort."

The Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Divines, and to some extent the Larger, were diligently used in the family as text books of religious instruction; and were zealously recommended to all christian families by precept as well as by example. The Sabbath-school, constantly favored, was, however, regarded not as a substitute for parental effort, but rather as a stimulus to it.

A strict observance of the Lord's Day, by all the household, was very strongly insisted upon, but without any mere ritualistic turn to the requirement. "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." It was a precious day for its spiritual uses and benefits; yet works of necessity and mercy were admitted with a free spirit. Mrs. Miller, though never accustomed to such an observance, entertained a decided preference for the New England reckoning of the Lord's day, and always urged that, at any rate, Saturday evening should be "the preparation" for the Sabbath.

Every member of the family, including domestics, was expected to attend God's house upon the Sabbath day. This rule was so imperative, that no child, well enough to go out, ever dreamed of asking to stay at home. It was so well understood, and so steadily and invariably, though lovingly, enforced, that dispute or conflict on the subject never arose. The dwelling was commonly locked up and left to itself. In the judgment of Dr. and Mrs. Miller, to pre-occupy the minds of all their children with their own honest and well-considered religious convictions, even to their denominational preferences, was as clear a duty as to cherish, themselves, those convictions. The soul not taken possession of for God, they regarded as abandoned to Satan; and all their parental authority, power, and influence they

sedulously employed to mould each soul according to their own settled views of the gospel. The only assurance that children would ever make a right choice, in the matter of religion, they found in faithfully bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

The children were often encouraged, though not absolutely required, to write abstracts of the sermons and religious lectures which they had heard. When the Rev. George Bush, before his lapse into Swendenborgianism, was lecturing in Princeton upon the fulfillment of prophecy, great interest was excited and kept up in the family, throughout the course, by adding a pecuniary inducement to the proposition that all should write abstracts, which were to be prepared from memory alone.

### 3. WORLDLY AMUSEMENTS.

In condemning, and in prohibiting to their children and all under their authority, what they regarded as sinful worldly amusements and indulgences, Dr. and Mrs. Miller were strict and earnest. The theatre and its kindred resorts need hardly be mentioned as forbidden. About the year 1826, the former contributed two or more short articles to the *New Jersey Patriot*, a weekly newspaper published in Princeton, on the subject of social amusements. They were replies to articles that had appeared in the same paper previously. One of them relates expressly to *Dancing*. Dr. Miller had been brought up plainly, as well as religiously, and, it is probable, had never learned to dance. Yet, in the article last mentioned, he says, "On this subject, the writer does not speak from mere hearsay. In youth, he was no stranger to the dancing-party and the ball-room." In Philadelphia, no doubt, during his college course, he had experienced many temptations to worldliness in the form of gay fashionable life; but his profession of religion, his thoughts already of the gospel ministry, and all his home recollections, if not some of his immediate associations in the city, had proved a strong and effectual restraint. When, however, surrounded as he was, and not wholly uninfluenced, by the fashionable society of New York, he was to provide for the education of his first children, and the question arose, whether they should possess

those outward graces which many imagine that a dancing-master only can impart, he seems at least to have wavered. Might they not, he asked, learn the poetry of motion, without being led away to the ball-room, or into the dissipations of the gay world? Mrs. Miller, doubtless, had passed under the dancing-master's hand; nay, had experienced, in many a fashionable rout, the true effects of such a training; and she never hesitated, but set her face, at once, against exposing her children to the fearful dangers, from which, as she ever felt, she had been plucked, of God's unspeakable mercy, like a brand from the fire. In after years, his wife's judgment having prevailed, the hour of temptation having passed away, and his own mind having attained to maturer views of the whole subject, Dr. Miller thankfully rejoiced in the issue. The writer once put to him the question, 'What is the harm of dancing?' He replied, in substance, that of *promiscuous* dancing—the dancing of the two sexes together—the very origin and inherent nature were most unholy; that it was strictly pantomimic, and all its motions were but the dalliance of sinful passions; that it had really a meaning, and that altogether abominable. Dr. Miller regarded it, then, as sinful in itself, and not simply on account of its many evil accompaniments; although these too he fully recognized. And who may not clearly discern, especially in the "round dances" so fashionable at the present day, this "harmless amusement," as some would fain believe it, simply revealing a natural and settled tendency to revert to its naked and shameless original? Satan provides for his votaries their proper offerings, which bear too clearly the stamp of his lordship to be ever alienated wholly from his service. In the article just referred to, Dr. Miller said,

"\* \* Not only some nominal Christians, but some whom we must regard as truly intelligent and pious Christians, have professed to see no evil in dancing, and have not hesitated even to speak well of it, as friendly to health, and conducive to ease and gracefulness of manner. But it is equally certain that a much larger number, nay, an overwhelming majority of those who were most eminent for the intelligence and fervour of their piety, have been, in all ages of the Church, opposed to promiscuous dancing, as unfavorable to the purity and spirituality of the Gospel, and calculated to produce very serious mischiefs.



That the great body of the best divines and best Christians that have ever lived, from the Apostles' days to the present time, have been of this opinion, no one can doubt who has taken the least pains to obtain impartial information on the subject. \* \* The plea that dancing is conducive to health appears to me perfectly frivolous. Walking or riding in the open air is surely far more friendly to health than skipping about within doors, under the direction of a dancing-master, or sweltering, for four or five hours together, in the close, impure atmosphere of a ball-room, and then coming forth into the frosty night air, to incur the risk of a fatal disease. Such practices have injured the health twenty times where they have restored or confirmed it once. The plea that learning the art of dancing contributes to gracefulness of attitude and movement, is not, I grant, wholly without foundation; but I contend that the same advantages may be nearly, if not quite, as effectually gained, and with more unaffected simplicity, by other means. On the one hand, some of the most graceful and polished persons I have ever seen never danced a step in their lives; and, on the other, the most fantastical and disgusting manners that were ever witnessed, have often been exhibited by those who were devoted to the amusement of dancing. \* \* The dancing of the sexes together is calculated to promote a spirit of vanity, sensuality and corruption. \* \* Some even of the more serious *heathen* condemned it as inconsistent with female purity. \* \*

“Some parents have indeed alleged, that they had their children instructed in the art of dancing, not that they might afterwards figure at balls and assemblies, which they have acknowledged to be scenes of unchristian vanity; but that they might gain the immediate advantages of the art as to manners. But what parent can be sure that his purpose will be regarded in the subsequent life of the child? The parent may intend nothing but the promotion of personal elegance and gracefulness. But the child may be so enamoured and fascinated by the new acquisition, as to be borne away by it, and tempted to launch out into all the extravagance of the most corrupting dissipation. In such a case, is not the parent really chargeable with the sin of leading his child into temptation, perhaps into ruin?—Could any reasonable child suppose that an enlightened Christian parent would deliberately have him taught that which he wished him *never to practice*?

“Let it not be said, that I am arguing only against the *abuse* of dancing; and that the best things may be abused. I contend that the unhallowed influence of which I have spoken, is its *native tendency*.”

Noticing the concession that, "when young people become serious, they lose all inclination for this amusement," he says, "This is undoubtedly true. I never knew an exception. And the only wonder is that your correspondent did not perceive how fatal the fact was to the whole scope of his argument. Can it possibly, then, be the duty of a Christian parent to teach his child that which is acknowledged not to be reconcilable with Christian feeling, and which, the moment that child comes to his senses with respect to divine things, he will, of course, abandon? \* \*

"In fine, Mr. Editor, though I would by no means exclude from church-membership those who occasionally danced themselves, and taught their children to dance; but would bear with them, if otherwise exemplary, "because of the hardness of their hearts"; yet I greatly admired and heartily approved the answer given by a pious minister to a lady, rather gay and worldly in her habits, who proposed to become a communicant of the church under his pastoral care. "I learn, Sir," said she, "that you do not allow your church members to dance, or attend balls."—"You have been misinformed, Madam," said the worthy minister: "I do not attempt, by my authority to prevent the members of my church from engaging in such amusements; *but, if their religion does not prevent them, I would not give much for it.*"

In his Retrospect of the Eighteenth Century, Dr. Miller, while pointedly condemning the great mass of the works of fiction current in that day, yet expressed the opinion, that such works, executed in a proper manner, were justified by their evident utility, and by the use of parables in the Scriptures. He said,

"Novels *may* be so written as to promote the cause both of knowledge and virtue. They *may* be constructed in such a manner as will tend to lead the mind insensibly from what is sordid and mean to more worthy pursuits, and to fill it with pure, elevated and liberal sentiments. Nay, it may be further conceded, that, out of the myriads of novels which have been composed, a *few* are, in fact, entitled to this character, and have a tendency to produce these effects."<sup>1</sup>

But it is evident that Dr. Miller entertained, his life long, a growing conviction against novel reading. It is by no means clear that the example of inspiration can be fairly pleaded for any species of fiction; while quite cer-

<sup>1</sup> Chap. xix.

tain that it cannot be for novels and romances. These are simply the distilled spirits of the intellectual and moral world; and, as belonging to such a world, might be called *spirituous* much more properly than any distillation from material substances. Like alcoholic drinks, they are concentrated extracts of intoxicating principles, too feeble, in their native diluted condition, to offer the craved stimulus. Whatever in the history of common life is stimulating in a moderate and healthful, or comparatively harmless, degree, is separated and condensed in the novel, so as to produce a higher, altogether unnatural, and necessarily injurious excitement. And surely spiritual, cannot be less injurious, to the inebriate himself at least, than sensual, intoxication. The ruin caused by novels is just as real and lamentable as that caused by ardent spirits and drugs, though, as intellectual and moral chiefly, less visible than the latter. Dr. and Mrs. Miller were perfectly agreed in the endeavor to keep novels entirely away from their children, until they crept in, to some extent, under the guise of religion, and from the Sabbath-school library. From the published works of the former a number of quotations might be given to the same effect as the following:—

“I would advise you to EXCLUDE NOVELS FROM YOUR LIGHT READING ALTOGETHER. I throw this counsel into a separate section, for the purpose of making it more emphatical. There have been ministers who were, habitually, among the most devoted readers of novels to be found. But I hardly need say, that they were not, in general, the most diligent and exemplary in the discharge of their parochial duties. I am not insensible of the powerful talents and fascination displayed in many of the first class of novels. But on this very account, as well as others, I would banish them from the study of a gospel minister. I consider them as an article, which, like *tobacco* and *ardent spirits*, if a man use at all, he will probably be tempted to use excessively. And, therefore, I would say, *Touch not, taste not, handle not*. No one, however grave his character or pursuits, if he once give way to this sort of reading, can ever be sure that he will not go to excess; and every man who abounds in novel reading, even though he be a clergyman, will suffer both intellectual and moral injury of no trivial import.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Clerical Manners and Habits; Let. 8, § 15.

## CHAPTER THIRTIETH.

TROUBLES WITHOUT AND WITHIN.

1831, 1832.

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### 1. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

THE General Assembly of 1831 will ever be memorable in the history of the Presbyterian Church of the United States as the scene of the first great, general conflict between the Old and New School parties. It was much the largest Assembly that had ever yet convened; and it soon became quite evident that the New School wielded a decisive majority, and that efforts, never before made, to secure such a result in this highest court of the Church, had been systematically, energetically and successfully prosecuted. To sustain Mr. Barnes, and to destroy or paralyze the Presbyterian Boards, were avowed objects with marshalled companies of New School men coming from various parts of the land.

Of this Assembly Dr. Miller was a member, and its exciting and painful scenes were almost too much for his physical strength. In a letter of the 14th of June following, to Mrs. Wales, he said,

‘From the hour the General Assembly commenced its session, until the last moment I remained with it, the business was of such a character, and was so urged on, that it was impossible to be absent, consistently, as I thought, with fidelity, for a moment. I remained till near the close of the business, when I became so feeble, reduced, and nervous, that I was unfit for anything.’

He wrote home, despondingly, of the prospect. In her diary, on the 24th of May, his wife wrote,

‘The Lord, I trust, put it into my heart, yesterday, to take my husband’s letter to Dr. Alexander, and communicate to him

the gloomy account which it contained of appearances in the General Assembly; and to endeavour to get him to propose a meeting for special prayer on this behalf. He proposed to make our early morning meeting an opportunity for the purpose, when, by a few words, the praying people amongst us might be awakened to plead for this representation of the Church, about which much deadness and carelessness seem to prevail. He came amongst us himself this morning according to promise, and the Lord, too, seemed to be with us; and it was proposed that all these early meetings, during the sitting of the Assembly, should include the concerns of the Church, as involved in this representative body, among their objects at the throne of grace.'

It may here be remarked, that the terms *Old School* and *New School*, though previously employed, first began, in this Assembly, to obtain some currency. The choice of Dr. Beman, both theologically and ecclesiastically an extreme New School man, as moderator, testified to the strength of the party of which he was an acknowledged leader. The organization had hardly been effected, before a struggle commenced in regard to the case of a committee-man, of a Congregational church, who appeared with a commission from a mixed presbytery—that of Grand River—formed under the "Plan of Union." He was admitted to a seat; but, afterwards it was resolved, that such appointments to sit in the Assembly were inexpedient, and of questionable constitutionality, and ought not in future to be made. Said one who listened to the discussion in this case,

'I recollect the able and unanswerable argument of Dr. Miller too, which was equal to demonstration, that we *could not* admit a mere layman, sustaining no office in the church, to a seat in the Assembly, and that we *might not* even if we could, admit a man to legislate and make laws to bind us, who himself not only belonged virtually to another denomination, but who shewed by the position he occupied that he would not come under these laws or be bound by them himself! It would be like admitting a monarchist to a seat in a legislature to make laws for republicans, though he was at once an alien and on principle opposed to the system in which he wanted to legislate.'<sup>1</sup>

The case of Mr. Barnes now came up, upon a reference from the Old School majority of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, and complaints from the New School minority.

<sup>1</sup> Balt. Lit. and Relig. Magazine, (1838,) 413.

What was to be done? The Presbytery, beyond all question, had violated Mr. Barnes's constitutional rights, by censuring and admonishing him personally, under the plea of their undoubted authority to condemn a printed publication bearing his name. The complainants, therefore, must be sustained as to this very important point; and, moreover, to remit the case to the Presbytery of Philadelphia would be to refer most difficult and delicate matters for adjustment to a judicatory which had already made grievous mistakes in its manner of proceeding, and was becoming more and more unfitted, by excitement and conflict, for deciding wisely such an issue. Thoroughly convinced of all this, and confident that the toleration of Mr. Barnes's errors was the less of two pressing evils, Dr. Miller urged repeatedly, and at length successfully, the reference of the whole case, by consent of parties, to a special committee, whose report, if adopted by the Assembly, should be final. With apparent reluctance, this was agreed to by the prosecutors on behalf of Presbytery. The committee was appointed, with Dr. Miller as chairman, and their report, partly from his pen, was adopted with but a few dissenting votes. The conscientious zeal of the Presbytery was commended; Mr. Barnes's sermon was declared to "contain a number of unguarded and objectionable passages;" the opinion, however, was expressed, that the Presbytery, particularly after his explanations, ought to have dropped the matter, and ought now to suspend all further proceedings; and it was pronounced expedient to divide the Presbytery of Philadelphia in such a way as would be best fitted to promote the peace of the ministers and churches thereto belonging; and to settle, *in thesi*, the abstract questions presented by the reference, rather than in connection with the case of Mr. Barnes.

This report, though originally drawn by Dr. Miller, and by him as chairman presented, had been so much altered, against his judgment, by the majority of the committee, that it cannot fairly be attributed to him; and he expressed his dissent from it "explicitly and publicly." Out of it grew the "elective affinity" presbytery, which afterward gave so much trouble; but it does not appear that a division other than by geographical lines was as yet

distinctly contemplated. So far as he was responsible for the measures adopted, they were, at least, the fruit of an honest effort to restore peace to the Church. The evils, which others more clearly discerned, and which vitally endangered her purity and order, had they been only what he thought them, might, perhaps, have been thus kept under and finally eliminated. But they were too great and too rapidly growing, to yield to such treatment. Yet who can say, with confidence, that this adjustment, so far as it was advocated by Dr. Miller, was not, for that time, with the exception, perhaps, of the proposal to divide the presbytery, the best of which the case, painfully involved as it had, by unskillful treatment, become, really admitted?

The proceedings of this Assembly, in regard to its Boards, next claim our attention. The American Home Missionary Society, from the very time of its formation, had striven, in the interest of New Schoolism, for the control of the domestic missionary operations of the Presbyterian Church. Its advocates and agents, with Dr. Peters, its corresponding secretary, at their head, were now constantly crying out against the alleged evils of denominational boards—the division of Christian force and the unhappy conflict of evangelical effort which the co-existence of such boards with voluntary societies involved. They lauded the advantages of union effort, and the superior capacity of their own institution. So limited had been the powers, and so lamentable the inefficiency of the Assembly's Board of Missions, prior to the year 1828, that even some of its friends, had almost despaired of its success. But, in that year, an overture for its improved organization, signed by Dr. Green and others, had been presented to the Assembly, which had been deliberating favorably upon the subject, when the Home Missionary Society had interposed, through a committee delegated for the purpose, resisted the projected improvement of the Board, and succeeded in having the whole matter indefinitely postponed. The New School party, however, in the Assembly, alarmed apparently by the feeling which this action had excited, had afterward agreed, virtually to reconsider the subject, and, at length, under the form of a declaration that certain powers already belonged to the Board, had conferred upon it the substance

of that authority for which its friends had asked. Henceforward the resources of the Board and its efficiency had rapidly increased: in 1828, it had reported less than \$3,000 as its receipts: in 1831, it reported nearly \$20,000. But success had proved more hazardous than the want of it, as it had only excited the agents and adherents of the Home Missionary Society to more determined opposition. To a courteous letter of salutation from the Board, soon after its re-invigoration, the Society had returned an answer, still insisting upon the incompatibility of two such agencies, and upon the Board's becoming an auxiliary or branch of its own, as the absolute condition of harmony between the two. To secure complete control of the Board, or its destruction, it was quite plain was now the Society's determined purpose. Dr. Miller had been a commissioner to the Assembly of 1828, and, although a friend and supporter of the Home Missionary Society, had, throughout, asserted the right and duty of the Presbyterian Church to carry on its missionary work through its own agencies—denominational boards; and had been a member of the Board of Missions, and a trusted, hearty co-operator in every effort to increase its efficiency.

During the winter of 1830-31, Dr. Beman, upon a tour through the South, and Dr. Peters, by six letters, entitled "A Plea for Union in the West," published in the Cincinnati Journal, with the aid, before the Assembly convened, of the Christian Spectator, at New Haven, writing earnestly in behalf of Mr. Barnes, were preparing the way for a triumph, which, with an overwhelming majority, to all appearance, in their favour, they failed, nevertheless, for some reason, to secure in full. They went far enough to disclose very clearly their real intention; but it seemed as though, when the critical moment arrived, they lacked that boldness, or that perfect command over their adherents, which was essential to complete success. In fact, there must have been, in the Assembly, a considerable number of men, not bound to any party, who, while they often swelled the New School ranks, were open to conviction by arguments from the opposite side.

Dr. Peters, in his Plea for Union, had brought the most extraordinary charges against the Board of Missions and its officers—such men as Dr. Green, Dr. Skinner, and Dr.



McAuley—the latter two belonging to the New School party. He had represented himself as making an “exposure,” which might “occasion malignant satisfaction in the minds of opposers,” was to be regretted “when the eyes of an infidel world were watching with eagerness for the halting of christians,” but was required by their “high and holy obligations” “to provide things honest in the sight of all men.” After this disclosure of the designs of Dr. Peters and his co-adjutors, it cannot have surprised any one, that they insisted, in the Assembly, upon the appointment of a committee to nominate a new Board; but it was a complete surprise to the friends of the Board, when that committee reported a list of men avowedly hostile to it, and virtually pledged, if not to destroy it, at least to make it wholly subservient to the Home Missionary Society. Said the Christian Advocate,<sup>1</sup> afterward,

“It was the report of this committee which led to those scenes of disorder and confusion which disgraced the Assembly, and grieved every friend to religion and the Presbyterian Church. The report was so flagrantly and intolerably at war with all equity and propriety, that it produced criminations and re-criminations, which issued in a complete disregard of the moderator and of all order; and rendered a hasty recess the only expedient left, to bring the members into a temper that would admit of their proceeding in business.”

After this recess, the Assembly engaged in prayer for a better mind, for divine guidance, and for more harmonious action; when the opponents of the Board finally agreed to the re-appointment of its old members, in connexion with a recommendation to the Western Synods, “in view of existing evils, resulting from the separate action of the Board of Missions of the General Assembly, and the American Home Missionary Society,” “to endeavor to agree upon some plan of conducting domestic missions in the Western States,” and report the same to the next Assembly. In accordance with this recommendation, a convention of delegates from the several presbyteries composing the Western Synods met in Cincinnati, on the 23d of November, and, after a week’s deliberation, by a vote of fifty-four to fifteen declared it inexpedient to propose any change in the General Assembly’s mode of conducting missions; and that, in their opinion, the purity, peace and prosperity of the Pres-

<sup>1</sup> 9 Vol., 476.

byterian Church depended upon giving efficient aid to the Assembly's Board, already in successful operation.

While the more advanced New School men, in this Assembly, had thus endeavored to give over the Board of Missions, because it was somewhat prosperous, to its enemies for destruction, they left, contemptuously, as we have seen, the Board of Education, which was sadly languishing, to its Philadelphia friends for burial. Dr. Baird says,

"The opportunity thus given was seized upon by the Old School party; who thereupon, proposed an enlargement of the Board, which was granted. They were also allowed to make their own nominations for the vacancies, and the names proposed were elected. At the first meeting of the reorganized Board, Dr. Neill [the Corresponding Secretary] resigned his office. On the next day, the 8th of June, the Rev. Dr. John Breckinridge was elected his successor. He accepted, upon condition that \$10,000 were, in the first place, put into the treasury; and that the Board should make it the basis of future operations, "to receive, at all hazards, every fit candidate, who may come, regularly recommended; trusting to God and his Church to sustain it in redeeming the pledge."

"These conditions were complied with, and the policy thus inaugurated by Dr. Breckinridge, and the vigor infused into all its operations, by the personal energies of that eminent servant of Christ, at once lifted the Board out of the depth into which it had fallen; and started it forward on a career of prosperity and usefulness."<sup>1</sup>

In 1828, the American Board of Commissioners, which had won the sincere respect of the Presbyterian Church, had relieved the latter of all direct agency in the work of foreign missions, expecting to turn her contributions wholly into its own treasury. In that year the missions of the United Foreign Missionary Society, which, though not denominational, was chiefly, as to both its origin and support, a Presbyterian institution, the Maumee Mission of the Synod of Pittsburg, and the Chickasaw Mission of the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia, were all transferred to the American Board. But many Presbyterians mourned that their Church was no longer directly engaged in this work of evangelizing the heathen; and it was evident that the New England organization, high as its character stood, could never command the entire confidence and all the re-

<sup>1</sup> Hist. of New School, 291, 2.

sources of the Presbyterian body. This state of things produced constant uneasiness and a variety of projects for remedying the evil.

The subject of Foreign as well as that of Domestic Missions engaged the attention of the Assembly of 1831. On the 6th of October, 1830, the Presbytery of Baltimore had unanimously adopted a paper offered by the Rev. John Breckinridge, lamenting inexcusable neglect of the heathen world on the part of the Presbyterian Church, and resolving to support, as a presbytery, one missionary at least, from year to year, in the foreign field. A circular was moreover issued to all the presbyteries, and about twenty of them took action on the subject. The first idea was simply to operate through the agency of the American Board. Dr. John H. Rice, passing through Baltimore just after the adoption of Mr. Breckinridge's paper, was urged by a Committee of the Presbytery to write something on this subject which might arouse the whole Presbyterian Church to the fulfilment of its duty. In November, he wrote to Dr. Wisner, then Secretary of the American Board, suggesting, at once, the difficulty of bringing the Presbyterian Church, as a whole, into hearty coöperation with that institution, and the idea of a Presbyterian branch board, connected with the General Assembly, and co-ordinate with the original Board, but acting in union and perfect harmony with the latter. To the next Assembly he sent, from his dying bed, an overture proposing substantially the same plan, and also earnestly urging upon the Church its duty to consider itself a missionary society, and engage heartily in the work of evangelizing the world. But the only result in the Assembly was the appointment of a New School Committee of Conference with the American Board—not a very encouraging step for Dr. Rice and those who agreed with him in desiring a co-ordinate Church agency; but a step which, by utterly disappointing all such persons, led immediately to the resumption by the Synod of Pittsburgh of the foreign missionary work, and to the formation, under its auspices, of "The Western Missionary Society."

By this Assembly a committee, of which Dr. Miller was chairman, was appointed to report upon the validity of Popish baptisms, a subject introduced by overture from the Synod of New York. A report was presented, but for

want of time referred to the next Assembly, which put it into the hands of another committee, and finally into those of a third, with Dr. Alexander as chairman, instructed to report the following spring. To the Assembly of 1833, Dr. Alexander wrote, explaining why the Committee was not prepared with a report, and expressing his own views as follows:—

‘I take the liberty of suggesting, that there will probably be no favorable result from the continuance of this Committee; or from any other similarly constituted; and, at any rate, I would request that some other person may be appointed the chairman. Perhaps it will be found most expedient not to press this question to a speedy decision. It is one on which the very existence of the visible Church depends; and on which there seems to be as much diversity of opinion as on any other which could be named. An ecclesiastical decision would, at present, be attended with very unhappy effects, unless the subject could be exhibited in such a light, as to produce greater unanimity on one side or the other. But, at present, the only wise and peaceable course is to leave the subject open for discussion, and to permit every minister of the Presbyterian Church to act in this case agreeably to his own honest convictions: for it is obvious that, if an ordained minister of Jesus Christ believes that a person has already been baptized, he cannot conscientiously repeat the ordinance; and, on the other hand, if a minister is persuaded, that the baptism which certain persons have received, is not valid Christian baptism, he must, in accordance with these sentiments, administer this sacrament before he recognizes them as members of the visible Church. And it is not perceived that any decision of this General Assembly would afford any relief in the case. It may still however be important to keep the subject before the ministers and churches, until, by discussion and inquiry, what is now perplexed and disputed may become clear. I would therefore respectfully suggest, that all the faculties of theological seminaries, within the limits of the Presbyterian Church, and in any way connected with any of her judicatories, be requested to inquire into this subject; and that, as soon as they have had opportunity maturely to consider the question, they communicate their opinions and reasonings in support of them to the General Assembly.’

The subject was then committed to Dr. Miller, Dr. Alexander, Dr. Green, Mr. R. J. Breckinridge, Mr. Barnes, Dr. Spring, Dr. McAuley, and Dr. McCartee to report upon to the next Assembly; which, on their report, and at their

request, discharged them from its further consideration. Dr. Miller's own opinion was in favor of acknowledging the validity of the baptisms in question. He regarded the precedents of the early Church, the decision of the Reformers, and sound principle, as all on that side. Eleven years afterwards, the General Assembly decided by a nearly unanimous vote—one hundred and seventy-three to eight—against such baptisms; but probably Dr. Alexander's suggestion, that the consciences of ministers would find little relief in any ecclesiastical decision of the case, has been fully justified by the result: doubtless each administrator of the ordinance feels it necessary to regard chiefly his own convictions, and those of the other parties immediately concerned. But the conscience may be relieved, where the prior administration is deemed valid, by using the not unusual hypothetical formula, "If thou hast not been baptized, I baptize thee, etc.;" and he who would hesitate to admit to Church membership, without insisting upon re-baptism, one who had been baptized in the Church of Rome, and conscientiously objected to having that baptism discredited, would have shut out John Calvin and John Knox from the Lord's Table. It may well be doubted whether even the total rejection, for conscience' sake, of any mere rite, is a sufficient ground for exclusion from Church fellowship.

We have seen that the subject of church boards and voluntary societies occupied a much longer time in the Assembly than any question of doctrine; but really doctrinal differences lay at the foundation of all the other troubles which agitated the Church and its judicatories. The *Christian Spectator*, in an article already referred to, published just before the Assembly's meeting in 1831, said truly, "the real question at issue is, whether New England Calvinism shall any longer be tolerated in the Presbyterian Church of this country."<sup>1</sup>

## 2. AFTER THE ASSEMBLY.

That Mr. and Mrs. Breckinridge were brought nearer to Princeton was one of the mercies of this year; but their new trials perhaps overbalanced all the pleasures of proximity to her parents. Dr. Breckinridge afterward referred to their change of residence in the following terms:—

<sup>1</sup> Baird's *Hist. of the New School*, 363.

“It was in leaving the latter city [Baltimore] that her sacrifices for the Church more especially commenced. At this eventful period, (the summer of 1831,) it was found that there were more than one thousand congregations in the Presbyterian Church without a pastor, not to mention the immeasurable destitution of the heathen world. To supply this immense demand required, in addition to the very inadequate means already in use, a greatly enlarged and quickened effort of the entire Church. This necessity was deeply felt by the General Assembly of 1831, and led to the reorganization by that body of its Board of Education. In the solemn providence of God, the writer of these sketches was called to fill the office of Corresponding Secretary and General Agent for that Institution. He found it impossible to resist what appeared to be the voice of God speaking through his Church; though in yielding to it he was constrained to dissolve forever the sacred tie which bound him to a beloved people, and to pass from the endearments of domestic and Pastoral life, to incessant toil and travel in the wide and homeless world. She foresaw, and with keen anticipation felt, all the trouble which such a step must bring upon herself and her little household. But the decision of all her friends, excepting the kind people we were about to leave, was in favour of removal. She remembered her Missionary vows. She saw in it the sweetness as well as the severity of the cross, and without a murmur meekly bowed to the burden of the Lord. In this service, which continued for nearly five years, she shared; and like an angel soothed the trials of the work. The comforts of domestic life were almost annihilated, either by incessant separations, or the nameless discomfort of a constant absence from home. During one entire year her house was occupied by her but *six weeks*, the rest being spent in hotels, and boarding houses, and steamboats, and stages, with occasional intervals of repose in the bosom of related or attached families scattered through the wide field of her visits from the Mississippi to the Hudson.”<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Miller returned home from the Assembly with somewhat modified views of the designs of the New School, and of the danger to be apprehended therefrom. To the Rev. Charles C. Beatty he wrote as follows:—

‘ My dear Sir, Princeton, September 1, 1831.  
 ‘ Your interesting communication of August 10th reached me seven or eight days ago; and I should have answered it before, had I not waited in vain, until this morning,

<sup>1</sup> Memorial of Mrs. Breckinridge, pp. 48, 49.

for a vacant hour, in which I could sit down<sup>1</sup> with some degree of tranquility, and reply to your important queries. This I shall endeavor now to do, with all the candour and impartiality of which I am capable. Yet I must be brief; for several sheets would not be more than enough to exhibit, at length, the feelings and views which I should be disposed to express on the great subject contemplated in your letter.

‘In the first place, then, I have no doubt that the apprehensions of danger, felt by our friends of the Old School, are well founded! There is, in my opinion, a crisis at hand. We have much to fear. There is danger, great danger, that our church will be overrun with error, and that the direction and instruction of Princeton, and, I may add, of every other place and institution, will fall into the hands of another set of theologians. I am fully persuaded that the fear of many on this subject is no chimera. There is no doubt that our New School brethren are earnestly intent, and fully determined, on the utmost extent of mastery and triumph; and that they are likely to be joined by so many, substantially on the Old School side, who are entirely unapprized, and cannot be convinced of their purposes, that there is a high degree of probability they will carry their point, unless God, in his adorable providence, should mercifully defeat their schemes, by either causing division among themselves, or by opening the eyes of some who cannot yet be persuaded there is any danger. They are united as one man, while we are split up into groups and parties. They are as persevering as they are united. If they do not succeed at the next General Assembly, they will not be at all discouraged; but will hold on, work under ground, and compass sea and land to attain their object; and, speaking after the manner of men, they will attain it ultimately, and that at no great distance of time, unless the friends of truth can be fairly roused, and made distinctly to see the danger, and combine, as one man, to prevent, under the divine blessing, its being realized. It is not too late yet to prevent the evil; but I see no prospect of the sound part of our church’s being awake, united, and firm in their course of measures to avert the threatened conquest.

‘A large number of our orthodox ministers, to the South and West, as well as in this region, suppose that the brethren of the New School, or at least the great body of them, stand upon the *old* New England ground of theology; and, although they do not like this, yet they suppose there is nothing specially alarming in it—in short, that there is no new danger: whereas

<sup>1</sup> A mere figure of speech, as Dr. Miller invariably wrote standing!

there are recent symptoms, which indicate a most important and essential change of circumstances. Three, and even two years ago, the devoted adherents of Mr. Finney, and the friends of New Haven theology were wide apart—nay, considered as decided and even ardent in their hostility; and the great mass of the old Hopkinsians of New England and the western part of the State of New York formed a third party equally hostile to both the former. But now, with few exceptions, these three parties are firmly united in policy and purpose to put down Presbyterianism, as it is exhibited in our public standards. Can this possibly be doubted, when we see such men as Dr. Beman, Dr. Taylor, Mr. Finney and Dr. Richards as firmly united as men can be in the same system of measures, and burying all their former animosities for the sake of acting together, and carrying their points? They call themselves Presbyterians, and some of them would greatly prefer retaining that title, and the external, general form of government which bears the name; but anything like a strict and faithful maintenance of our doctrine and order, as manifested in our book, if I do not altogether mistake, they would be glad to see prostrated. And, although they are not all united in other matters, I am entirely deceived, if they would not cordially unite in putting down Old School Presbyterianism, and taking every institution in the country into their own hands.

‘Do you ask, What can and ought to be done? My reply is—(1) Let the friends of the Confession of Faith and of Presbyterianism be aware of the danger, and fully awake to its reality and character. (2) Let them calmly, humbly, and prayerfully preach the truth, and maintain it, not in a pugnacious and irritating manner, but mildly and firmly, in all their public and private acts, especially in all their admissions of young men to license and ordination. (3) Let them show, by their indefatigable labor and zeal, that they are real friends of revivals of religion, which many of the New School brethren seem to wish to insinuate is not the case. (4) Let them treat their New School brethren mildly and affectionately, differing from them as little as possible in other matters, and guarding, as much as possible, against all exciting and dividing measures, and having as little warfare as possible consistently with regard to the truth.

‘As respects the great question which the General Assembly has referred to the presbyteries and synods in the valley of the Mississippi, respecting the missionary business—I am persuaded that the wisest course will be to decline appointing any great united board at the West, and to let things remain just as



they are. My reasons for thinking so are the following: (1) To form such a board will be only creating another source of conflict and strife. If it should be composed, as it doubtless will, of two parties, each party will be striving for the mastery, and it will be a constant scene of quarrel and mutual crimination. (2) If the western board should be created, and should consist, acknowledgedly, of a majority of New School men, the Old School men at the East will not be willing to commit their men and money to such a board, and will, of course, have less spirit to collect money, and less spirit to give for expenditure in the West, than if they had entire confidence in the western board. On the contrary, if a majority of that board should consist of Old School men, no one can doubt that the friends of the Home Missionary Society would have little disposition to exert themselves to put either money or men into the hands of such a board. (3) It will be just placing the Assembly's Board of Missions and the Home Missionary Society in the situation of the Siamese twins—tying them together by a ligature which can only hamper and impede the movements of each. (4) Our friends at the West must, of course, depend very much on the churches at the East for money and men in carrying on missionary plans. But you may rely upon it, if a great western board be formed, (tying the two eastern boards together as to their western operations,) less money and fewer men will be sent to the West than will be likely to go on the present plan. If each board be left, as at present, to pursue its own course in its own way, you may rest assured, the spirit of emulation will create more liberality in giving, and there will be a greater amount of missionary effort than can possibly be hoped for on the plan of amalgamation. Unless I am totally deceived, if the amalgamation plan for the West be adopted, both parties here to the East will find their zeal cooled, and their emulation diminished; and I am sure that many Old School Presbyterians will immediately withhold their funds, as not likely to be disposed of by a body in which they can have entire confidence. (5) One great reason why the amalgamation plan in the West is proposed is, that all further contention and irritation between two rival boards may thenceforward cease. I am persuaded that the new proposed board would create rather than destroy conflict and strife. And I am fully convinced that boards, as now constituted, need not quarrel, and would not quarrel if their respective secretaries and executive committees in Philadelphia and New York could only be prevailed upon to be quiet. I have no doubt that all the fire which exists at the West is kindled and kept up by men here at the

East, and chiefly by the secretary and executive committee of the Home Missionary Society, who have been, for two years, absolutely persecuting the Assembly's Board to agree to some plan of union.

'I sincerely hope that the Barnes question will not be brought up from the West to the next Assembly. Such a measure could do harm only, and not good. That Assembly, even if composed of as great an Old School majority as you have ever seen together for ten years, would not give a decision on this question very different from the decision of the last Assembly. I hope, therefore, you will discourage such a movement by all the means in your power. I wish I could have an hour's conversation with you on that subject.

In the month of September, Dr. Miller attended the annual meeting of the American Board, held at New Haven. The General Assembly's committee of conference, and a similar committee appointed by the Board, after joint deliberation, came to the conclusion that it was inexpedient to form any other foreign missionary organization, but that the Congregational, Presbyterian, and Reformed Dutch Churches ought to "give to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions their cordial, united, and vigorous support." This conclusion was reported to the Board, when Dr. Miller offered the following paper as an addition to the report:—

"While this Board accept and approve the foregoing report, as expressing their firm opinion, on the subject referred to the Committee of Conference,

*Resolved*, That if the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, or any of its subordinate judicatories, shall eventually think proper to form any association for conducting Foreign Missions separately from the American Board, this Board will regard such association with fraternal feelings, and without the least disposition to interfere with its organization or proceedings."

This paper was at once unceremoniously rejected, only two persons, Dr. Spring and Dr. Carnahan, according to Dr. Miller's recollection, voting in its favor. Nevertheless, to the Secretary of The Western Missionary Society he wrote, soon afterward, as follows:—

'Reverend and dear Brother, • Princeton, December 7, 1831.

'I received your communication of the 20th of November last, accompanied with a copy of the Constitution and Address

of the "Western Foreign Missionary Society," and informing me of my election as an honorary vice-president of that society. For this testimony of respect and confidence I feel greatly indebted; and although I fear it will not be in my power to render any important services to the Society; yet I accept of the place to which I have been elected with much pleasure, and shall be cordially gratified to render any service, which, at my distance, and in my declining age, may be practicable.

'In declaring this acceptance, allow me to remind you, my dear Sir, that I am a member of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, and a sincere and ardent friend of that institution in all its interests. The more intimately I become acquainted with the members and the administration of that Board, the more I admire its wisdom, fidelity and zeal; and the more deep is my conviction, that there is not a missionary association on earth conducted with more sagacity, prudence, energy, perseverance and christian disinterestedness; and more entirely worthy of the affectionate confidence of all christian people. Instead, therefore, of wishing any diminution of the patronage received by the American Board from the Presbyterian Church, I could cordially wish it increased fifty fold. Nor would my feelings admit of my lending what little influence I may have, to any plan, the object of which should be to impair in the least degree the honor, the power, or the patronage of that venerable and eminently useful institution.

'Yet if it be, as I suppose it to be, a fact, that there are large portions of the Presbyterian Church, which may be much more easily and effectually roused to feeling and zeal in the missionary cause, by an organized body within their own bosom, and of their own ecclesiastical denomination, than by one differently situated, it would seem reasonable that such a body should be forthwith organized. Nay, more than this—if there be some considerable portions of the Presbyterian Church, which, in the opinion of pious and intelligent christians, cannot be really roused and rallied to this work, in any good degree, at all, by a board without their own bounds, and not of their own denomination; what enlightened and disinterested friend of the missionary cause would hesitate a moment to say: "Let effectual measures be taken to accomplish this purpose by means of some other organization?" I am in favor of the earliest and most energetic measures possible for rousing the whole Presbyterian Church to a cordial co-operation in the great enterprise for the conversion of the world. And my wish further is, that, on the one hand, all those ministers, churches and judicatories which prefer the American Board as the medium of their missionary

efforts, should adhere to that Board, and redouble their prayers, exertions and pecuniary liberality in its behalf; and, on the other, that all those ministers, churches and judicatories which prefer an ecclesiastical board, should be gratified by seeing such an one formed, and a treasury opened to receive their most liberal donations. In this way, I am persuaded, the missionary spirit will be more extensively excited, larger contributions, in the aggregate, to this hallowed cause received, and, of course, a greater number of missionaries sent to the heathen. Cordial and warm as my friendship to the American Board is, I am not prepared to say, that those in our Church, who are not willing to send their contributions to its treasury, should have no other presented into which to cast them.

‘You see then, my dear Sir, the principles and feelings with which I accept of the honour you have conferred upon me: Not with a view to encourage a *hostile*, or even a *rival* board; but to express my approbation of a plan for calling into life, and into vigorous action, a *beloved and affectionate sister*, who shall be ready to receive what others cannot and never would receive, and to do what others cannot do, towards promoting that great cause, which ought to be equally dear to us all; and, in promoting which, there ought to be no other strife than, who shall love it most, and seek its advancement with the most active zeal.

‘Permit me, therefore, to close, by expressing an earnest wish and a confident hope, that your new board will pursue its object in perfect harmony and affectionate co-operation with the American Board of Commissioners; that when the latter shall send out its agents to the West as well as to the East, they will neither be frowned upon nor be sent empty away; and that that Board will, in time to come, receive larger contributions than ever from the Presbyterian Church. There is *room* for both. There is *need* of both. And if we, on all sides, exercise the spirit of the gospel, there will be *greatly more good done* by both, than could possibly be done by either alone.

‘I heartily wish you God-speed; and hope we shall speedily hear good accounts of the rising missionary spirit of the West.

‘Sincerely and respectfully your brother in Christ,  
 ‘The Rev. E. P. Swift, } Samuel Miller.’  
 Cor. Sec’ W. F. M. S. U. S. }

Here are extracts from Dr. Miller’s diary, two a little earlier and one a little later than the letter just given.

‘October 24, 1831. This day, thirty years ago, I was *married*. My beloved wife and myself happening both to be at home, (which, since my connexion with the Seminary has seldom hap-

pened, the day always coming in the midst of our vacation, commonly spent in journeying,) we resolved to keep it as a day of special prayer. If ever man had reason to be thankful for a wife, I am that man. \* \*

‘October 31, 1831. I am this day sixty-two years of *age*. I have set it apart as a season of special prayer. Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life. I have enjoyed better health during the past year than for many years before; and have been enabled to labor with more uniformity, comfort, and, I hope, usefulness than usual. Oh, how shall I be thankful enough for these mercies? \* \*

‘January 1, 1832. Having obtained help of God, I continue to this day. Not only is my life spared and my capacity for labor continued; but I enjoy a degree of improved health which is a wonder to myself. I have felt better, been more capable of my usual labors, and preached more frequently, and, as it appeared to me, with more vigor and ease, the last year, than for ten years past. Thanks to the Giver of all good! And I would especially here record to his praise, that my experiment in leaving off the use of *all stimulating drinks* (even wine and cider) has proved beneficial beyond my most sanguine expectations. The effect of this change on my general health has been not only real and sensible, but very great. I feel stronger; my digestion is better; I am seldom thirsty, and seldom feel disposed to drink even water at my meals. The Lord make me thankful for so great a favor; and dispose me to exert myself more than ever for recommending and spreading the doctrine of total abstinence from ardent spirits, and from all stimulating drinks!

‘N. B. The doctrine taught by some, that the Bible forbids all use of wine as, *per se*, a sin; that it allows only the use of the fresh and unfermented juice of the grape; and that the use of fermented wine ought to be banished from even the Lord’s Table, and a kind of boiled syrup only used, I hold to be unscriptural, fanatical, and therefore to be abhorred. I place the duty of total abstinence on the principle of expediency; that principle which is recognized in *Romans* xiv., especially in the 21st verse of the chapter. Considering how much every kind of stimulating drink is abused, especially by young people, I resolve to set the example of abandoning the use of it altogether.

‘What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits toward me? How shall I testify my gratitude for his multiplied and most unmerited favors? I would this day make a new and unreserved dedication of myself, with all I have and am, to Christ.

I would resolve (Oh that I may have grace given me to make the resolution with unfeigned sincerity and humility, and to keep it faithfully) to be henceforth more devoted to Christ than I have ever yet been.

‘RESOLVED TO-DAY—

‘1. To be more careful in *improving my time* than heretofore; and, for this purpose, to avoid all useless reading, and every kind of employment, which does not appear adapted to promote the Redeemer’s kingdom.

‘2. To ask daily, “*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*” and to seek to know my duty, whatever labor or self-denial it may cost me.

‘3. To be still more careful than heretofore in regard to my *diet*; guarding against every kind of excess; and endeavoring to eat and drink, not to gratify the flesh, but to glorify God, and to prepare me more effectually and comfortably to do his work.

‘4. That I will try to be more plain, faithful and pointed in all my *preaching*.

‘5. That I will strive and pray to be enabled to make a more hallowed and salutary impression on the *students of the Seminary*. Alas, that I have not set them a more deeply spiritual example!

‘6. That I will direct more attention than ever to the eternal interests of my *children*.

‘7. That I will try to make *every conversation*, in which I shall engage, during the year on which I have entered, as useful as possible.

‘8. That I will direct more attention than I have ever yet done to the precious cause of *missions*, foreign and domestic.

‘9. That I will endeavor to profit more by the deeply spiritual and admirable *example of my wife*, (for the gift of whom I have reason forever to praise God,) during the coming year, than I have ever yet done.

‘10. That I will hereafter, as God shall enable me, endeavor to make all my *rides* and *journeys* subservient to the best interests of my fellow men.

‘11. That I will hereafter endeavor, in all things, to regard myself as a *consecrated man*; as not my own; and as bound unreservedly and forever to be devoted to the glory of God.

‘O thou God of all grace! let not these resolutions be insincere or transient; but may they be adopted in the fear of the Lord, under a due sense of my own exceeding weakness, and with an humble dependence on thy grace for strength to keep

them! May the Holy Spirit help me! May thy grace fill my heart!

Under date of January 4, 1832, Dr. Miller received from the American Home Missionary Society, of New York, a copy of a circular letter, setting forth the services, successes, and need of the Society, and soliciting the more earnest and liberal co-operation of its friends. To this letter he returned the following answer:—

‘Rev’d and respected Brethren, Princeton, January 9th, 1832.

‘I received, by due course of mail, your communication of the 4th inst., giving me an account of the course and the present exigencies of your society, and requesting in its behalf my prayers, my influence, and my pecuniary aid. I have bestowed upon this communication all that serious and respectful attention, which my personal regard for the gentlemen who signed it, and my deep impression of the importance of your society, could not fail to inspire.

‘I made myself a life member of your society a very short time after its formation; and have, repeatedly, since that time, testified my desire to promote its interests, by such contributions to its funds, and such other efforts in its favor, as my limited means, connected with the numerous calls made upon me for public objects, rendered practicable. And it is still my desire and purpose, if your course shall permit me, to go on to contribute as much, annually, to your treasury, as my indispensable duty, in regard to many other calls, shall permit.

‘It is but candid, however, to confess, that, for more than a year past, the posture of affairs between the General Assembly’s Board of Missions and the American Home Missionary Society, has been with me a subject of deep solicitude, and a source of no small embarrassment. The nature of this solicitude and embarrassment I think it my duty, in replying to your communication, with all frankness, to unfold.

‘The prejudice which many cherish against *voluntary associations* has no place in my mind. When your Society was formed as a voluntary association, I approved of the measure and rejoiced in it: I cordially approve and rejoice in it still. A voluntary association is, in my opinion, adapted to move in a peculiar, untrammelled and highly important sphere of duty. It may gain access to many places, and accomplish many things, which an ecclesiastical board could not do, and perhaps ought not to attempt; and it may also expect to be approved and sustained by many who have no disposition to patronize ecclesiastical boards. There is, I am persuaded, in the present state

of the Church and the world, both room and need of such associations, over and above all the ecclesiastical boards which have been formed, or are likely to be formed, by any or all of the evangelical denominations in the United States. And when to these considerations I add the important service which the American Home Missionary Society has rendered in extending the Redeemer's kingdom in our country, by aiding so many weak churches, and organizing so many new ones; and the good which it is likely still to do; I cannot help considering it as an important institution, which ought to be regarded with deep interest by the friends of religion in the United States, and to be liberally sustained.

'While I say this, however, and can declare myself to be, *ex animo*, a decided and warm friend to the American Home Missionary Society, and unfeignedly desirous of seeing it prosper; and, while I can further declare, that I in no degree participate in the feelings of those, who consider voluntary associations as inconsistent with the prosperity of the Church, and who, on that account, desire to see the American Home Missionary Society put down, or enfeebled: I say, while I in no degree participate in these feelings, or counsels, I am constrained, at the same time to confess, that the course pursued, for more than a year past, by some of the leading members of your Society, in urging, with so much pertinacity, first, an amalgamation, and, afterwards, some kind of connection, with the Assembly's Board of Missions, has been regarded by me with deep, and increasing regret. However favorably I may have viewed some plan of this sort, when first proposed; and however willing I may have been in the beginning, from a love of peace, to consent to some form of connection; yet the longer the plan was pursued, under various modifications, the more I became convinced of its impracticability; and I am now perfectly satisfied, that connecting the two together, *in any way*, would be productive of far more harm than good; and that every enlightened friend to each ought to wish that they might remain perfectly separate: each independently of the other pursuing its own course, moving in its own sphere, looking to its own patrons, and seeking to do good in its own appropriate department; without, in the least degree, interfering with the other. In this way, I am persuaded that both will move with most ease, with most comfort, with the highest degree of public acceptance, and with most benefit to the great interests of our common Saviour. Some little embarrassment may, indeed, now and then occur, even upon this plan, in spite of every thing that can be done to prevent it, since every thing human is imperfect; but I can no longer doubt,



that if the friends and agents of each could be induced to pursue such a course as I have described, a course entirely separate and yet entirely friendly, there would be greatly more evil avoided and good done, than upon any plan of union that could be devised.

‘This is the course, I am well persuaded, which the great body of the friends of the Assembly’s Board of Missions wish it to pursue, and by the adoption of which, I cannot for a moment doubt, it would gain strength instead of losing it.

‘Such, my reverend and highly respected Brethren, are the principles on which I am, and can continue to be, a decided and warm friend of the American Home Missionary Society; and on which I may be expected to exert myself in its favor, as far as my many cares, numerous calls, and declining age will allow. But if your Society should continue to pursue the object of union, or connexion in any form, with the Board of Missions, and should continue to importune the Assembly, or the Board for that purpose; and, by this importunity, to disturb the harmony of the Presbyterian Church, it will be impossible for me, with my views of duty, to approve, or participate in, such a course.

‘If, while I hold and avow these principles, you should think proper to continue my name on the list of your vice-presidents, or, in any humbler place, on the list of your friends and officers, it will give me pleasure, and be regarded as an honor. But if, after this exposition of my views and feelings, you should be of the opinion, that, with such views, I cannot any longer consistently remain a member and officer of your Society, I certainly shall not object to your taking the first opportunity of removing my name from the place which it occupies. It will give me, indeed, much pain to be separated from the Home Missionary Society; for I really love it, and wish its prosperity; but, if its policy and course should be materially different from that which I have recommended, I am conscientiously persuaded, it will not be in my power to render it the least service.

‘I am, Gentlemen, with great regard,  
 ‘Your friend and fellow-servant,  
 ‘Samuel Miller.’

Dr. Miller delivered the 7th of the “Spruce Street Lectures” of the winter of 1831–2, on the evening of the 12th of February. His subject was “Ecclesiastical Polity,” his text 1 Peter v. 1, 2. 3. These Lectures were afterward published in a single volume.

“The Presbyterian Preacher,” commenced at Pitts-

burgh in June, 1832, presented, as its first sermon, one of Dr. Miller's entitled "The Importance of Gospel Truth."<sup>1</sup>

In 1832, also Dr. John Breckinridge, as Corresponding Secretary of the Board of Education, published a small volume, entitled "The Annual of the Board of Education," intended especially for its candidates, and composed of essays designed to profit them. Dr. Miller's contribution<sup>2</sup> was taken chiefly from his introductory lecture of three years before, which has been already mentioned. In the same year, he likewise contributed a long letter to Dr. Sprague's well known Lectures on Revivals.

The Rev'd John B. Pinney and the Rev'd Joseph W. Barr, both from the Seminary at Princeton, were two of the first missionaries of the Western Foreign Missionary Society. They had been ordained on the 12th of October, 1832, Dr. Miller giving the charge to them as evangelists; and they were about to sail for Africa, when the latter died—only sixteen days after his ordination—at Richmond, Virginia. Having just parted from his fellow-students, he seemed to speak loudly in his death to them, and an attempt was made to improve the occasion by a sermon which Dr. Miller preached in the Seminary.<sup>3</sup>

This sermon was published by the Society, with a memoir of Mr. Barr, and after sending the manuscript, Dr. Miller wrote to the Rev. Elisha P. Swift, Corresponding Secretary, on the 14th of December, 1832,

'I think if Dr. Alexander were urgently applied to, he would prepare an interesting and valuable *Preface*. I advise that you request it of him. If he declines, and you wish it, I will try to prepare something *short* of that kind. But do not intimate to him the alternative of my doing it, or else (such is his *enormous modesty*) he will certainly decline.'

To Mr. Nettleton he wrote on the 8th of November, 1832,

'The Board of Education of the General Assembly was,

<sup>1</sup> John xvii. 17.—8vo. Pp. 16.

<sup>2</sup> "The Importance of a Thorough and Adequate Course of Preparatory Study for the Gospel Ministry. By Samuel Miller, D.D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in the Theological Seminary at Princeton."—24mo. Pp. 41.

<sup>3</sup> "The Dead Speaking. A Sermon delivered in the Oratory of the Theological Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey, November 18th, 1832, on occasion of the death of the REV. JOSEPH W. BARR, Missionary to Africa. By Samuel Miller, D.D., Professor in said Seminary."—Heb. xi. 4.—24mo. Pp. 31.

last year, remodelled, revived, and put under the immediate agency of my son-in-law, Mr. Breckinridge. Since that time, it has pleased God to smile upon it in a very remarkable manner; so that it has now between three and four hundred beneficiaries under its care; and the number is almost daily increasing.

‘Mr. Breckinridge and the other friends of this Board are more and more persuaded, that the training of the young men to *ardent piety*, and as to all that part of their furniture that may be eminently called the *practical part*, is unspeakably more important than it has been heretofore commonly viewed. It has, therefore, occurred to them, that, if an experienced brother were employed and authorized to visit, at least once in every year, and as much oftener as circumstances might admit, all the seminaries, colleges, and academies, in which their beneficiaries are located, and to have faithful and affectionate pastoral interviews with them, the effects might be salutary, and exceedingly important to the interests of religion in the United States. Would not this be a species of service as likely to be truly and extensively useful as any other that could well be devised? They are deeply anxious that the experiment should be made; and their minds have been unanimously turned to you, as the most suitable person within the circle of their acquaintances to be engaged in this interesting service. And, if you can give the Board of Education the least encouragement that you may be persuaded to engage in it, you will be appointed forthwith.

‘My dear Brother, do not hastily say, No! to this suggestion. I know that you are prone to shrink from plans, which would constrain you to place yourself in stations of prominence and responsibility. But can you conscientiously refuse to undertake a service of such vital importance to the forming ministry of our country? and, through them, to the interests of true religion? Turn the subject in your mind. Commit it to the Lord, as we do, in humble prayer. If the precise form or aspect, under which I have presented it, does not strike you favorably, propose some other that does. And remember, that, if you will consent to engage in the service, you may give it that shape, denomination, and aspect, which may be most agreeable to your own views of duty and usefulness. Or, if you would be willing to engage for any time, longer or shorter, in paying the pastoral visits proposed, without a publicly recognized commission for that purpose, yet sustained by the Board in your labours, say so, and your inclination will be most respectfully consulted.’

## 3. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF 1832.

In the General Assembly of 1832, the New School party had still the preponderance, as also in the Assemblies of 1833 and 1834. This fact proves how successfully a large minority of the Church, may, under able leaders and by skillful management, secure, for a considerable time at least, absolute control in its highest judicatory. The chief matter of party discussion, in 1832, was the action of the Synod of Philadelphia in regard to the recommendation of the Assembly of 1831, that the Presbytery of Philadelphia should be divided in the way best calculated to promote the peace of its ministers and churches. The majority of that presbytery asked for a geographical division by the line of Market street; the New School party, that a presbytery should be formed of certain churches and ministers, whose New School affinities and sympathies led them to elect each other as presbyterial associates—an “elective affinity” presbytery. The Synod, after considerable discussion, decided, as no doubt, in the discretion allowed, it had a right to do, that any division of the Presbytery was inexpedient. Of this decision some of the New School presbyters complained to the Assembly; while others presented a petition that the supreme judicatory itself would effect the division. The complaint was wrongfully sustained, and “The Second Presbytery of Philadelphia” was formed, upon the elective affinity principle, as a safe harbour for New School men. The Assembly, doubtless, has a right to form presbyteries, because its powers are not conferred, but only, in a degree, restricted, by the Form of Government; but the latter, in defining a presbytery as composed “of all the ministers, and one ruling elder from each congregation, *within a certain district*,” clearly excludes the idea of elective affinity. Nevertheless the Synod should have submitted: a decision of the General Assembly, on any subject, is necessarily final, until regularly set aside by the same or a subsequent Assembly—final, excepting as contumacy may refuse obedience, or revolution throw off authority. The Synod, contumaciously therefore, though in very respectful language, refused to recognize the Second Presbytery.

## 4. DEATH OF EDWARD MILLINGTON MILLER.

The year 1832 was a sad one in the family annals. Edward Millington, the second surviving son, had been graduated, honorably, the previous September, at the age of seventeen, at the College of New Jersey; and, with the highest hopes and aspirations, and much promise, entered, in April of this year, upon the study of law, in the office of his uncle, the Honorable John Sergeant, of Philadelphia. In that city, he took up his abode with his sister, Mrs. Breckinridge, and every arrangement for the happy prosecution of a course of professional training seemed, in God's good providence, complete. If there were any favorites in the household, he certainly was one, on account of his sprightliness, the comparative excellence of his mental endowments, and a dashing, adventurous spirit, which was interesting to others, though full of danger to himself. He gave no evidence, at this time, of a renewed heart; all his aspirations and tastes were for the world; and, doubtless, the prospect of his exposure to the temptations of a city life had caused great anxiety to his parents. But the circumstances in which he thus commenced studying law were such as to relieve, in a good measure, their fears; and, though his health had not been entirely vigorous, the danger really nearest they had, perhaps, comparatively little apprehended. He had been but a week in the city, when he was attacked by measles, and this disease ended in consumption and his speedy decline. As soon as possible, he was brought back to Princeton. Every means that affection and skill could devise was employed for his restoration, but in vain. Medicine, dietetic prescriptions, exercise and travel were alike unavailing. He was not entirely without those flattering hopes which so generally attend the progress of this almost hopeless disease; yet, from the first, he lost his sprightliness and gaiety, and shrank away from company and mirth; he sometimes prognosticated a fatal result; and seemed rationally convinced of the importance of making his peace with God. He was, however, very taciturn as to his religious convictions, and for a long time, when he did express himself on this subject, simply acknowledged his danger, but added, that he *could not feel* alarmed. In fact, his com-

posure, when he talked about himself and the likelihood of his approaching death, was wonderful; though to be accounted for, partly as the effect of languor from disease, of pride, and of a measure of self-command, and, in part, as founded on that insensibility of the natural heart, from which God's Spirit alone can effectually awaken. He would tell, with the utmost coolness, and almost with seeming indifference, what one and another heartless, or strangely boorish young man of his acquaintance would say to him:—"Why, Ned, how badly you look! Are you going into consumption?" Or, "Have your friends any hope of your recovery?"

About the middle of July, alarming hemorrhage from the lungs supervened, and at intervals, afterwards, returned with increasing profuseness. The scenes of his sick chamber, particularly at the time of these attacks, were full of sadness, yet such as became a christian household. One of them is recalled to mind by a nearly contemporaneous record. He was sitting up in bed, spitting blood freely, himself agitated, but perhaps not so much so as the other members of the family, who had flown to his room, in alarm, and, while waiting for the physician hurriedly sent for, were administering such styptics as were at hand. As soon as a few moments could be seized for the purpose, all, excepting those immediately engaged in waiting upon him, were kneeling about the room, while from a father's heart, too full of agitating emotion for entire self-command, was poured forth a fervent prayer for his relief, and his soul's salvation.

As the disease advanced, he became more communicative in regard to his religious feelings, often desiring the Bible to be read to him, hymns to be sung and prayers to be offered. Singing, especially, was a great comfort to him, as to many others it has been in a like situation—to him the rather, because he had been a good singer himself, and in the sacred songs of the household had always taken a natural delight. He frequently asked for the hymn—"Rock of ages, etc.", seeming to join in it heartily with all but his voice, which had been long unequal to the task: especially the lines,

"Nothing in my hand I bring,  
Simply to thy cross I cling;—"

seemed strongly to interest him. For some time, he was in deep spiritual dejection, and when his mother found him weeping, and asked tenderly, "What is the matter?" he answered, "Oh, I am in such darkness!" But a little later, he became comforted in a trembling hope, that he had obtained an interest in the peace-speaking blood of Jesus. Now he was anxious, not to live, but only to be assured of his preparation for death.

From New York, on the 27th of October, his father wrote to him,

I 'found that kind and hospitable reception at Mr. Strong's which his early and uniform friendliness led me to expect. But, amidst all the kind attention of friends, my thoughts are in Princeton, and especially employed about my dear, afflicted Edward. You have scarcely been out of my mind for fifteen minutes together since I left home.

'I know from experience, my dear Son, what it is to lie, day after day, upon a sick bed, and to feel all the tedium and weariness of such confinement; and I have also, I trust, experienced something of the aid and consolation which may be drawn, in these circumstances, from prayer and humble confidence in God. May you enjoy the same aid and consolation. I trust you have been enabled to renounce all dependence on any thing you have done, or can do, and to place your entire reliance upon the atoning sacrifice and merit of him who came to take away the sin of the world. Pray without ceasing, my dear Son, that the Holy Spirit may give you, day by day, clearer views of your own sinfulness and unworthiness, and also of the glory, the excellence, and the willingness of Christ as a Saviour. Pray that you may be more and more delivered from all dreams of self-righteousness, and be enabled more simply and humbly to repose all your confidence in the atonement and intercession of the blessed Redeemer. Try to come, with the spirit of a little child, that you "may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

'You cannot but know, my dear Son, that your situation is one of extreme peril. I say not this to fill you with needless alarm; but with all the fidelity of an affectionate father, who desires more than he can express your restoration to health; yet desires far more—ininitely more—your preparation for the divine will whatever it may be. That preparation, I cherish the hope, you have in good earnest begun. God grant, that you may have more and more evidence that you possess "a good hope through grace"!

‘Try, my dear Son, more and more to get rid of your reserve on this great subject. It has pleased God to give you a mother, who not only loves you dearly, but who is also abundantly capable of instructing you, praying with you, and answering all your anxious inquiries. Be not backward to tell her your whole heart, and to pour out the fulness of your feelings and views without reserve. It may enable her to speak to you with far more appropriateness and usefulness than if you withhold from her such communications.

‘May the God of all grace bless you, my dear Son! May he more and more enlighten your mind by his gracious Spirit, and make the Saviour precious as the Lord your righteousness and the Lord your strength!

‘Your affectionate father,  
‘Sam’l Miller.’

Edward lingered until the 13th of November. As the end approached, Mrs. Miller’s anxiety for his spiritual welfare increased. In making some private memoranda, after his death, she wrote,

‘The last night of his life, I determined and endeavoured to imitate, in my measure, the wrestling prayer of Jacob, which is recorded for an example to the people of God in all generations. I had a piece of sewing, \* \* with which I determined to employ my hands, when sleep might threaten to be irresistible; \* \* and I found that prayer was helped and not hindered by this means. My wrestling spirit seemed not to relax; and, although I found myself growing bewildered and weary, ideas and words failing, there was enough strength left to say, “I will not let thee go except thou bless me”; and I had a sort of superstitious feeling, that, if I held on until it could be said, “The day breaketh,” I should prevail. One thought began to trouble me: If I should sink under this exertion, the poor sick child would be alone, without strength to make himself heard, even if he were dying. The conflict, however, was soon determined. He seemed to have an intuitive impression of my struggle; and he called me about four or five o’clock, and said, “Mother, you will wear yourself out: do go to bed and send D— to me.” Upon my objecting, he added, with a sort of confident assurance, “Try it—try it.” These words overruled my purpose, and, after helping to remove him to the other bed, I retired to mine.’

A few hours afterward, she was hastily summoned to receive his dying, but, as she learned even before she reached the bed-side, his rejoicing breath. About breakfast time,



the doctor came in and said that he was probably dying. The family were very soon assembled in the chamber of death; and his father kneeled down, as he had so often done before, near the bed, and now earnestly prayed that Jesus would receive his departing spirit. Before the voice of prayer arose, he had seemed to be in a stupor; but this sound immediately recalled him to consciousness; and just as all had risen from their knees, he said aloud, though with the choking accents of death,

“Jesus can make a dying bed  
Feel soft as downy pillows are,”—

going over parts of this stanza several times with great composure. He then said, very distinctly, “O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?” and repeated frequently the words, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit! Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!” He called his father to him, and said, with broken utterance, “That Jesus Christ will *soon* receive my spirit—*pray that!*” His mother asked him, whether he had not some message to leave for his young companions, in college and elsewhere, who were going on in folly. He hesitated for a moment, as if in deep, troubled thought. Then he replied, with distinctness and solemn emphasis, “Stop!—Mad!”—and a moment after—“Madness!”

He calmly kissed all farewell, and very soon, quite suddenly and unexpectedly, his altered looks arrested the attention of those present. His father prayed again by the bed-side; his mother endeavored in vain to recall his failing senses; a few long, easy breaths, and all was over! Another prayer—a prayer of submission, of trust, of thankfulness, with deepest, almost smothering emotion, was offered up. The spirit was gone. One by one the mourners went forth to weep apart. The hands of others were speedily preparing the cold clay for burial.

“Death-bed repentances” are too often fearful delusions. The best hope, perhaps, for this one was—He was a child of the covenant!

Dr. Miller wrote to Miss Elizabeth Sergeant,

‘Our dear Edward has at length left us. He expired at one o’clock this afternoon, without suffering more, in body, than we had expected, or even so much; and in the calm and joyful ex-

ercise of gospel hope. Indeed, he gave us a degree of satisfaction concerning the intelligence and firmness of his Christian confidence, especially within the last few days, which has almost turned our mourning for his loss into cordial joy, in the persuasion that the event is his unspeakable gain. If you had heard some of his expressions, when he was hardly able to speak, this forenoon, you would not wonder that I use such strong language.'

On Thursday, the 15th of November, the funeral took place—the religious services in the village church. Dr. Hodge preached on the occasion, with characteristic tenderness, of "The Christian's Triumph over Death." A short extract from his sermon will not be out of place.

"Instead of being cut down by a sudden stroke, in the midst of his career, it was kindly ordered that he should fall by that disease, which, while it wears away, refines the body and leaves the soul clearer and less earthly, as its clay investment is perishing around it. Time was thus mercifully granted for reflexion. As he had enjoyed the inestimable blessing of a religious education, his mind was bright in the light of Christian truth; and, when roused by the apparent approach of death, his soul was not left to the irregular and useless action, which arises from excited feeling in the midst of darkness. To his parents it must have afforded a satisfaction abundantly repaying all their care and anxiety, to witness the obvious benefit of correct doctrinal knowledge. Instead of anxious doubt as to what was to be done to secure the favour of God, there was a clear perception of the way of salvation through Jesus Christ; and, instead of mere excitement and delusion, calm and spiritual views. To this, under God, is to be referred the remarkable simplicity and purity in the religious exercises of the dear youth, over whose grave we are called to rejoice rather than to weep. The evidence which he gave of a change of heart, and of faith in Jesus Christ, became, through a series of weeks, more and more satisfactory. For more than two months past, and long before he was confined to his room, he evidently abandoned all expectation of recovery, and looked forward to his death as certain and not far distant, with a degree of calmness and steadiness which made a deep impression on all around him."

## CHAPTER THIRTY-FIRST.

LABORS FRUITLESS AND FRUITFUL.

1833-1835.

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### 1. LETTERS TO PRESBYTERIANS.

WITH the month of January, 1833, Dr. Miller commenced contributing to *The Presbyterian* a series of Letters upon the Present Crisis in the Presbyterian Church. On the 17th of the month, the Rev. James W. Alexander wrote,

“You will have seen in the *Presbyterian*, No. 1 of Dr. Miller’s letters; and, I doubt not, you approve its spirit. It is a sincere attempt at pacification; and, like all such attempts, will displease the extremes.”<sup>1</sup>

Hearing that Mr. Nettleton talked of visiting Princeton, Dr. Miller wrote to him at once, on the 24th of January, 1833,

“The intimation gives me peculiar pleasure, \* \* I hope you will execute your purpose as soon as you conveniently can. And I trust I need not add, that, when you come, Mrs. Miller and myself will expect you, of course, to come immediately to our house, and to make it your home during your stay in Princeton. I believe I am the oldest acquaintance you have here; and I think I may add, you have none anywhere who will be more glad to see you, or esteem it more of a privilege to entertain you. \* \* If you can stay seven, eight, or ten weeks, come on immediately. I think my dear wife and I can find you work enough, that you will not be reluctant to be employed about, the whole time and longer. If you can only stay \* \* ten days or a fortnight, (and I sincerely hope your time will not be thus limited,) then I advise that you postpone your visit until about the 14th or 15th of February. Our students will then have come together again. \* \*

<sup>1</sup> *Familiar Letters*, 204.

‘I am engaged in a series of “Letters to Presbyterians, on the present Crisis in the Presbyterian Church.” Whether they will do good or harm, I know not. I tremble at every step of my progress; and I hope I try to pray. May the Lord keep me from giving an unhallowed touch to his PRECIOUS ARK, in this awful juncture of affairs. I should be glad to be able to confer with you on several important and delicate points. Pray for me, that the “Holy Spirit of promise” may be in me “a Spirit of love, and of a sound mind.”’

‘The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you!

‘Affectionately yours, \* \*’

In a letter to Dr. Wisner, Secretary of the American Board of Foreign Missions, dated the 25th of January, Dr. Miller wrote,

‘By the way, will you allow me to *scold* you a little? Why have you not taken notice, in the *Missionary Herald*, of the death of Mr. Barr? I am sure there is not an individual in your rooms, who has ever felt, for a moment, disposed to take the ground of hostility, or even of jealousy, toward “The Western Missionary Society.” She is, indeed, an humble, unpretending sister. I feel confident you will consider it as equally your policy and duty not to frown upon her.’

The dates of these letters range from the 1st of January to May; and, in the latter month, they were issued, in book form, by a Philadelphia Publisher, who asked for them.<sup>1</sup> A glance at the table of contents will show that they treated of most of the vexed questions which then agitated the Presbyterian Church. They were commended by some, and condemned by others, of both parties; and were often quoted against the author, with great relish, when, not very long afterwards, either changed circumstances, or a change in his views, led him to depart, in practice, as to one point or another, from what he had written. “Some one applied to Aaron Burr to know the best way of in-

<sup>1</sup> “Letters to Presbyterians on the Present Crisis in the Presbyterian Church in the United States. By Samuel Miller, D. D. Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in the Theological Seminary at Princeton. Philadelphia: 1833.”—12mo. Pp. 314.

The titles of these letters were as follows:—I. Introductory Remarks—Early Rupture in the Presbyterian Church. II. Voluntary Associations. III. IV. V. Voluntary Associations and Ecclesiastical Boards. VI. VII. VIII. Adherence to our Doctrinal Standards. IX. X. Revivals of Religion. XI. XII. Adherence to Presbyterian Order. XIII. Selecting and Licensing Candidates. XIV. Religious Education of the Children of the Church. XV. Doing good as a Church. XVI. Sectarianism—Conclusion.

fluencing a prominent man to adopt a certain policy. ‘Has he argued against it?’ asked the wily politician.—‘Yes.’—‘Has he written against it?’—‘No.’—‘Well then, we *may* change him; but, if he had written, it would be improbable; for a man seldom changes when he has put himself in black and white.’” It was no real discredit to Dr. Miller that he sometimes changed his opinions, much less, that, with a change of circumstances, he changed his course of action. These letters were a partial result of an honest, though seemingly fruitless, effort to make peace in the Church. Possibly, in his ardent desire for peace, he too far overlooked the Scripture which he had made the motto of another work<sup>1</sup>—“first *PURE*, then *peaceable*.”

He refers to this publication, in his diary, thus:—

‘May 15, 1833. Mr. Anthony Finley, of Philadelphia, has just collected and published, in a neat duodecimo volume, my “Letters to Presbyterians.” I would fain hope that these letters have done, and will yet do, by the blessing of God, some good. If I do not deceive myself, they were written with a sincere desire, that they might promote the great interests of truth, piety and order in our beloved church. I commit them to the Lord. They have certainly been written with much prayer. Whether it was prayer of the right sort I will not decide.

‘Some of my friends have wondered, how I made out, with my feeble health and multiplied engagements, to write so much. There is no mystery in it. It is not because I write rapidly; for I compose for the press with as much difficulty, I presume, as most men who are accustomed to composition. But the real reasons why I am enabled to accomplish as much as I do, may be comprized in the following particulars:

‘1. I do not allow myself to be hurried; or to press my health, strength or spirits beyond what they will bear, by writing at late hours, or by overstrained exertion at any one time. I am very much of the mind of the old Quaker, who, when a traveller on the same road overtook him, seemed to be pressing forward in great haste, and asked with much apparent eagerness, how soon he could reach a certain town, thirty or forty miles ahead, significantly replied, “Thou mayest get there by sunset, if thou wilt go slow enough.” The inquirer pressed on, leaving the prudent Quaker to jog along at a slow, but regular, rate. Several hours before sunset, the Quaker over-

<sup>1</sup> II. Vol., 112. Note.

took his impatient fellow-traveller, some miles short of the town to which he was going, greatly fatigued himself, and his horse fairly fagged out. The Quaker passed him, and reached the same town with ease before the sun went down—all because he had travelled slowly but regularly. I am persuaded that, in every sort of labor, the old Latin maxim, *Festina lenie*, is of exceeding great importance.

‘2. I have been, for many years, in the habit of going to bed early. I wish always to be in bed a little after ten o’clock, certainly before eleven. Sitting up late, and studying much by candle light, are very destructive to health, and, ultimately, retard, rather than promote, literary labor.

‘3. I make a point of rising very early: in winter, an hour before day, making my own fire, and getting ready for work, before I can be interrupted by company, etc.; and, in summer, soon after sunrise. This is very important to him who would do much.

‘4. I try to improve every fragment of time; and although my interruptions \* \* are incessant, yet I am so happy as to be able, after an interruption, to take up a subject where I left it, without much loss of time in going back to find the clew. This has long been of great use to me, and made my fragments of time more precious.

‘5. Whenever I have been compelled to make an extra effort, in the way of study or writing, I have found incalculable advantage in going through it fasting, or, at least, eating very little. In these circumstances my mental operations are always more active and successful; and I, of course, suffer much less from mental application, and from want of exercise, than if I ate as usual.

‘6. I must do honor to divine aid. I have always found, that the more I acknowledged God, in my studies, the more comfortably and successfully they proceeded.’

The biographer’s comments upon these letters may, perhaps, be guarded against exerting too much of the influence of partiality, by giving, beforehand, Dr. Baird’s honest, though hardly impartial, criticism:

“In another direction, [apart from New-School designs and efforts,] recent indications were calculated to cause anxiety. During the preceding spring, in a series of “Letters to Presbyterians,” published in the Presbyterian newspaper, the Rev. Dr. Miller had assumed ground which was presumably indicative of the position to be taken by the Moderate party. In these Letters, the questions in agitation were brought under elabo-

rate review. The conclusions, however, which were attained, were disproportioned to the argument, and altogether inadequate to the emergency. As to doctrinal differences, the Professor declared his conviction that "nineteen twentieths of the whole number of our ministers are sufficiently near to the Scriptures and to each other, to be comfortably united in Christian fellowship and co-operation"; and that the great mass of the ministry were as united in sentiment as were the fathers of the Church, in 1741. The schism of that year he regarded as having been condemned by the reunion of 1758. He, therefore, gave his voice, "not for division, but for peace and continued union"; "for softening asperities, for reconciling differences, for putting away all bitterness, and wrath, and evil speaking." He insisted that the Church, in conducting the business of missions and evangelization, was engaged in her proper and peculiar work; yet wished her sons to sustain the voluntary societies, too; and, whilst expressing pleasure at the formation of the Western Foreign Missionary Society, uttered the hope that the attempt would not be made to induce the Assembly to undertake the work. He condemned and showed, very clearly, the evil and danger of erecting church courts upon the principle of elective affinity; and yet declared that, had he been in the Assembly, he would probably have voted for that measure. In fact, the venerable Professor was the leading promoter of the "compromising policy" of the Assembly of 1831, by which a judicial decision, in Mr. Barnes's case, was evaded; and he was chairman of the committee, which recommended the erection of the elective affinity Presbytery, for the accommodation of that gentleman and his friends.

"As the result of the entire discussion, the Professor opposed himself decisively to any really effectual measures, and proposed, as the remedy for the evils which were harassing the Church, that the extremists, on the one hand, should cease giving cause of uneasiness to their brethren; and that those, on the other, should no longer agitate the Church, with their apprehensions and alarms!"<sup>1</sup>

An interesting illustration of parental influence presents itself in the first of these letters. Dr. Miller's father, as a New England man, would, not improbably, have been a New School man, had he lived until the times now under review; and his son, though thoroughly Old School, says,

"\* \* if the sketch which I propose to give should answer no other purpose, it will serve to show why I shrink, with a

<sup>1</sup> Hist. of New School, 419-421.

kind of instinctive horror, from everything adapted to produce strife and division in our beloved Church. I have heard so much under my paternal roof, and among the associates of my youth, of the mischiefs and miseries of the old schism, that I feel willing to sacrifice everything but truth and duty, for the sake of avoiding a repetition of those melancholy scenes. \* \*

“Although this breach was healed eleven years before my birth, yet, in my youth, I \* \* witnessed so many of its mournful effects, that, I hardly need say, my recollections of it are deeply painful, and that I consider it as one of the most solemnly admonitory portions of the history of our Church. From a venerated parent, who acted his part with other ministers in the distressing struggle; and from a number of his clerical friends, with whom I had, in early life, a sort of filial acquaintance, I learned so much of the miseries and mischiefs of the whole scene; of the wounds which were inflicted on private feeling; above all, of the deeper wounds inflicted on the cause of religion; and of the deplorable degree in which the hands of ministers, and the interests of many churches, were weakened by strife and schism;—that you cannot wonder that all the associations in my mind with that history are peculiarly painful; and that it is impossible for me to witness ecclesiastical animosity and alienation, and to hear suggestions of another rupture in our beloved Church, without much more intense anguish of spirit than seems to be endured by many younger men who make or hear the suggestion.”<sup>1</sup>

It was a mistake to compare the condition of the Presbyterian Church, before the schism of 1741, with its condition at this time. There was alienation of feeling chiefly then, where there was now serious doctrinal disagreement; but Dr. Miller put a more charitable construction upon the views of many of his brethren than the facts really warranted, and hence did not discern quite clearly the difference between the two cases.

The following letter, though written, as the date shows, several years after the publication now under notice, throws so much light, both backward and forward, upon Dr. Miller's course, that just here, perhaps, it may best be inserted. It especially illustrates the action of the Assembly of 1831 in Mr. Barnes's case, and the general tenor of the Letters to Presbyterians in 1833. It was addressed to the Rev. John McElhenney,<sup>2</sup> of Lewisburgh, Virginia, and pre-

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 3, 11, 12.

<sup>2</sup> Afterwards D.D. See *The Presbyterian*, (1837,) 62.



ceded, by about a month, as may be observed, the decisive measures of the Assembly of 1837.

“Rev. and dear Brother,

“Your letter of March 7th found me on a bed of sickness, to which I was confined for more than three weeks. I am now, by the blessing of God, slowly regaining my strength, and am just beginning again, with great caution, to resume the use of my pen.

“You ask me to state “whether I know of any ‘Fatalists’ in our Church.” My explicit answer is, I do not. I know of no minister in the Presbyterian Church who carries the doctrines of Predestination and Election further than the judicious, rational and Scriptural manner in which they are represented in the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of our beloved Church. I suppose Arminians and Pelagians would call the doctrine of our public standards on these subjects fatalism, and you and me fatalists for adhering to them. But so would not the apostle *Paul*; so would not *Luther*, or *Calvin*, if they could now be consulted; so would not the venerable *John Newton*, or *Thomas Scott*, of the Church of *England*, if their writings may decide the question.

“It is indeed true that I have, in a few cases, heard ministers, in our Communion, speak of the inability of the impenitent sinner in a manner which seemed to me adapted to make an impression on the popular ear, unfavorable to his moral agency and accountability. And yet it is due to truth to say, that, in all such cases, when an explanation was sought, I found that I differed from the speakers chiefly, and for the most part, only, in language. When they said that man, by nature, is unable, *in any sense*, to turn to God, and keep his commandments, they meant only that he has no ability, as to this matter, which can *avail him to the attainment of the object*—that, though fully possessed of all the faculties constituting a moral and accountable agent—yet of that MORAL ABILITY, which is the grand *sine qua non* to all obedience, he is entirely destitute; and, of course, that while thus destitute, he is, in no sense, that can avail him, able to perform his duty. Is this erroneous? Is it not impregnable truth? Do those who hold it deserve the name of *fatalists*? It is impossible to believe that any enlightened and candid judge can make this estimate of the matter.

“I have now answered the only question you proposed to me, with all the explicitness and candour of which I am capable. And as you inform me that you wish my answer for the purpose of making it public, I hope you will pardon my ad-

dressing it to you, in the first instance, through a public medium.

“Having thus, reverend and dear brother, despatched what I have to say on the foregoing subject, allow me to make this letter the channel of a few remarks on another. Having been associated with you in all the conflicts of the last two General Assemblies, I feel a fraternal interest and confidence in you, which embolden me to dwell on some things respecting myself, which I am persuaded will not be wholly indifferent to you, and through you to communicate them to the public.

“Ever since the rise of the General Assembly of 1835, my course as a member of that body, which you witnessed throughout, has been made, in various quarters, the subject of unfriendly and severe remark:—by some, within the bounds of your Synod, with decorum, yet with decided censure: by some other writers and speakers in more northern Synods, of coarser minds, with more acrimonious and unmeasured vituperation. The amount of the charge brought by these brethren is, that the course which I took, and the principles which I advocated in the General Assembly of 1835, were very different from my former professions and course, and manifested a timid and pliant submission to the brethren of the Act and Testimony, and to the Convention and Memorial which they formed.

“Now, even if every part of this charge had been true to the letter, what great crime would it have involved? Surely there were brethren who signed that document, and attended the Convention, with whom any man might consider it as an honour to be found in company and in co-operation. They were among the most venerable ministers in the Presbyterian Church for age, wisdom, experience, piety, and valuable services. Suppose I had been materially influenced by the advice of such men, and had in some measure altered my course in conformity with it, would there have been anything either discreditable or criminal in this? When I think of the character of such a man as Dr. Green, one of the number, who has been labouring without weariness for the Presbyterian Church for fifty years, and who has probably done more for promoting her essential interests than any other man now living; and when I reflect on the manner in which he has been spoken of and treated by men of yesterday, who would find it extremely difficult to point to any record of their services to our beloved Zion, and who scarcely know enough of her history to understand what others have done; I scarcely know how to express my indignation.

“But the truth is, the charge alleged has not the shadow of

foundation. And, happily, the documents to prove it entirely groundless are public and undeniable. My "Letters to Presbyterians" were first published in the winter and spring of 1833. They had been widely circulated in the Presbyterian, and were all collected into a volume, and on sale in the city of Philadelphia, prior to the meeting of the General Assembly of that year. In those "Letters," I publicly and zealously maintained the following opinions:—

"1. That every Presbytery has a right to be satisfied with regard to the character of every candidate for admission into their body, even though he should come from another Presbytery with clean papers; and, if necessary, to examine him for this purpose.

"2. That the erection of Church Courts on the principle of "Elective Affinity"—that is, judicatories not bounded by geographical limits, but erected with a chief regard to diversities of doctrinal belief, and ecclesiastical polity—is contrary to the letter and spirit of the Constitution of our Church, and opens a wide door for mischiefs of the most serious and ruinous character.

"3. That it is the duty of the Presbyterian Church to engage with zeal in the work of missions, foreign and domestic; and also in training her own candidates for the ministry:—that the Boards of their own Church ought to be first sustained by sound and consistent Presbyterians; and after them voluntary associations of a promising and useful character.

"4. That there was too much reason to believe, that certain specified doctrinal errors, of a very serious and lamentable character, were adopted and published by ministers in our Church; and that it behooved all our judicatories to purge out such errors, and to guard with the utmost vigilance and fidelity against their admission into our body.

"Those who will take the trouble to look over the proceedings of the General Assembly for 1835, will perceive that these four positions, were precisely those acts of the Assembly of that year, which gave most offence to our brethren of the New School, and for actively concurring in which I have been most severely censured by them, and represented as having deserted my former ground, and acted an inconsistent part. Surely no charge was ever more unjust. All the principles above stated, I had openly avowed, and steadfastly maintained, two full years before the meeting of the General Assembly of 1835, or the Convention which immediately preceded it, and more than a year before the Act and Testimony or the Convention was thought of.

“There was another principle adopted by the General Assembly of 1835, for concurring in which I am charged with being a new and pliable convert to high-church doctrines:—I mean the principle that it may be the duty of a judicatory to warn the Church against a corrupt or dangerous *book*, without being bound, in all cases, to arraign the author for heresy. But it so happens, that, as far back as 1831, when as a member of the General Assembly of that year, and as chairman of a committee in the case of Mr. Barnes, it became my duty to draft a report for that committee, the original report as drawn by me, declared, that every judicatory had a right to express its opinion of erroneous books, and that it might be a duty to do so in cases in which it was not necessary to arraign their authors. This part of the report, however, was disapproved and thrown out by a majority of the committee, very much to my regret, and against my earnest remonstrance. The same principle was also adopted and embodied in a resolution of the Presbytery of New Brunswick, of which I am a member, in which resolution I heartily concurred, a number of months before the meeting of the Assembly of 1835, or of the Convention which has been so often referred to.

“By the way, before taking leave of the committee of which I was chairman in the case of Mr. Barnes, in 1831, it may not be improper to state, that for that report I have had, ever since, a sort and degree of credit from my New School brethren, to which I was never justly entitled. The report in question was praised by them for its mild and accommodating spirit. It was not, strictly speaking, my report; nor was it formed agreeably to my wishes, though, as the chairman of the committee, I presented it to the Assembly. In the committee I contended for a report much less agreeable to the friends of Mr. Barnes; and, at length, when I found that a majority of the committee could not be brought to accede to my views, I informed them that I should think it my duty to disavow concurrence in it, before the Assembly, which I accordingly did in the most explicit and public manner.

“Further still; when, in the Memorial of the Convention, in 1835, some measures were proposed and urged on the General Assembly, which I had referred to, in my “Letters to Presbyterians,” with disapprobation and resistance, I continued openly and firmly to resist their adoption by the Assembly; and they were accordingly, if my memory does not deceive me, not one of them adopted by that body. Those who will do me the justice to compare my “Letters” with the Memorial of the Convention, and with the doings of the Assembly of 1835, will perceive at once the meaning and the evidence of this statement.

“But it is alleged, that, in 1833, when I wrote my “Letters to Presbyterians,” I expressed an opinion that, though decidedly in favour of the Presbyterian Church’s sustaining the Western Foreign Missionary Society, it would be unwise to place that Society under the immediate care of the General Assembly, lest it should prove another source of strife and conflict; but that, in the General Assemblies of 1835 and 1836, I altered my mind, and voted in favour of its being placed under the immediate supervision of the General Assembly. It is manifest that here was no change of principle. When I became convinced, after much inquiry, that unless the Society were placed under the patronage of the General Assembly, it could not receive the cordial support of all those members of our Church who prefer Ecclesiastical Boards, I became a friend to that measure. I am constrained, moreover, further to declare, that among the considerations which had much influence in effecting an alteration in my views in this matter, were the language, the measures, and the spirit of our New-School brethren, in conducting the debate in the Assembly of 1836. These were of a character which I contemplated with regret and amazement; and I became fully satisfied that their designs were more deeply hostile to the true honour and best interests of the Presbyterian Church, than I had ever before supposed. These brethren themselves have had more agency in bringing about the change of opinion of which they complain, than all others combined.

“The overture of Dr. Rice has been grievously misrepresented. It is well known that that excellent and lamented man was a warm friend to “The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions”; and yet it is manifest from the overture itself, that he wished and expected the General Assembly *as such*, in some form, to undertake and conduct foreign missions. I so understood the overture when it reached Princeton; and, so understanding it, gave it my hearty support in the General Assembly of 1831, of which I happened to be a member, and to which it was presented. It was *that overture*, no doubt, which gave rise to the appointment of a committee on the part of the Assembly to confer with the American Board of Commissioners, “on the best means of enlisting the energies of the Presbyterian Church more extensively in the cause of missions to the heathen.” The Committee appointed attended the annual meeting of the American Board at New Haven, in the autumn of the same year. I was present, as a member of the Board, when the joint Committee of the Assembly and of the Board laid before the latter a report expressing the opinion that the General Assembly ought *not* to undertake any separate

action in the missionary field. When the question on this report was about to be taken, I arose, and remarked, that I could not give an unqualified vote in favour of that report; that I was persuaded there was a large portion of the Presbyterian Church that earnestly wished a Board of Missions of our own Church to be formed, and that, in all probability, would ultimately form one. But that I would cheerfully vote for the original report, provided the following addition to it could be made, which I moved as an amendment, viz. :<sup>1</sup>

“This amendment, however, was very unceremoniously negatived, two other members of the Board only, so far as I recollect; viz., *Dr. Spring*, of New York, and *Dr. Carnahan* of Princeton, rising in its favour. Although this rejection made, at the time, a very unpleasant impression on my mind, as well as on the minds of some other warm friends of the Board to whom it was made known, it never diminished my cordial friendliness to that Board, nor suspended those testimonials of friendship to it which I have been, according to my ability, for a number of years, in the habit of giving.

“You will bear in mind, my dear Brother, that the purpose of the foregoing statement is not to show that my course has been a *correct one*. On that point my mind is entirely at ease. My appeal, on that question, shall be to a higher tribunal than any in this world. My only object, at present, is to show that I am no “recent convert” to new opinions; that my course, since these troubles began, has been as uniform and steadfast, as it was public and open; and that while I never felt prepared to concur in *all* the measures proposed by some respected brethren with whom I have been wont to coöperate, nothing has been further from my policy than trimming or concealment.

“But more than all this, have not the “gentlemen in Princeton,” in all the strictures which they felt bound conscientiously to make on the “Act and Testimony,” and on the plan and doings of the Convention of 1835, uniformly assured the public, that they perfectly agreed, in all great principles, with the venerable brethren who acted in those matters; and that they differed from them only on questions of policy and means? Was it possible to make declarations of this kind more distinctly or more publicly than they were repeatedly made? And *facts* have uniformly corresponded with these declarations. In this, so far as I know, we have been all united. When I wrote my “Letters to Presbyterians,” in 1833, I was opposed to a division of the Church. I am opposed to a division still. By prudence, firmness, fidelity and patience, I am confident it may

<sup>1</sup> The paper here referred to has already been inserted. See page 205.

be avoided. But I have no hesitation in expressing the opinion, which I entertained and published four years ago, that if we are to go on, in future, as we have done for the last few years, in a course of continual conflict and strife; and above all, if division can be avoided only by yielding to the inroads of Arminian and Pelagian errors; I do not see how the great ends of Christian fellowship can be attained; and am persuaded it would be better to separate, and that as speedily and quietly as possible. This is all I meant to say in giving my assent to the late resolutions of the Presbytery of New Brunswick; and this I have uniformly said, on every suitable occasion, for the last four or five years.

“But perhaps the table of accusation will now be turned upon me, and I shall be told, that, although the foregoing statement may conclusively show that I am not a “recent convert” to the doctrines and policy of the Old-School party, it establishes something much worse; viz., that I have rather been a precursor in all their mischiefs; the real alarmist and incendiary in all the agitation which has afflicted the Church. This latter charge has been, indeed, formally made by several writers, and, what is remarkable, by the very same persons who have reproached me as a “pliant convert” to a “restless and aspiring party.” I have no anxiety to plead either innocent or guilty to this charge. It never occurred to me that I was considered as a firebrand or disturber of the peace in any society of which I was a member. But, if any act or publication of mine has been instrumental in rousing the Presbyterian Church to a sense of her danger and her duty; if I have contributed, in the smallest degree, to turn the public attention to those schemes of corruption and subversion which every year, for some time past, has more and more disclosed, I cannot consider it as a fault: I rather glory in it as a service to the cause of my Master in heaven.

“What may be the result of these painful conflicts, I am a little able to foretell as yourself. I cannot, however, but cherish the humble confidence that the God of truth and order will sustain his own cause. That the general cause of the Old school brethren, in this contest, is the cause of God, and of righteousness, I can no more doubt than I can doubt that the Gospel is from heaven. I know, indeed, that their remonstrances and their efforts have been often stigmatized as a mere “struggle for power.” But it were just as reasonable to say, that he who strives to defend his dwelling and his beloved family from ruthless invaders is only “struggling for power.” What is it that they desire and claim? Simply that they be allowed to maintain, pure and entire, that system of doctrine and order which they verily believe to be founded in the word of God

for which their fathers made so many sacrifices; and which they have bound themselves to one another, and to the Christian community, to preserve uncorrupted. Surely when they desire nothing more than to enjoy this precious privilege—to be permitted to train up their own ministry, and to send forth to their benighted fellow-men that Gospel, and that ecclesiastical order which they conscientiously prefer, and believe to be most agreeable to the will of God—it requires no proof to satisfy any candid mind that their claim is reasonable, and that those who would resist it are chargeable with extreme injustice. My hope, under God, is, that those excellent brethren known by the title of “Old Hopkinsians,” with whom we have lived and acted in peace for many years, and who are as much opposed to the errors of the new theology as any of our number, will firmly take their stand, in the coming struggle, among the advocates of truth, and thus prevent a catastrophe which they profess to deprecate no less than ourselves. If they refuse to do this, and prefer sustaining by their votes, however conscientiously given, that system of error and disorder which they acknowledge to be deeply mischievous in its tendency; should the ultimate destruction of the peace and unity of our beloved Church be the consequence, charity herself cannot doubt that the responsibility will lie at their door.

“In regard to the delicate and solemn subject of *slavery*, concerning which you express an anxious interest, I can only say, that I fully sympathize in all your solicitude. I believe as fully as you do, that our *Abolition brethren*, by the course which they pursue, are every day deeply wounding the cause of religion; retarding the progress of emancipation; inflicting immeasurable injury on the slaves themselves whose benefit they profess to seek; more firmly riveting their chains; shutting them out from privileges which they would otherwise enjoy; and madly indulging in conduct adapted to plunge both the Church and the State into calamities which they can never repair. Whether God, in his sovereign wisdom, will permit these brethren, some of whom, I have no doubt, really believe they are doing him service—to pursue their frantic course, until they realize that consummation to which it so manifestly tends, we must wait to see developed by his adorable providence. In the mean while, I will cling to the hope, until compelled to give it up, that a large majority of our church will frown on the conduct of those brethren, and refuse to take another step in concurrence with a course so demented and destructive.

“With fervent prayers that you and I, and all our brethren who may be called to act in the present exigency, may be di-



rected by heavenly wisdom to those measures which will secure the purity and peace of the Church, I am, rev'd and dear Sir, your affectionate brother in Christ,

'Princeton, April 15, 1837.

Samuel Miller.'

As regarded Voluntary Associations and Ecclesiastical Boards, Dr. Miller came to the conclusion, (1) that every church "ought to consider herself, in her ecclesiastical capacity, as a MISSIONARY AND EDUCATION SOCIETY," bound to propagate the Gospel, and train up a well qualified and faithful ministry, according to her own distinctive forms and tenets; and that denominational agencies were further recommended by the fact that multitudes preferred them, and would not, without them, as zealously and liberally as they might, if at all, provide for the furtherance of the cause of Christ: (2) that union voluntary associations could reach some fields of usefulness, and draw out some contributions and efforts, which ecclesiastical boards could not, and should therefore be encouraged, but only as secondary objects: (3) that there need be no hostility, no strife, between union and church agencies; and that the most perfect harmony should attend their simultaneous operations. Not very long after the publication of this work, he was constrained to regard the actual management of both the American Home Missionary Society and the American Education Society, as much more hostile to the best interests of the Presbyterian Church itself, as well as to those of its boards, than he now permitted himself to imagine.

The New School have throughout contended for a lax interpretation of the terms of subscription to the Confession of Faith required of ministers, ruling-elders and deacons in the Presbyterian Church. Some few persons have stickled for every idea, nay, almost every word, of the Confession and Catechisms, as binding upon the conscience of the subscriber. This was by no means Dr. Miller's view. He considered such absolute uniformity of creed quite inconsistent with human imperfection and liberty of thought—in fact utterly impossible; but he pointedly condemned, as a subterfuge, that interpretation of the prescribed formula, which made it a reception of the standards only so far as they agreed, in the opinion of each subscriber, with the

Word of God; he regarded the terms of subscription as requiring the strictest Calvinism; and he virtually reprobated the assumption that they demanded only the "essentials of Christianity," or "the substance of doctrine."<sup>1</sup> Moreover he said,

"If the brethren of the "New School" *will* persist in the public, habitual use of a theological language, which impartial judges consider as Pelagian in its obvious import;—if they will *pay* no regard to the distressing apprehensions of multitudes of their brethren, who are grieved in regard to this subject;—if they *will* venture, notwithstanding all the irritability of the public mind in relation to the matter, to license and ordain men who give too much reason to fear that they do not, *ex*

<sup>1</sup>The difficulties with which the Old School had to contend, as to this matter of subscription, are strikingly illustrated by a revelation made, with an innocent unconsciousness quite remarkable, in the Autobiography of Dr. Beecher. His son Charles, before applying to the Presbytery of Fort Wayne, in 1844, for ordination, inquired whether his assent to the Confession of Faith implied an unqualified acceptance of every article of the Confession, or whether the Confession was to be taken for substance. "I can accept it," he said, "*yet so* that my liberty of differing therewith, in all cases where there is question of agreement with Scripture, be not diminished, but rather established."

"He also stated that while, to his mind, in some respects, the Confession, according to the present popular understanding of its language, failed to give an entirely just expression of the spirit of the Bible, nevertheless he admitted that it plainly recognized all the fundamental facts necessary to salvation."

Dr. Beecher replied, quoting the Confession:—"The Supreme Judge, by whom all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture." (Ch. II. 10.) "This provision," said he, "was intended to meet just such difficulties as you feel about some things."

"In accepting the Confession, you do not profess to believe that it contains all that the Bible contains, or that it is as unerring as the Bible is, but that it does comprehend the system of fundamental doctrines taught in the Bible.

"There have always been two different expositions of the meaning of the Confession on some doctrinal points from the beginning, in respect to which both parties appeal to the Bible, and have been allowed to differ, as holding substantially the fundamental doctrines of the system taught in the Holy Scriptures."

"You are sound enough to make all safe. \* \* Be of good cheer, and leave off pulling up the roots of things all at once just now: provide no mark for the enemy to fire at, and all, with diligence and spirituality, will go well.

"To this excellent advice Henry Ward adds the following: "Preach little doctrine except what is of mouldy orthodoxy; keep all your improved breeds, your short-horned Durhams, your Berkshires, etc., away off to pasture. They will get fatter, and nobody will be scared. Take hold of the most practical subjects; popularize your sermons. I do not ask you to change yourself; but, for a time, while captious critics are lurking, adapt your mode so as to insure that you shall be rightly understood." (Autobiography, 475-477.)

To second efficiently the advice thus given, and overawe opposition, Dr. Beecher attended the meeting of presbytery, and carried his hesitating son triumphantly through.

*animo*, receive the doctrines and order of our Church; and if, whenever a question arises, in our higher judicatories, respecting doctrinal soundness, they *will* always sustain and acquit lax theology, to whatever extreme it may go;—I say, if they *will* pursue this course, it requires no spirit of prophecy to foresee, that growing alienation, strife, and eventual rupture must be the consequence.”<sup>1</sup>

While pointedly condemning “elective affinity” church courts, as a violation of Presbyterian order, Dr. Miller, in his Letters, admitted that, had he been in the Assembly of 1832, he would have voted for the erection of the Second Presbytery of Philadelphia, on the ground, however, not of doctrinal diversity, but of alienation of feeling, and the unwieldy size of the old body.

The reality and preciousness of revivals of religion were recognized in the letters on this subject, but spurious revivals were exhibited as great evils. The Holy Spirit, for several years previous, had been poured out so remarkably over the length and breadth of the land, that the whole subject was one of general and peculiar interest. Mr. Nettleton had continued his labors, as an evangelist, until, in 1833, he was appointed Professor of Pastoral Duty in the Theological Institute of Connecticut, at East Windsor; although, subsequently to a severe sickness in 1822, from the effects of which he never fully recovered, his success had not been so marked as before. After the revival labors of the Rev. Charles G. Finney, in 1826 and 1827, in the State of New York, the subject of “New Measures” had agitated the churches exceedingly. About the time of his entrance upon his professorship,—probably while the “Letters to Presbyterians” were in the course of publication,—Mr. Nettleton had visited Princeton, and spent some days under Dr. Miller’s roof, making “New Measures” and “New Divinity” the two great staples of his conversation. With Presbyterians and Congregationalists, they were among the most exciting religious topics of the day.

Dr. Miller had himself witnessed, near at hand, something of the effects of New Measures. Mr. Flavel S. Mines, who ended his ministry in the Episcopal Church, as an ultra high churchman, began it, while a student of the Seminary, as a volunteer revivalist, at Jugtown, more ele-

<sup>1</sup> P. 126.

gantly yepleped Queenstown, a little more than a mile from the institution. Having hastily caught up some of the ideas prevalent among Mr. Finney's admirers and followers, he here found a stage for exhibiting them, upon a small scale, with their usual issues in temporary excitement, and ultimate mischief and disrepute. Said Dr. Miller,

"The principal of these [New Measures] are,—at the end of a warm and pungent discourse,—calling upon all who are more or less impressed by it, and who have formed the resolution to attend to the subject of religion, to rise from their seats, and declare their purpose before the public assembly;—or, requesting all who are willing to be prayed for, to rise and come forward to a particular part of the church, and kneel together for that purpose;—or, inviting all who are anxious about their everlasting welfare, to separate themselves publicly from the rest of the congregation, and to occupy certain seats, called anxious seats \* \* In short, this machinery for working on the popular feeling may be and has been endlessly diversified."<sup>1</sup>

The opposition of many of the Old School to New Measures, and to other practical out-workings of the New Theology, was frequently stigmatized as opposition to revivals. It was Dr. Miller's design to repel this slander, and at the same time to condemn the irregularities and extravagances which had crept into the Church under the guise of special zeal for God. "We must not undervalue," he said, the ordinary means of grace, nor make too common or cheap those which may be called extraordinary." "It is of great importance in revivals to guard against a sudden introduction to the Church of those who are hopefully made the subjects of converting grace." "The real friends of revivals of religion ought to be upon their guard against the confident allegation, that the preaching of certain new opinions is alone favorable to revivals; and that those who adhere to the system of old orthodoxy cannot hope to be, in this respect, extensively, if at all, useful"; and "against the arrogant claims of some to peculiar, nay, to almost exclusive skill and power in this great concern."<sup>2</sup>

In the letters on "Adherence to Presbyterian Order," Dr. Miller mentions, as prevailing irregularities, (1) the introduction of men into office in the Church, without the pre-

<sup>1</sup> P. 163.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 174, 178, 183, 185.

scribed qualifications, and without regular subscription; (2) unauthorized lay-preaching; (3) presenting for subscription to candidates for license and ordination, instead of the proper Confession, a brief substitute designed for easy reception; and (4) the admission of Congregational committee-men, in place of ruling-elders, into Synods and the General Assembly. The remaining letters need not here be particularly noticed.

It should be remarked, that these letters were not intended to show how the Old School might overcome the New, and thus purify the Church; but, proceeding upon the idea that existing evils were not so great as some imagined, and that conciliation was more needed than discipline, Dr. Miller sought, by gentle means, to bring erring brethren to repentance, and to induce his own side to treat them with more forbearance and brotherly confidence. It was hardly a mark of timidity, that, in pursuing this course, he braved the censure of both parties; and, possibly, it was not to his discredit, that he learned some things during a seven years' conflict, and was ready to change his opinions, with increasing light and knowledge, and candidly to avow the change.

## 2. MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS.

The sessions of the General Assembly of this year were unusually tranquil, and less protracted than common. The reason of this, however, was that the New School had again skilfully secured a majority, and that they dexterously evaded the consideration of the case of the Synod and the Second Presbytery of Philadelphia. The representatives of the Synod remonstrated, but, after a vain attempt to induce them to withdraw their remonstrance, it was referred to the Committee of Bills and Overtures, who suppressed it. The Synod, at its next meeting in October, recognized, under protest, the Second Presbytery, but only to dissolve it, and restore its members to the old body, which they now divided, geographically, by the line of Market street, giving the name of the Second Presbytery to the presbyterial constituents north of that line. Thus there was a Synod's Second Presbytery, and an Assembly's Second Presbytery; for the latter body would not recog-

nize the legality of its dissolution, and, having appealed to the General Assembly, was really in existence, at least until the appeal could be heard and decided. Before, in refusing to submit to the Assembly, the Synod had acted both unconstitutionally and contumaciously. At present, it was constitutionally contumacious; or, if that be a solecism, it had managed to bring its old, unyielding spirit of opposition to the will of the Assembly within the letter of the Constitution. We must accord to the actors in these scenes, on both sides, a Christian regard to what they considered the best interests of religion; but we must, at the same time, regret that the ruling majority, whether in the Synod or the Presbytery, lacked those large, comprehensive views, which would have enabled them to take higher ground for the conflict of great principles in which really they were engaged. Of course, the whole matter must now go, for adjudication, to the next General Assembly.

The following is from Dr. Miller's diary:—

'June 5, 1833. This is the anniversary of my *ordination* to the work of the holy ministry, June 5, 1793. Forty years have I borne this sacred, all-important office. When I ask myself, how I have borne it, what I have done, what are the fruits of my poor ministry—I feel as if I had reason to blush and be ashamed at the recollection. I have reason indeed to know that it has not been wholly without a blessing, either in New York, or in the place and neighborhood of my present residence. But, alas! when I compare it with what it ought to have been; when I compare it with the ministry of some men, who had not greater natural advantages than I have; I have reason to lie in the dust of abasement. They had more faith; more of a spirit of fervent, persevering prayer; and more close communion with God. Oh, that I might learn, more and more, to cultivate a similar spirit, and to make similar attainments. \* \*'

During the month of June Dr. Miller prepared an "Introductory Essay," to "An Essay on the Spirit and Influence of the Reformation; by C. Villers, some time Professor of Philosophy in the University of Gottingen," translated from the French and published in Philadelphia.

With the Rev. William S. Plumer, D.D., who left the Seminary in, or about, the year 1827, Dr. Miller, to the

end of his life, kept up an affectionate and not infrequent correspondence. The former, in 1833, wrote earnestly querying, whether the interests of Christ's kingdom would not be promoted by the General Assembly's proposing intercourse and correspondence, by letter or delegation, with the proper representative bodies of the Cumberland Presbyterian, Baptist and Methodist Episcopal churches in the United States. Dr. Miller replied, earnestly dissuading from any attempt in this direction. The following are a few extracts from his letter, dated the 28th of August:—

‘I cordially approve the great object you have in view. Love, and union, and co-operation among professing Christians are dear to my heart; and especially now, when the conversion of the world to God seems to call for more of all these than before.

‘Yet I am perfectly persuaded, that the correspondence and intercourse which you propose, in the form of query, would by no means forward that great object, but rather oppose and retard it.’

Dr. Miller then went on to explain, that while he heartily approved of individual intercourse with Methodists, Baptists and others of similar evangelical views, wherever it was possible, all his experience and observation, and that not a little, on this subject, had convinced him, that anything like general, denominational intercourse with them led naturally, not to peace and love, but to discord and strife: that proper harmony, therefore, depended upon keeping, denominationally, at a certain distance. He regarded the Methodists and Baptists as much more sectarian in spirit than Presbyterians; and the latter, on this account, as most likely to suffer in their attempts to promote Christian fellowship. He added,

‘Last evening, happening to fall in with Dr. Alexander, Dr. B. H. Rice, and Dr. Carnahan, in a free, confidential interview for other purposes, I mentioned my having received your letter, \* \* but without giving a hint of your name, or place of residence, that I might obtain their perfectly impartial opinion on the subject. They unanimously concurred in the sentiments which I have above expressed—some of them in even stronger terms than I have used; and that, before I had said one word expressive of my opinion.

‘My dear Brother, I know your heart is full of love to the

Christian body and to the world. I have admired the delightful enthusiasm which you have manifested in this cause. Go on. Try to rouse up, and animate, and purify Presbyterians; and this will be the most effectual method of attaining the end you have in view. \* \* This is the right handle to take hold of.'

At its fall meeting, in this year, the Presbytery of Louisville adopted a resolution, requesting Dr. Miller "to prepare and publish, as soon as practicable, a catechism upon the Scriptural authority, etc., of the Presbyterian form of government, adapted to the youth of the Church." His answer to this request was probably in the negative, on account, perhaps, of his pre-occupation with other projects more congenial to his taste, if for no other reason, because they were strictly his own.

The following extract is from a letter of the 14th of October to the Rev. Elisha P. Swift:—

'I am rejoiced to hear of the proposed missionary meeting this evening in the Wall street Church. It would give me peculiar pleasure to be present and to take a part in the exercises. No secular business, that I can easily think of, should prevent my enjoying this privilege. But situated as I am, I must deny myself the gratification. Our Synod meets to-morrow afternoon at Newton, in Sussex County, sixty miles from this place. For several special reasons I consider it as my duty to be there; and have accordingly made arrangements for setting out, this morning, for that place, which, I am persuaded, ought not to be abandoned.

'But, my dear Sir, though necessarily absent in body, I shall be present with you in spirit; and I hope, in some measure, engaged in private, in imploring a blessing on your meeting. I rejoice that *Ethiopia* is beginning, in good earnest, to "stretch forth her hands unto God." I rejoice that our promising and incalculably important colony in *Liberia* (which may God, of his infinite mercy, protect, extend and bless!) is likely to receive new and valuable accessions of light and strength. And I rejoice that the "Western Foreign Missionary Society," is advancing with plans which appear to me so judicious, and with strides so vigorous. Every thing at the present day seems to conspire to encourage and animate in the missionary enterprise. The state of the heathen nations and the state of our own country, alike, call us to redoubled effort. The whole heathen world is now, with very little exception, wide open be-



fore us, and, if not actually, yet virtually, inviting the labours of christian benevolence. And our own country was never so well able to answer this call, and to send to the benighted and the perishing the light of life, as at this hour. In these circumstances surely every consideration both of piety and humanity calls upon us to be active; to extend our plans; to cherish new zeal; and to endeavour to secure the coöperation and the prayers of every one who wishes well to the Church of God, and to the cause of human improvement and happiness.

‘It is delightful to see a new spirit rising in reference to that greatest of all objects, the conversion of the world to God. The time has been, when serious Christians were apprehensive, that the spirit of Foreign Missions, if cherished and acted upon, beyond certain very moderate bounds, would exhaust the resources and impair the strength of the churches at home. This error, I trust, is now beginning to be abandoned by the most of those who study the word of God, and regard the dispensations of his providence. They begin to see that efforts to spread the gospel abroad are the surest pledge of its power and success at home; that when such efforts are sincerely and fervently made, they never fail to rouse, to animate, and to draw down a blessing upon those who make them; and that, of course, however feeble and impoverished a church may be, one of the very best means of enlarging, strengthening and building herself up, is to engage, heart and hand in the hallowed work of sending the gospel to the benighted and the perishing. Oh, if we could hear of all the churches being united as one man in feeling, praying and laboring for the conversion of the world, we might certainly conclude that the time, even the set time to favour Zion, in a glorious manner, had come. That Christian is the best friend to the revival and spread of religion at home, and does most, effectually, to promote it, who is most zealous, active and prayerful in the great work of sending the Gospel from the rising of the sun even to the going down of the same.’

Here are extracts again from the diary:—

‘October 24, 1833. This is the thirty-second anniversary of my *marriage*. \* \* \* The advantages derived from her, [his wife,] in respect to my experience and course as a Christian, and my duties as a minister and professor, are so many and great, that I cannot presume to measure them. She has been a counsellor, a helper, a guide in duty, at once enlightened, conscientious, zealous and firm. Instead of finding her advice and influence to be on the side of worldly show and worldly indulgence, I have found it uniformly

on the side of self-denial, of withdrawal from every form of secular parade, and of devotedness to spiritual attainment and duty. I have considered her, year after year, as going more and more before her husband in spirituality, and in fidelity to the best of causes. \* \*'

'October 31, 1833. \* \* I am a wonder to myself. I have enjoyed better health for the last year, felt stronger and more comfortable, and been enabled to go through a larger amount of pulpit labour, with ease to myself, than for any year within the last twenty. \* \*'

In November, 1833, the Synod of Philadelphia, upon overtures from the Presbyteries of Philadelphia and Huntingdon, appointed a Board of Managers of "The Presbyterian Tract and Sunday-school Book Society." This society was to have its business location in the City of Philadelphia, and to be under the care of the Synod. It grew, subsequently, into the Presbyterian Board of Publication.

In his diary Dr. Miller wrote,

'December 3, 1833. This is the anniversary of my arrival in Princeton, with my family, when I came to take possession of the professor's chair of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government. The amazing goodness of God, in raising me up from a severe illness of Typhus fever, which had immediately preceded my removal, and delayed it for more than six weeks; and in sustaining me in my removal under extreme weakness, I desire here humbly and gratefully to record. And for all the mercies which have marked my feeble and imperfect labours in this place, I would praise and magnify the name of him who has bestowed them. "Having obtained help of God, I continue unto this day."'

### 3. CORRESPONDENCE.

To Mr. Stuart, agent of "The New Jersey Howard Society," Dr. Miller wrote on the 28th of January, 1834,

'\* \* I hope that means will be employed to engage as many friends and patrons in this cause as possible, in every part of the State; \* \* always remembering, that whenever you can prevail upon an individual to take an interest in the poor, the friendless and the prisoner, and to devote a portion of his time and substance to the bettering of their condition, you confer upon that individual himself a rich benefit.

'I feel especially an ardent desire, that the *young men* of our neighbourhood, and of the State at large, should be, as far as

possible, engaged in this enterprise. I hope, my dear Sir, that neither you, nor any other zealous friends in the work of benevolence in which you are engaged, will be *discouraged*, though comparatively few should unite with you at first, and though even a part of these should soon become weary in well-doing. Few have a taste for doing good, and fewer still such a degree of it as will prompt them to persevere, without weariness, in labours to benefit, as our Lord commands, even "the unthankful and the evil." But this painful fact ought neither to depress nor intimidate us in our benevolent efforts. The less others are willing to do, the more remains to be done by *us*; and at this we ought neither to repine nor complain; but rather to consider it as a *privilege to wear out* in endeavouring to promote the happiness of mankind.

'Be pleased to put down my name as a member of your association, and the first time we meet I will hand you the contribution expected of members. May he who sits as "Governor among the nations," preside in your meeting! May he raise up friends to your society in every part of the State! And may he render all your efforts effectual in promoting the temporal and eternal happiness of the poor, the prisoner, the degraded, and those who have none but you, under God, to help them.'

One consequence of the agitated, troubled condition of the Church was, that it suffered, with all its institutions, from a diminution of pecuniary support. Perhaps the course of the professors themselves, not satisfying either party, was one cause of this difficulty, so far as they were concerned. In November, 1833, the treasurer received only about one third of what was due, for their salaries, and in consequence, they were reduced to distressing straits. On the 31st of the following January, Dr. Miller wrote to Dr. John McDowell on the subject, representing his own circumstances, and those of his colleagues, as very painfully affected, and, among other suggestions, adding,

'Is there the least probability that the next General Assembly will be able to afford relief? When the members come together, will not two thirds of them be pledged to other Seminaries?'

'Is not the next General Assembly likely to be more distracted and divided than any one for a number of years? And, if so, what hope can we have for our institution?'

'Is not the only field in which we can hope to glean for our Seminary becoming more and more narrow every day? Is it entirely wise, therefore, to wait for the orders of the General

Assembly, when their committee is now vested with all power, except that of borrowing?

'I throw out these hints, my dear Brother, merely for consideration. Perhaps they are unworthy of regard. In the meanwhile, you may rely upon it, we are put to our trumps to get along from day to day.'

Toward the close of this year, things *looked* more hopeful. Writing to Dr. McDowell, on the 15th of December, Dr. Miller said,

'I thank you sincerely, my dear Brother, for your kind attention to our wants; and also for the encouraging manner in which you write. I hope things will come right by and by; but, in the mean time, the "Act and Testimony" brethren appear to be very unrelenting. I hope their eyes will be opened before long.'

This promise of relief, however, proved fallacious. Only a little more than a month later, he again wrote,

'You requested me to inform you of our wants. Dr. Alexander mentioned to me to-day, that he was really distressed for want of his salary. Almost two full quarters are now due. \* \* All our students' scholarships remain unpaid, \* \* and, as the winter recess will commence in twelve or fourteen days, they will be obliged to separate without having received a farthing, unless the dividends are sent soon.'

"The Pastoral Union of Connecticut" was formed, in 1833, by the opponents of New Haven Theology, as a barrier to its progress; and by this Union "The East Windsor Theological Institute" was established. The Union framed and issued an original Creed, which was so indefinite, on several important points, that it did not satisfy all the advocates of old orthodoxy.<sup>1</sup> On the 14th of March, 1834, Dr. Miller, in his kindly spirit, wrote to Mr. Nettleton,

'I thank you, my dear Brother, for the affectionate freedom with which you have written. Dr. Alexander and myself were both sorry to see the piece signed B. in the Presbyterian. It is far from expressing our feelings. Our views and feelings with respect to "The Pastoral Union of Connecticut" are not only amicable, but cordial and fraternal. We view it as a most desirable and important association, embarked in a great and good cause, and likely to accomplish a very important

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Baird's Hist. of New School, 205-207.

object. True, indeed, in looking over their published Confession of Faith, we do not find every word exactly as we could have wished; but we find quite enough in it that we approve, to be a basis of affectionate confidence, and unfeigned goodwill.

‘If you can pick up anything to help that institution within our bounds, do not hesitate to do it. It is true, indeed, that we are almost starving ourselves, and cannot raise money to pay our own salaries; so that we are on the verge of actual suffering, or, at any rate, of pressing straits. But some may be disposed to help you that will not help us. Receive, without scruple, whatever you can get.

‘I hope you will take Princeton in your way, and stay as long as you can, and make our house your home.’

A valued female friend and correspondent of Mrs. Miller’s wrote, on the 3d of April, ‘Will you please to present my best respects to Dr. Miller, whose kind prayer, offered for me when parting from you, often recurs to my mind with feelings of deep gratitude? I trust it has been answered to my soul’s welfare.’

To a work entitled, “History of Popery.” “By a Watchman,” Dr. Miller contributed an Introductory Essay, which bears date of the 28th of March, 1834. This essay, though exhibiting only the charges against Popery in which Protestants generally are agreed, was testily reviewed by “A Catholic Layman”—Matthew Carey, Esquire, of Philadelphia, in an “Address to the Public,” the first part of which, dated August 22d, appeared in the Daily National Intelligencer, of Washington, on the 6th of September. This Address was afterwards published in pamphlet form.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Carey was a very liberal Romanist, which rendered him less tolerant of what he, though unreasonably, regarded as Protestant intolerance. His concessions, in respect to Popish fallibility, brought upon him the condemnation of some, in his own Church, who entertained ultra-montane notions. Dr. Miller replied briefly, under date of the 12th of September, in the Protestant Vindicator.

#### 4. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF 1834.

The General Assembly met in the Seventh Church in Philadelphia on the 15th of May. On the 18th, in the

<sup>1</sup> Its motto: “Quousque tandem abutere patientia nostra,” Millere?

evening, Dr. Miller preached before the Board of Education, at their request, in the Central Church; and the sermon was afterwards published.<sup>1</sup> The preacher said,

“— there are, at this moment, within the bounds of the Presbyterian Church, MORE THAN SIX HUNDRED VACANT CONGREGATIONS: congregations which are not only destitute of pastors, but which cannot possibly be supplied with them, without a corresponding addition to the number of our ministerial laborers. Besides these vacant congregations, many of which are ready and loudly calling for pastors, and languishing and declining for want of them—I say, besides these—there are at least FOUR OR FIVE HUNDRED POPULOUS DISTRICTS, north, south, and west, in which, if we had zealous and able ministers to send to them, large and flourishing congregations might be speedily formed. So that our beloved church, at the present hour, most urgently needs MORE THAN A THOUSAND MINISTERS, over and above her present supply. \* \*

“But besides all these loud calls for many more ministers; besides the large supply demanded for vacant churches, and the extended frontier settlements within our own borders; there is a much larger harvest still, which calls for a far greater number of laborers than any which has been mentioned. I mean THE HEATHEN WORLD. Had any one told the apostle *Paul*, in the midst of his arduous and devoted labors, that at the end of eighteen centuries from his time, more than three-fourths of the whole human race would still be covered with pagan darkness, what would have been the feelings of that heroic, noble-minded missionary? Yet so the humbling, appalling fact is!”<sup>2</sup>

In this Assembly, the New School party again had such a decided majority, that they abandoned their previous temporizing and more conciliatory tactics, and adopted very decisive measures. Whether this was to be complained of depended, however, chiefly upon the question, whether, as to their grand principles, they were right or wrong. If New Schoolism, in doctrine and church order, was to be condemned, so was every measure designed to give it preponderance and command. As to the case of the Assembly's Second Presbytery, it was unjustly decided, that the

<sup>1</sup>“The Presbyterian Preacher. Pittsburgh, June, 1834. Vol. III., No. 1. Sermon xxviii. By Samuel Miller, D.D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey. Plea for an Enlarged Ministry. Luke x. 2.”—8vo. Pp. 16.

<sup>2</sup>Pp. 3, 4.

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act dissolving it was void; but the Synod's Second Presbytery was recognized, though as containing none of the members belonging to the other, and with the recommendation that its name should be changed. Then, to checkmate the Synod of Philadelphia, the Assembly's Presbytery was taken from it, together with the Presbyteries of Wilmington and Lewes, and an elective affinity Synod—the Synod of Delaware—was formed of the three. The object of these measures, by some at least of their advocates, was openly avowed to be, the security of Mr. Barnes and others of a lax adherence to the standards, and the greater facility of licensing and ordaining candidates equally lax in their views. That is, the Assembly's Second Presbytery, which far outnumbered both the others together, was, if not these others likewise, to cherish, in security, the New Haven doctrines, and, to the extent of its opportunity, flood the Church with them. The Third Presbytery of New York, formed, in 1830, upon the elective affinity principle, and the Presbytery of Cincinnati, after being replenished with New School men, had been, ere this, busily engaged in the same promising work.

“The Western Memorial,” an able paper prepared by a conference of ministers and elders belonging to the Synod of Cincinnati, was sent up, in print, to the General Assembly; which refused utterly every prayer of the memorialists, censuring, besides, both directly and indirectly, the framers of this paper, and, indeed, the whole Old School party. The Rev. Mr. Leach, of Virginia, was chairman of the committee which drew up the minute adopted by the Assembly. Among other things, it justified the Plan of Union of 1801; enjoined the reception of ministers dismissed by one presbytery to another upon the simple “credit of their constitutional testimonials”; and denied the right to condemn the doctrines of a printed publication, without trying regularly the author. It was but a slight compensation for these offensive and dangerous decisions, that the Assembly's Board of Missions was coldly and impotently commended. It must be admitted, however, that the memorialists had transcended the bounds of propriety, in their severe reflections upon the acts of previous Assemblies, and of other judicatories of the Church by name.

They were censured for also "publishing to the world Ministers in good and regular standing, as heretical or dangerous"; but this they had done simply by a legitimate reference to printed works by the names which they bore upon their title-pages. And the New School majority, waxing bolder, as they proceeded, strangely violated an express constitutional right of their opponents, by refusing a place on the Minutes to a respectful protest offered by the latter. They admitted, nevertheless, that elective affinity judicatories ought not to be formed "except in very extraordinary cases."

### 5. THE ACT AND TESTIMONY.

The bold front prematurely assumed by the New School, in the Assembly of 1834, manifested great confidence in their speedy triumph, even while it was preparing for them a sure and final defeat. During that Assembly's sessions, an Old School conference was held, which resulted, particularly, in drawing up and publishing the famous "Act and Testimony," penned by the Rev. R. J. Breckinridge,<sup>1</sup> who obtained, however, nearly the whole specification of errors from Dr. Charles Hodge; though the latter was constrained to dissent from some portions of the paper. It was decided to circulate this instrument for signature by the ministers and elders of the Church at large, and to secure its adoption by as many church judicatories as possible. "It was ultimately adopted in terms by about three hundred and seventy-four Ministers, seventeen hundred and eighty-nine Elders, and fourteen Licentiates; and either entire or substantially by five Synods and thirty Presbyteries."<sup>2</sup>

Taking the Act and Testimony as a whole, it was a noble and successful effort, at a grand crisis, to awaken the Church to a sense of great evils, and really alarming danger. It had its vulnerable points, which, directly, will be designated; and men thoroughly orthodox, and deeply anxious for the Church's deliverance, were clearly justifiable in withholding from it, as many did, their signatures and full approval. But every important human enterprize that God ever blessed, has been justly liable to the same criticism. The historian, at least, should not permit minor

<sup>1</sup> Since D.D.

<sup>2</sup> Baird's Digest, (1856,) 674.



blemishes, seen only upon a near approach, to mar his impression of the grandeur of the whole object. The Princeton Reviewers were right, for the most part, perhaps, in their minute objections, and they looked, evidently, with a single eye to the welfare of their beloved Church; but they certainly underrated the crisis; they underrated the Act and Testimony; in their apprehension of inferior evils, they failed to comprehend those of far greater magnitude; and they contented themselves, too nearly, with objecting to the mistakes, when the occasion demanded earnest co-operation, in one way or another, in the grand and unobjectionable purposes, of the Old School leaders.

The Biblical Repertory at Princeton, thus prefaced its notice of the Act and Testimony, after giving in a few lines its history:—

“It is impossible for any man to read this document, without being deeply impressed with respect for its authors. It is pervaded by a tone of solemn earnestness, which carries to every heart the conviction of their sincerity, and of their sense of the importance, as well as the truth, of the sentiments which they advance. The fear of God, reverence for his truth, and love for his church, seem clearly to have presided over the composition of this important document. In addition to these intrinsic claims to the respect of those to whom it is addressed, the fact that it has received the sanction of so large a number of the best ministers of our church, demands for it the most serious consideration.”<sup>1</sup>

It was validly objected to the Act and Testimony, that it embraced too much, and entered too minutely into detail, venturing too many statements of fact and opinion, upon which the Old School themselves were not agreed, to admit of general signature; while its friends were using it widely and offensively as a test of orthodoxy, and condemning, as unsound, all who could not affix to it their names; that it treated previous Assemblies with disrespect, and misrepresented, however unintentionally, their action; and that it, virtually, proposed nullification and revolution. These views of it might well prevent those who concurred in them from signing the paper; but, without that, they might have testified, unitedly, their adhesion to its right

<sup>1</sup> October, 1834. Art. vi., 505.

principles, and joined heartily with its authors in reforming the Church. Indeed ultra Old School men, at this juncture, needed nothing more than the counsels of moderate, but decided, coadjutors; though it is perhaps true, that no great reform was ever accomplished without an ultraism, involving unhappy excesses, in some of its advocates.

The Act and Testimony did not state too strongly the critical condition of the Church: on this point the "Moderates" amiably deceived themselves. It bore witness against errors which really prevailed to an alarming extent, and threatened the lasting corruption of the whole body: the warning note was certainly not too soon or too loudly uttered. There was no impropriety in providing for its circulation for additional signatures, which might add to its weight and influence. The call of a special convention was perfectly legitimate, and the crisis was exigent enough to demand extraordinary expedients. This call was by no means, in itself, an act of revolution, as some maintained; and its simple loyal character could not be changed by anything of a revolutionary aspect unhappily admitted into the same document. Least of all was the Act and Testimony, as the Princeton Reviewer pronounced it, a failure. It no doubt had much to do with securing an Old School majority in the Assembly of 1835, and it helped to inaugurate a series of successful efforts, of which the final excinding acts were but the crowning result.

An extract from a work by the Rev. Isaac V. Brown, published more than twenty years afterward, will give some idea of the state of things produced by this collision between the "Moderates," as they have been called, and the Act and Testimony men. The author, certainly, cannot be regarded as an unbiased witness, and may have been mistaken as to some of the statements; but no doubt they present a substantially correct view of facts as seen from the Act and Testimony side. The "gentlemen of Princeton" were regarded as the head and front of Moderatism.

"The sympathizers with the Princeton dissent, in general, assumed the same position, [opposing the Act and Testimony's call for an Old School reforming convention in 1835,] and by their action undesignedly greatly strengthened the power of

the New School party. Even in the Presbytery of New Brunswick, a majority denounced the convention as a caucus, and succeeded in preventing that Presbytery from sending a delegate to represent them in that important conservative meeting of the church for consultation. [The minority, however, sent a representative.] Already an impression of discouragement and despondence, as to the result of the impending conflict, began to affect the minds of many adherents of the Old School body. The trustees of the theological seminary were engaged in the laudable enterprise of collecting funds to endow and establish that institution at Princeton. Many who had either subscribed to that fund, or resolved to participate in its accumulation, seeing the success attending New School movements, and the lukewarmness prevalent at Princeton, declined contributing until the result could be more certainly predicted. Even the trustees of the seminary, not knowing how soon, and how totally, the whole institution with its professors, edifices, libraries, funds, and assets *en masse*, might pass into the hands of the New School, gave distinct intimations to their agents and collectors to suspend their operations; considering it much better that the funds \* \* in prospect should remain in possession of the donors, than be placed within reach of the rapacious foe. And what cannot but be regarded as remarkable, while the condition and prospects of the church generally, and of the seminary in particular, were hanging in this state of torturing suspense, the opposers of the *Act and Testimony* some time continued their hostility to that document, and the general relief measures contemplated.”<sup>1</sup>

In May 1829, the Directors of the Seminary had authorized the Professors to take measures for the erection of a chapel, the “Oratory” having been found, at length, too strait for the full assemblies of professors and students; and Dr. Miller had prepared a circular and subscription-paper, issued in September of the same year, appealing to the Church, and especially to former students, for aid. The idea was to connect with the chapel, if possible, an apartment suitable for the library—an idea afterward abandoned. In fact, the collection of funds for any Seminary purpose was so difficult, that the chapel was not finished sufficiently to be occupied until near the close of the year 1834.

<sup>1</sup> A Historical Vindication of the Abrogation of the Plan of Union, 174.

## 6. PRESBYTERIANISM AND BAPTISM.

Upon the formation of the Tract and Sabbath School Book Society of the Synod of Philadelphia, Dr. Alexander was requested to prepare their first volume, and Dr. Miller their first Tract. The former presented the Society with the little work entitled, "The Way of Salvation," standing first now upon the catalogue of the Presbyterian Board of Publication. The latter presented a treatise upon Presbyterianism, first, upon the same catalogue, in the list of tracts.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps no other work from Dr. Miller's pen has been so widely circulated as this. It was republished in Edinburg, in 1842, as part—about one half—of a volume entitled "Manual of Presbytery," under the editorial care of the Rev. John G. Lorimer,<sup>2</sup> Minister of Free St. David's Church, Glasgow, author of the latter half of the volume.—"The Character and Advantages of Presbyterianism ascertained by Facts,"—and of a number of notes appended to Dr. Miller's work; forming together a very valuable addition to the original treatise. This original has also been published in an Italian translation.

Dr. Miller delivered two sermons on Baptism—its proper subjects and mode—in the Presbyterian church of Freehold, Monmouth county, New Jersey, on the 29th of September, 1834. A desire that they should be published having been expressed, they were committed, after revision and enlargement, to the Society just mentioned, and issued as the eighth tract of their general series.<sup>3</sup> The two Works—Presbyterianism and Baptism—are now issued by the Board of Publication, not only in tract form, but also together as the seventeenth bound volume.

Sending to Dr. Engles part of the manuscript of the work, on Presbyterianism, Dr. Miller wrote, on the 27th of November,

'I will thank you, my dear Sir, to look over the manuscript

<sup>1</sup> "Presbyterianism the Truly Primitive and Apostolical Constitution of the Church of Christ. By Samuel Miller, D. D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey. Philadelphia: 1835."—12mo. Pp. 98.

<sup>2</sup> Now D. D. The degree was conferred by the College of New Jersey in 1849.

<sup>3</sup> "Infant Baptism Scriptural and Reasonable; and Baptism by Sprinkling or Affusion the most Suitable and Edifying Mode. By Samuel Miller, D. D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey. Philadelphia: 1835."—Acts xvi. 15. x. 47.—12mo. Pp. 122.

with freedom and candor; and if there be any part of it which shall appear to you, or to any of your Executive Committee, defective, redundant, or erroneous, I hope you will mention it to me with the utmost frankness; and I shall most willingly alter it as far as I conscientiously can. I write, not for any private purpose, but for the benefit of the Church, and never wish to write or print any thing that does not do her good. \* \*

'The more I reflect on the subject, the more decided is my opinion, that, instead of postponing the issue of manuals of one hundred, or even a hundred and fifty pages, until some of much smaller size precede them, the very reverse is the true policy of your society. Depend upon it, such manuals will be more prized, better preserved, more read, and do more good, than pamphlets of twelve or fifteen pages, which must, from their nature, be perfectly fugitive. This is also Dr. Alexander's opinion—often and strongly expressed, entirely irrespective of any manuals of mine. \* \*

'P. S. I very much regret that your Synod has taken the ground that it has against the admission of any protests, etc., excepting in cases strictly judicial. Nothing is more certain than that the doctrine is as antipresbyterian as it can be—contrary to multiplied and long established precedents—contrary to reason and to every principle of our constitution. It is just as certain that every enlightened and sober General Assembly will condemn it, as that another such body will meet. I was never more amazed than to find such a doctrine broached by grave, experienced men.'

Dr. Lorimer, in his preface, says,

"I have long wished for something in a brief, but not too brief a form, which should comprehend some view of the history and doctrine of the Presbyterian Church, as well as of its government and worship, and that in an attractive and readable style. In the little work of the able and accomplished Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the Presbyterian College<sup>1</sup> of Princeton, New Jersey, I think I have met with the desideratum. So far as it goes it is admirable, and only needs to be adapted, by means of additional information, to the state and prospects of the question in this country, to prove a most useful digest for every Presbyterian family. \* \*

<sup>1</sup> The means of correcting these trifling errors have been already given. The College and Theological Seminary of Princeton are wholly distinct institutions, although often supposed to have some connexion. As the work was published, at the time Dr. Lorimer wrote, by the Board of Publication, established by the General Assembly, that body might, with an approach to the truth, be said to have given it "currency by the sanction of its official approbation."

“The recommendations of the following treatise are peculiar. Besides its own merits, its accuracy, simplicity, comprehensiveness—embracing a sketch of the history, doctrine, government, and worship of the Presbyterian Church—and freedom from controversy, it is the work of one who occupies a leading place in one of the most important Presbyterian Churches of the world, who has devoted many years to the study of Church history, and who has written largely and well on the subject of Church government. The treatise, too, was written at the request of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of America, and has for years been adopted as one of the many useful little works to which that body gives currency by the sanction of its official approbation. In the United States it has had a circulation of many thousands, and continues in high estimation. In these circumstances, I have thought that a republication, with additional original matter, suited to this side of the Atlantic, would be a service to the cause of Presbyterianism, which has suffered from the want of such a work—a cause which I believe to be the cause of knowledge and truth, freedom, order, social happiness, virtue, religion, because founded on the Word of God.”<sup>1</sup>

This little work, which Dr. Lorimer commended for its “freedom from controversy,” was treated, by a few Episcopalians, as an unpardonable attack upon their sect; and the smothered embers of their polemical wrath were raked over, that Dr. Miller might roast, afresh, for all the imagined sins of his past adventures in the field of the prelatical controversy. The essay of one of these critics was noticed incidentally by Professor J. Addison Alexander, in the *Biblical Repertory*, as follows:—

“In forming this favorable judgment [of Bishop H. U. Onderdonk] we have had no reference to a unique production ascribed by *fama clamosa* to the Bishop; we mean the review of Dr. Miller’s Tract on Presbyterianism, originally published in the *Protestant Episcopalian*, and reprinted as a pamphlet. As Dr. Miller, we are sure, will never think it worth an “answer,” and as we shall most assuredly never think it worthy of a re-reviewing, we subjoin a few choice samples of style and spirit.

““These ninety-six tract pages are stuffed to extreme tension with presbyterian and puritan topics, the greater portion of them being such, merely, as invectives against episcopacy and the episcopal church.”

<sup>1</sup> Pp. xiii. xiv.

““They are so charged also with bitterness, and not unfrequently with sanctimony, that we should sicken at the task of draining them to the dregs.”

““From Dr. Miller, of course, nothing better, towards episcopalians, was to be expected; he has shown very thoroughly what he is both in the green tree and in the dry; he has fed on his prejudices till he has become all prejudice; he has been exposed for *quotations* till almost every one but himself has stood aghast at the developments; of course he is Dr. Miller still. For this we were prepared. But we were *not* prepared for such a *farrago* issued under the authority of the tract Society of the Synod of Philadelphia.”

““Such, reader, is the tone of this tract—it is one of the most supercilious and pharisaical productions we have ever seen.” “Were there a possibility of supposing it to have an obscure origin, it would be laughed at, as the mere spleen of imbecility.”

“If Dr. Miller’s tract is the “spleen of imbecility,” what sort of spleen is this? We have not held Bp. O. responsible for this effusion, first, because it is anonymous, and next, because, whether penned by bishop, priest, or deacon, it is a thing of which the most effeminate “candidate for orders” might blush to be the author.”<sup>1</sup>

## 7. MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS.

In a letter of the 31st of March, 1835, Dr. Miller wrote to a minister and former pupil,

\* \* 2. You seem to have considered the *fama clamosa* as the testimony on which a person may be convicted. But this is by no means the case. *Fama clamosa* only warrants the judicatory in taking up and investigating a subject, where there is no individual who comes forward as an accuser. When a matter is taken up on the ground of *fama clamosa*, witnesses are to be cited and regularly qualified, before they give their testimony, just as in the case of an individual accuser.

‘3. It was irregular to allow the members of the session to give testimony without being regularly sworn or affirmed. \* \*

‘4. You were wrong in convicting and censuring for the original offence and for contumacy, at the same time. No man can be, strictly speaking, tried in his absence. When he refuses to attend, after being properly cited twice, some person is to be appointed his counsel, and the testimony is to be taken and put on record, to prevent its being lost. But in this case the culprit is to be suspended for contumacy only. There may be use

<sup>1</sup> For 1835: note to pp. 595, 6.

for the testimony afterwards, if he should be willing to be tried.

‘I would therefore advise— \* \*

‘3. All the witnesses examined, whether members of the session or not, are to be sworn or affirmed, according to the direction given in our book. The moderator is to do this. Let their testimony be carefully recorded.

‘4. If there are witnesses enough, who do not belong to the session, it is better to cite them. It is not desirable, if it can be helped, that the members of the session, who are to be judges, should also be the witnesses.’ Sometimes this cannot be helped, and, of course, ought to be submitted to.

‘5. I would advise that all your proceedings in the case pass in the session only. If you publish them from the pulpit, — may possibly carry the matter into a civil court, and sue you for slander. I never knew a case of that kind to occur; but where you have to do with a troublesome man, it is well to be on your guard and give him no advantage. \* \*

‘P. S. If — attends and submits to a trial, then, after all the testimony is taken on oath and recorded, and he has said what he pleases, and has withdrawn, the session will, of course, sit in private and form their judgment. There is no necessity for publishing this judgment from the pulpit.<sup>1</sup> It may pass in the judicatory, and he be notified of the result by a private note. And the elders can cause the fact of his suspension (if that should be the judgment) to be understood, by speaking of it in the course of private conversation with the members of the church.’

The Rev. George S. Woodhull, who had been pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Princeton from 1820 to 1832, was brought thither for burial, and Dr. Miller preached the funeral sermon, which by request was published.<sup>2</sup> His diary, under a little later date, presents the following:—

‘March 1st, 1835. This day the Lord’s Supper was dispensed in the church in Princeton, and it was my privilege to be an attendant on that solemn and precious ordinance. It is so seldom that I have an opportunity of enjoying, as now, this privilege, without being called upon to take any public part in

<sup>1</sup> Book of Discipline, Ch. iv. 19. But see Directory for Worship, etc., Ch. x. 3. 7. 8.

<sup>2</sup> “The Good Man: a Sermon in Memory of the Rev. George S. Woodhull; delivered in the Presbyterian Church in Princeton, January 18, 1835. By Samuel Miller, D.D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in the Theological Seminary in Princeton. Princeton, N. J. 1835.”—Acts xi. 24.—8vo. Pp. 28.



the service, that I cannot help regarding it as a favor to be left, in a state of entire mental tranquillity, to ponder on the great and blessed objects which are held forth in this sacramental supper. Alas! for our infirmity, that being called upon to speak in public, on such occasions, so frequently creates a degree of solicitude, which, in a measure, interferes with that calm repose of spirit, that sweet peace in contemplating "the unsearchable riches of Christ," set forth in this feast of love, as to make abstraction from official labor on such an occasion sometimes desirable and delightful. I owe it, indeed, to my Master's grace, to say, that I often enjoy precious comfort in publicly officiating at such seasons; but I too often feel a degree of solicitude, that I may not mar the edifying character of the ordinance, by unskilful remarks, or by an unhappy manner, which, in a degree, interferes with that entire forgetfulness of everything but the glory of Christ, and the humbling influence of his adorable and wonderful love, which is so desirable. Nor is this a drawback connected only with extemporaneous ministrations. On the contrary, in those parts of the service, in which my preparation has been most perfect, if my observation has not deceived me, the state of my mind has been most unfavorable to simple, humble devotion of spirit. In prayer, on such occasions, I have found, if I am not deceived, less reason to mourn over my infirmities of mind, than in other exercises.

'Thank God, I have been free \* \* from such solicitude to-day! My mind, through the sacramental service, was calm, serene, and I hope employed in a manner not altogether inappropriate. Oh, how wonderful that any should ever be dull or uninterested in meditating on the amazing love of HIM, who, "though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be rich!"

'O Lord, enable me henceforth to be more cordially and entirely than ever devoted to thy service! Increase my faith! Lift me up above the grovelling pursuits of time and sense! Make it, more than it has ever yet been, my meat and drink to glorify thee in body and spirit which are thine! Amen! Amen!'

## CHAPTER THIRTY-SECOND.

### TRIUMPH AND DEFEAT.

1835, 1836.

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#### 1. GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF 1835.

THE General Assembly of 1835 met in the First Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh, on the 21st of May. For thirty-six years, before, it had not met out of Philadelphia.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Miller was a commissioner, and, in the absence of the Moderator, and by request of the Rev. Dr. William A. McDowell, the last Moderator present, opened the sessions with a sermon. A large Old School majority wielded the power of this Assembly: the efforts which had been made to arouse the Church to a sense of its danger had proved not unavailing. A week earlier, the Convention called by the Act and Testimony had assembled in the Second Church. That body had framed a Memorial, which was presented to the Assembly, and occupied its attention during a large part of its sessions of eighteen days. The very intent of this paper, and the criticisms which the Act and Testimony had provoked, had concurred to give it, in itself, an unobjectionable shape. Going first to the Committee of Bills and Overtures, it was, by their recommendation, referred to a special committee, of which Dr. Miller was chairman, and the report of which, including all the important points of the Memorial, after long discussion and some amendments, was adopted.

<sup>1</sup> Until the year 1844, beginning with which this judicatory has met, at the most, but three times in the same place, it had convened always in Philadelphia, except its meeting at Carlisle in 1792 and 1795, at Winchester, Virginia, in 1799, and at Pittsburgh in 1835 and 1836.

The decisions thus reached embraced nearly every great question which had of late agitated the Church. The preamble of the report said,

“In approaching these weighty subjects, the committee deemed it to be an obvious duty to exclude from their view all those principles which result from the wishes or plans of different parties in the Church, and to take for their guide simply the word of God, which we consider the only infallible rule of faith and practice; and those public formularies, by which we have solemnly agreed and stipulated with each other to be governed in all our proceedings. \* \* The committee, indeed, by no means expect, and do not suppose the Assembly would think of enforcing, that perfect agreement of views in every minute particular, which, in a body so extended as the Presbyterian Church, has perhaps never been realized. But that an entire and cordial agreement in all the radical principles of that system of truth and order which is taught in the Holy Scriptures, which is embodied in the Confession of Faith and Form of Government, and which every Minister and Elder of the Presbyterian Church has solemnly subscribed and promised to maintain, may not only be reasonably expected, but must be as far as possible secured, if we would maintain ‘the unity of the Spirit, in the bonds of peace’ and love—it is presumed this General Assembly will be unanimous in pronouncing. If this be not so, it is in vain that we assemble from year to year; in vain that we hope for intercourse either pleasant or edifying. Our judicatories must be scenes of discord and conflict, and the ties which bind the several parts of our extended body to each other, can scarcely fail of being ties of strife and contention.”

It was declared to be the right and duty of presbyteries, though not without responsibility to the higher judicatories, to satisfy themselves, by examination or otherwise, of the orthodoxy and good character in every respect, of ministers applying for admission, even when they came with regular testimonials.

The right, and possible duty, of church judicatories to condemn printed publications, without arraigning their authors, was asserted. The principle of elective affinity, in the formation of presbyteries and synods, was wholly condemned, as contrary to both the letter and the spirit of the Constitution, and as opening a wide door for mischiefs and abuses of the most serious kind. The Synod of Delaware,

with the concurrence of the New School party, and by a unanimous vote, was dissolved, and its presbyteries restored to the Synod of Philadelphia, which was to take such constitutional order respecting their organization as it might deem expedient. The Assembly would not prohibit the efforts of voluntary associations within its bounds; but expressed its persuasion that it was the first and binding duty of the Presbyterian Church to sustain its own boards; and condemn the introduction into the Church, by voluntary associations, of ministers holding sentiments contrary to her standards. It was declared no longer desirable that churches should be formed upon the Plan of Union with Congregationalists; the General Association of Connecticut was requested to consent that that plan should be annulled; but this was not to invalidate the position of any churches already organized. In conclusion, the Assembly condemned the doctrinal errors specified in the memorial, as wholly incompatible with an honest adoption of the Confession of Faith, warning the Church against them, and enjoining upon presbyteries and synods to exercise the utmost vigilance in guarding against their introduction and dissemination; recognizing the fact that these errors did prevail, although to what extent they could not determine.

The Stated Clerk failed to communicate the proposition as to the Plan of Union to the General Association of Connecticut, which therefore took no action upon it; and the whole matter was left, without complication or change, to be freely disposed of by the Assembly of 1837.<sup>1</sup>

A committee was also appointed, not only to negotiate, but to conclude, finally, an agreement with The Western Foreign Missionary Society for the transfer of its missions to the Assembly, and also to digest a plan of foreign missionary operation. It was fully intended to consummate the transfer without any further action of the Assembly, except to organize its own agency for carrying on the work. A definite agreement was afterwards, accordingly, made with the Society, and the actual transfer only awaited the creation of a Board, or some other agency capable of receiving it.

These acts of the Assembly were not all passed by a

<sup>1</sup> Baird's Hist. of New School, 445.

mere party majority. The right of presbyteries to satisfy themselves of the orthodoxy and good character of applicants, by examination or otherwise, was sustained by a vote of one hundred and twenty-nine to seventy-nine, though only one hundred and seventeen had voted for the Old School moderator; and some of the New School leaders, like Dr. Hillyer and Dr. Fisher, upon the vote first mentioned, were with the majority. The dissolution of the Synod of Delaware, and the disposition made of its presbyteries, were put in a shape substantially suggested by Dr. Ely, only a little modified by an amendment of Dr. Miller's and were unanimously agreed to. Yet, upon the whole, party lines were as strongly marked in this Assembly, as the overwhelming preponderance of the Old School, and the discouragement of the New, permitted.

The leaven at work in some parts of the Presbyterian Church, at this time, may be exhibited by giving in full, as reported in the *New York Evangelist*, the speech of Mr. Stewart, a ruling elder from Illinois, on the first resolution providing for the examination of applicants. We may take for granted that it revealed the ministerial influences under which the speaker had been living.

"Mr. Stewart said he intended to vote for the resolution. He liked it, not because it is constitutional, for it is not; but because it is common sense, and it is Bible too. And it will answer a valuable purpose where I live; it will enable us to keep out the Old School, and that is a prime object for us. If the motion should carry, presbyteries can act just as they please, and that will suit us right well in Illinois. Heretofore, we could not move to the right or left, because we supposed the General Assembly would restrain us. But pass this resolution and we are free, and we will take care that they have no Old School in Illinois. We have one Old School church that has made us trouble, but pass this resolution, and we never will have any more. We think Old Schools are heretical, and they think we are heretical; and where there is a majority of the Old School they will purge out the New School, and then they will have a heap of peace. And if there is a majority of the New School, they will clear out the Old School, and then they will have good times, and have revivals, and not be disturbed with their opposition and noise. For my part, I like Old School men; good, honest, thorough going Old School men! I like them very well, only we don't want them in Illinois! they don't suit there, and if you pass this resolution, we shan't have

them there. If you pass this resolution, you will divide the church according to elective affinity, and I hope it will pass: I came here with a strong desire to have the church stay together, but I have altered my mind. I hope the General Assembly will never come to Illinois. I don't wish to cast reflections, but I think the devil must have been highly pleased with what is going on."<sup>1</sup>

This speech, just then "going on," was perhaps too candid to command Satan's admiration.

By this Assembly Dr. John Breckinridge was chosen Professor of Pastoral Theology, in the Seminary at Princeton, and he was inaugurated on the 26th of September following; but his connexion with the Board of Education was not immediately dissolved, and he did not remove to Princeton until the 1st of May, 1836. Mr. Joseph Addison Alexander also, who, in 1833, had been appointed, Assistant Instructor in Oriental and Biblical Literature, was now elected Associate Professor in the same department; but, for a time, he declined accepting the new title.

During the sessions of the Assembly, Dr. Miller preached a sermon before the Alumni of Princeton Seminary, which was requested and given for publication. It was issued from the press in the ordinary form of a single sermon,<sup>2</sup> and also in *The Presbyterian Preacher* published at Pittsburgh.<sup>3</sup> In this sermon he said,

"We, perhaps, all need an improvement in our method of preaching, making it less dogmatical; less philosophical; more simple; more biblical, that is, consisting more in the illustration of scripture by scripture; more direct; more pointed; more affectionate; more full of heavenly unction; more, in short, like a message from God, than a human oration. The late excellent and lamented Dr. *John H. Rice*, in the last letter that I ever received from him, made the following remark: "I am convinced that, in the present state of this country, there is nothing which can control the religious principle, and give it a salutary direction, but **BIBLE TRUTH, PLAINLY EXHIBITED, AND HONESTLY URGED ON THE UNDERSTANDING AND CONSCIENCE.** And I am persuaded that all settled pastors, and all missionaries too,

<sup>1</sup> *Biblical Repertory and Theol. Rev.*, (1835,) 464.

<sup>2</sup> "Christ the Model of Gospel Ministers. A Sermon, delivered June 1, 1835, in the City of Pittsburgh, before the Association of the Alumni of the Theological Seminary at Princeton. By Samuel Miller, D. D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in the said Seminary. Published by request of the Association. Princeton: 1835."—*Matthew* iv. 19.—8vo. Pp. 32.

<sup>3</sup> *IV. Vol. No. 4. September, 1835.*

ought to do a great deal more than they now do in *lecturing*; or, as some express it, *expounding*. There is too much *reasoning*, and too much *dogmatizing* in the pulpit. I throw out this hint, that, if it is worth anything, you may drop it before the students of your Seminary." The sentiment is worth much, and I repeat and record it for your benefit. "The word," as the pious and venerable Mr. *Baxter* somewhere observes—"the word is divine; but our preaching is human; and there is scarcely anything we have the handling of, but we leave on it the prints of our fingers."<sup>1</sup>

The subject of slavery came by overture, and in other forms, before the Assembly; and the report of a committee appointed to consider it, with all the papers in their hands, was, after some discussion, referred to another committee, of which Dr. Miller was chairman, to be considered, and reported upon to the Assembly of 1836.

## 2. CORRESPONDENCE AND SERMONS.

The following letter, from the Hon. John Cotton Smith, who had been a Representative in the first Congress assembled at Washington, Governor of Connecticut, and President of the American Bible Society, was written in reply to one from Dr. Miller, accompanying a copy of his work on the Ruling Elder.

"Reverend and dear Sir, Sharon, June 3, 1835.

"You have been informed by my grandson, that your most acceptable letter, and accompanying volume did not arrive in due course, \* \* I shall make no further delay in expressing my hearty thanks for a favor, which I esteem as well for its intrinsic value, as for the courteous manner in which it is conferred.

"I am so much in the habit of admiring your writings, and of confiding in the correctness of your theological views, that when these come into conflict with my own preconceived opinions, the latter are necessarily put in great jeopardy. My early impressions were in favor of the Presbyterian organization; but were removed by a series of essays against the institution of "lay elders," ascribed to the late Dr. Wilson, of Philadelphia, and published several years ago in a monthly periodical in this state.<sup>2</sup> The essays evinced considerable research, and an ex-

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 25, 26.

<sup>2</sup> The Primitive Government of Christian Churches, which first appeared in The Christian Spectator, and was republished in a volume, with "Liturgical Considerations," in 1833.

tensive acquaintance with the Fathers ; and, although I do not now recollect the exact proofs by which the effect was produced, I settled down in the conviction, that the Congregational was, in truth, the primitive order of ecclesiastical government. Nor have I met with anything to disturb that conviction, until I took up the volume you had the goodness to send me. I freely confess, you have presented an array of proofs and authorities too powerful to be easily overcome ; so that I am almost disposed to sympathize with the Dutch magistrate, in a neighboring state, who felt no difficulty in entering up judgment on hearing one side only, but pronounced it. "utterly impossible for any man to decide a cause after hearing advocates on both sides." But on whichever side of this question the weight of evidence and argument may lie, there is consolation in believing, as you charitably suggest, that on neither side can the error be deemed fundamental. The representative system is certainly the most beautiful in theory, most efficient, most in analogy with our civil institutions ; and even the venerable Hooker would have thought it better adapted to our republican forms, than his own hierarchy. And yet the Congregational plan, although too democratic and anarchical in form, is nevertheless in practice scarcely less energetic than the other. By a standing committee of the church, of which the deacons, who are permanent officers, are *ex officio* members, and in which the pastor presides, we secure nearly all the benefits of your church judicatory ; for, although their acts and decisions may require the sanction of the church, it is rarely, if ever, withheld ; and our deacons, besides their appropriate duty, are expected to perform all the ministerial functions allotted to your ruling elders. Thus the difference between the two systems is, perhaps, more in name, than in substance. At any rate, I ardently hope it will never be thought of sufficient magnitude to interrupt our union in the church militant ; nor, as I humbly trust, in the church triumphant.

"I lament with you, my dear Sir, that the ground of complaint against the theological department of Yale College is not removed. Strong hopes are, however, entertained, that the legal remedy will yet be applied, unless a reform is otherwise effected. It is believed, that the apprehension of some such measure has induced greater caution latterly on the part of the Professors, and, with the additional circumstance of a vigorous opposition to their doctrines from several of their own pupils, may, ere long, produce an entire change in their views. At all events, I feel little confidence in the attempt to correct the evil by setting up a rival institution, belligerent in its design, and obviously calculated to produce, as it has in fact produced,



irritation and unkind feeling among brethren of the same communion. Total alienation, it is justly feared, must be the result of this state of things; a result not less fatal to the peace and unity of the church than to the vital interests of the college. Moreover, what pledge can be given, that the new institute itself may not, as has happened in another case, become the nursery of error? In short, what indemnity can we have but the divine promise, that "when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall set up a standard against him?" A spirit of discord seems to prevail, to an alarming degree, in many sections of the American Church. God grant that these unhappy divisions may be speedily absorbed in one united and mighty effort to evangelize the world.

"With very great respect and Christian affection,

"I am, Reverend and dear Sir, your

"Obliged friend,

"Rev'd Dr. Miller.

John Cotton Smith."<sup>1</sup>

The following passages occur in a letter from Dr. Miller to Mr. Nettleton, dated the 18th of August:—

'I am glad that our general proceedings in Pittsburgh met your approbation. I do think that the first resolution in the report on the Memorial, of which you speak particularly, is both reasonable and important in the present state of the Church. While I am satisfied that the right of examining, and judging of the sentiments and character of those who apply to be received, is inherent in all religious bodies, and cannot be abandoned; yet I think it a right which ought to be exercised with great prudence, and with all possible delicacy. Twenty years ago, I should have thought bringing it forward in this prominent manner indelicate and unreasonable. But, if the Christian Church, as such, is bound to be a witness for God, I am unable to conceive of a clearer duty than that which at present devolves upon the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches to take this stand openly and decidedly. None, I believe, will oppose it, but unsound and dangerous men, who are opposed only because the operation of the rule will bear hard upon the unsound and erroneous.

'Of one thing, my dear Brother, you may rest assured—that, however a few such men as Dr. — and Mr. — may feel, and be disposed to act, concerning our Congregational brethren and their churches, there is no such feeling among the mass of our Old School men. \* \* \* The Evangelist man,

<sup>1</sup> See The Correspondence and Miscellanies of the Hon. John Cotton Smith, LL.D. By Rev. Wm. M. Andrews. 1847.

and all like him are laboring to create feelings of jealousy and alienation between our New England brethren and the Presbyterian Church. \* \* There is no foundation for it. No one laments more than we do some parts of the course of Dr. —, and some paragraphs which now and then occur in *The Presbyterian*. But we cannot help it, and we hope it will not be misconstrued.'

The *American National Preacher*, for September, 1835, contained two sermons, from Dr. Miller, on Domestic Happiness.<sup>1</sup> On the 9th of September he preached before the American Board of Commissioners, meeting in Baltimore, a missionary discourse, which also was published, both in the usual form,<sup>2</sup> and in the *National Preacher*.

In November, 1834, Dr. J. L. Wilson, of the Presbytery of Cincinnati, had arraigned Dr. Lyman Beecher, President of Lane Seminary, before that Presbytery, upon charges, chiefly, of error in doctrine. The New School character of the body secured, of course, his acquittal; but Dr. Wilson appealed to Synod. Upon his trial before presbytery, in June, 1835, Dr. Beecher read, in self-defence, and afterward published, or permitted to be published, the letter written to him, when he was called to Philadelphia, by Dr. Miller, which has been already given.<sup>3</sup> After the date of that letter, Dr. Miller's opinion of his orthodoxy had undergone a material change, and some persons—among others, Mr. Nettleton—urged him to condemn, publicly, the use of a letter of so old a date, for such a purpose, without permission; and publicly to retract the good opinion which it expressed—in short, to come out in the newspapers to give aid and comfort to the opponents of Dr. Beecher. To Mr. Nettleton Dr. Miller replied, on the 23d of September,

'I feel the weight and importance of what you say concerning the publication of my letter by Dr. Beecher. I, at first

<sup>1</sup> "Sermon CXCVIII. By Samuel Miller, D.D., Professor in the Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey. The Importance of Domestic Happiness. Sermon CXCIX. The Means of Domestic Happiness."—Job v. 24—8vo. Pp 16.

<sup>2</sup> "The Earth filled with the Glory of the Lord. A Sermon preached at Baltimore, September 9, 1835, before the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, at their twenty-sixth Annual Meeting. By Samuel Miller, D.D., Professor in the Theological Seminary, Princeton, N. J. Boston: 1835."—Numbers xiv. 20, 21.—8vo. Pp. 34.

<sup>3</sup> See pp. 140, 141.

resolved, that I *would* prepare and publish something adapted to explain the transaction, and set it in its true light; and even went so far as actually to write "a Letter to a Friend in New England," making such statements as I thought fitted to rectify all mistakes in reference to my unfortunate communication of 1827—with a view to its being published in the New York Observer, etc. But, on mature deliberation, and consulting confidentially with two or three wise friends, I have concluded not to publish any thing directly on the subject—at least, for the present. My reasons are the following:—

'1. The letter which I wrote to Dr. Beecher, in 1827, was not considered by me as confidential when I wrote it. The views and wishes it contains, were frequently and freely expressed to a number of persons, especially to the gentlemen appointed to go to Boston to prosecute the call.

'2. It was produced by Dr. Beecher, on his trial, *not* to shew that *now*; but simply to show that, in 1827, when I had seen and read a particular publication, which was one of the principal grounds of process against him, I had not withdrawn from him my confidence, but wished him to occupy a conspicuous station in our Church. This appears to me to have been a fair and legitimate purpose; and my letter is, surely, an unexceptionable testimony to that amount. And, although I think that equity and delicacy demanded that he should consult me before publishing it; yet I do not feel as if I ought, at present, to beat him with many stripes; especially as

'3. The case, for which he produced my letter is *still pending*, an appeal having been taken; and it is impossible to foresee before whom it may come as judges. In this situation of things, for me to interpose, and endeavor to vary the position of the case, would seem scarcely consistent with delicacy and propriety. Besides—

'4. That part of the matter brought forward in Dr. Beecher's trial, which appears to me to demand most explanation and counter statement, is the representation of Professor Stowe; viz., that Dr. Beecher left New England with an unimpaired reputation for orthodoxy. Now this is a point which ought to be set in a proper light by the orthodox gentlemen of New England—by yourself, Dr. Woods, Dr. Tyler, Dr. Hewit, Dr. Harvey, etc. In my opinion it is incumbent, not on us, but on you, to make it appear, that there were those who considered and represented Dr. Beecher as sliding into error, before he went to the West. \* \*

'I am grieved to hear Mr. P.'s statement of the present posture of Dr. Beecher's mind. I feared, when I read his strong

protestations of a belief in the old school doctrines, that it was *from the teeth and outward*. The manner in which he spoke of Mr. *Finney*, on his trial, very much revolted and discouraged me.'

### 3. MR. BARNES.

No small part of Dr. Miller's plan for purifying and pacifying the Church had consisted in conciliating his more advanced New School brethren, and inducing them to at least desist from the defiant publication of error, and promotion of disorder. Most reluctantly he was giving up, from month to month, the hope that they would listen to the counsels of peace; most reluctantly he yielded to the conviction that sterner measures were necessary for the preservation of orthodoxy and Presbyterian order. Yet after that hope had been, once and again, well nigh abandoned, we find him catching, from time to time, at some imaginary support for his sinking confidence. Moreover the prosecution of disciplinary measures for the correction of false doctrine he dreaded, partly because of their inevitable divisive tendency, and the scandal they were likely, however just, and necessary, and wisely conducted, to bring upon religion; partly because, when attempted hitherto, they had been managed, in repeated instances, most unskillfully, and had tended, therefore, more to embitter feeling and aggravate disorder, than to remove evils, heal breaches, and restore health and comfort to the Church.

In the course pursued by the *Biblical Repertory*, all the Professors of the Seminary seem to have been substantially agreed. No article of importance was inserted without their general concurrence. In the number for January, 1835, appeared a paper upon *The Present State and Prospects of the Presbyterian Church*, which doubtless expressed, in substance, Dr. Miller's views, even if he was not its author.<sup>1</sup> A few extracts from this paper will explain, therefore, his position, during the winter of 1834-5.

"— we have felt unable, for several years past, to accord

<sup>1</sup> No account of the authorship of particular articles was kept for many years. At length, the Rev. Dr. Hope, during his professorship in the College, made out such an account, as well as he could, from tradition and the memory of survivors. His list attributed the article above mentioned to Dr. Miller, and there is strong internal evidence that it was his; but by very high authority it is now, with confidence, attributed to Dr. Alexander.

with all the views and movements of what has been sometimes called the *ultra* old-school party, composed of a portion of the Synod of Philadelphia, and a few brethren in other judicatories of the church. We have, indeed, venerated their piety, and honoured their ardent zeal in pursuing a course which, we doubt not, they have honestly considered as adapted to promote the best interests of truth and ecclesiastical order. Our unfeigned desire has always been to act with them, knowing the elevation of their character, and the general soundness of their opinions; and feeling that their principles and ours are, in all important respects, one. But, within the last four or five years, they have repeatedly advanced principles, and pursued a course which it was impossible for us to contemplate without regret.

“\* \* when they did bring before the highest judicatory of the church matters of just complaint, in regard to which sound principle was on their side, and redress ought to have been obtained, and, under proper management, would have been obtained;—these matters were so unhappily involved with questionable theories, or inadmissible or offensive demands, as almost to insure their rejection. \* \*

“\* \* we see no reason to believe that the evil in question [the prevalence of error] is either so *extensive*, or so *deeply seated*, as some excellent brethren imagine. \* \*

“\* \* we totally disbelieve that corrupt opinions exist among the ministers and elders of our church, *to the extent that is proclaimed by some.* \* \*

“It is the part of wisdom, in contending for the truth, to present her claims in an unembarrassed form, and to fight her battles on well selected ground. We have no doubt that sound, old-school principles would have fared far better in the General Assembly—nay, that they would have invariably triumphed, IF THEY HAD BEEN MANAGED AND PRESENTED WITH EVEN TOLERABLE DISCRETION. But in most cases, if not every one, not only had the previous management been unskilful and injudicious; but each case was finally brought before the highest judicatory, under such an aspect, and so unhappily mixed up with other and highly exciting matters, as almost to ensure an unfavourable reception. \* \*

“On such a subject it would be an irksome task to enter into details. Suffice it to say, as a specimen of what we mean—that the original complex management, and final presentation to the Assembly of the first striking case which occurred in 1831; the whole management of the case relating to the division of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, in 1831 and 1832; the pertinacious denial of the right of the General Assembly to erect new Pres-

byteries; the refusal to acknowledge the Presbytery formed by the Assembly in 1832, and shutting out all its members from their seats in Synod; the attempted dissolution of that Presbytery, by a Synodical act, in 1833; the adoption and presentation of the *Western Memorial* in 1834; and last, though not least, recommending in the "Act and Testimony," that no Presbytery or Synod formed by the Assembly on the *elective affinity* principle, should ever be acknowledged as a judicatory at all; these are a specimen of the management and the measures over which we have never ceased to lament, as most unwise; as adapted to weaken the hands of old-school men; and to bring their system, and their portion of the church into disrepute."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Barnes, certainly, did not appreciate Dr. Miller's advice to the New School, to cease offending their brethren. In 1834,—the preface bears date of June 14th,—he published his "Notes, Explanatory and Practical, on the Epistle to the Romans," which manifested the more censurable inconsiderateness, because, in about a year afterward, he issued a "fifth edition, revised and corrected," in which he acknowledged and rectified quite a number of unhappy expressions at least. Any one who compares the two editions must certainly wonder, that language needing such correction could have been used, especially after the author's prior experience, inadvertently.

The New-School party had all along insisted, that a publication could not, with justice, be ecclesiastically condemned, unless its author had first been tried and found guilty. They were now to be met on their own ground. The Rev. George Junkin, D.D., belonging to the Presbytery of Newton, preferred charges of doctrinal error against Mr. Barnes, in March, 1835, before the Second Presbytery of Philadelphia. The charges were founded upon his Notes on the Epistle to the Romans. Odium was cast upon Dr. Junkin, as a member of another presbytery going a "heresy hunting" out of his own proper sphere; but this was most unreasonable, as no member of Mr. Barnes's presbytery, formed by the Assembly for the very purpose of giving him respite from "persecution," would commence process; and no remedy remained, unless a member of another judicatory appeared as prosecutor. The only proper question then was, whether the charges tabled by Dr. Junkin were a

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 60, 63—66.

sufficient ground of prosecution, and could be sustained. These charges embraced, no doubt, some points of minor importance, and one of them, at least, represented as an error what, perhaps, very few besides the prosecutor would so consider; but they embraced also, undoubtedly, some very important points.<sup>1</sup> After a singularly unwise course

<sup>1</sup> For many readers it may be desirable to give a brief statement of the principal errors supposed to be taught in Mr. Barnes's Notes on Romans. It may be premised, that it was hardly an error to maintain (charge 4) that saving faith was an act, not a principle, of the soul; (P. 94;) and that the opinion (charge 2) that Adam did not understand, before the fall, the consequences, beyond his own natural death, of transgression, (P. 115,) was an error comparatively unimportant. Mr. Barnes taught a general atonement, denied the eternal Sonship of Christ, and represented Abraham's justifying faith as faith in God's general promises, particularly the promise of a numerous posterity, not faith in Christ; (Pp. 94, 95, 103;) but these errors, probably because they were thought not to be so serious as others, were not made the ground of any distinct charge. The more important accusations were the following:—(1) All sin consists in voluntary action: there can be, therefore, no original sin (charge 1):—"In all this, and in all other sin, man is voluntary." (P. 249.)—"They [Jacob and Esau] had no moral character. They had *done* nothing good or bad; and where that is the case there can be no character, for character is the result of conduct." (P. 192.)—"Men will not be held to be guilty unless there is a law which binds them, of which they are apprized, and which they voluntarily transgress." (P. 118.)—(2) Unregenerate men are able to keep God's commandments (charge 3):—This Mr. Barnes but covertly asserted, by denying that this and that passage taught human inability. (Pp. 108, 164, 165.)—(3.) The first sin of Adam was not imputed to his posterity. A certain laxity of opinion in regard to the nature of imputation—holding, for example, a mediate, instead of an immediate, imputation—had long been tolerated in the Presbyterian Church. But Mr. Barnes denied the doctrine of imputation altogether—denied it with peculiar directness, earnestness, and reiteration. (charges 5, 6, 7.)—"Where Paul states a simple *fact*, men often advance a *theory*. \* \* he that calls in question their speculation about the *cause*, or the *mode*, is set down as heretical, \* \* A melancholy instance of this we have in the account which the apostle gives (ch. v.) about the effect of the sin of Adam. The simple fact is stated that that sin was followed by the sin and ruin of all his posterity. \* \* Yet men have not been satisfied with that. They have sought for a theory to account for it. And many suppose they have found it in the doctrine that the sin of Adam is *imputed*, or set over by an arbitrary arrangement to beings otherwise innocent, and that they are held to be responsible for a deed committed by a man thousands of years before they were born. This is the *theory*; and men insensibly forget that it is mere *theory*, \* \* " (P. x.)—"The most common [explanation] has been that Adam was the representative of the race; that he was a covenant head, and that his sin was *imputed* to his posterity, and that they were held liable to punishment for it as if they had committed it themselves. But to this, there are great and insuperable objections. (1.) There is not one word of it in the Bible. \* \* (2.) It is a mere philosophical theory; \* \* " (P. 128.)—"What idea is conveyed to men of common understanding by the expression 'they sinned in him?'" (P. 117. See Short. Catechism, Q. 16. See, also, Pp. 119, 121, 127.)—(4.) The righteousness of Christ is not imputed to his people for their justification: faith is the *ground* of justification, which is merely pardon (charges 8, 9, 10.):—" (4) It is not that *his* righteousness becomes *ours*. That is not true; and there is no intelligible sense in which that can be understood." P. 28.)—"It [Romans 4, 5] does not refer to the righteousness of another—of God, or of the

of deprecatory and obstructive proceedings, on the part of Mr. Barnes and his friends, the trial took place. Of course, the Presbytery dismissed the charges; but to this judgment it added a declaration, that the christian spirit manifested by the prosecutor, during the progress of the trial, rendered it inexpedient to inflict any censure on him.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Junkin appealed to the Synod of Philadelphia. After the decision of Presbytery, and before the trial of the appeal in Synod, Mr. Barnes published the revised edition, already mentioned, of his work on Romans. The "Advertisement" to this edition is a curiosity. After referring to changes made in some passages which had been misunderstood, some which were really ambiguous, and a few that had given offence, and might be made more acceptable without the abandonment of principle, he added, "On some of these passages, as is extensively known to the public, charges of inculcating dangerous doctrines have been alleged against me before the Presbytery of which I am a

Messiah; but the discussion is solely of the *strong act* of Abraham's faith, which *in some sense* was counted to him for righteousness. \* \* All that is material to remark here is, that *the act* of Abraham, the strong confidence of his mind in the promises of God, his unwavering assurance that what God had promised he would perform, was reckoned for righteousness." (P. 94.)—"The word [imputation, in Scripture] is never used to denote *imputing* in the sense of *transferring*, or of charging that on one which does not properly belong to him." (P. 95.)—"Unto whom God imputeth righteousness. \* \* This is found in Ps. xxxii. And the whole scope and design of the psalm is to show the blessedness of the man who is *forgiven*, \* \* " (P. 97. See, also, Pp. 110, 124, 182.)—Mr. Barnes still insisted that he was not bound, as an interpreter, by any creed. "The design has been to state what appeared to the author to be the real *meaning* of the Epistle, without *any* regard to any existing theological system; \* \* " The same, substantially, he had before said of his duty and design as a minister; (See p. 159 of this vol. ;) and, as to both points, his principle was right; but was it right to remain a *Presbyterian* minister, in a *Presbyterian* church, bound by a solemn subscription to a *Presbyterian* creed, while teaching and preaching "without any regard" to the *Presbyterian* "theological system"?

It should be remarked, that while, in the passages quoted, and others, Mr. Barnes seemed to teach the errors mentioned, he seemed also, in some passages, to teach the opposite truths. Representations most contradictory of each other, according to the settled usages of theological language, might be brought together, in great variety, from different parts of his work. Of all the theological system he was most remarkably independent. Yet he was wonderfully dependent, throughout his interpretation of the Epistle, upon certain opinions, not original, either, with himself. To the common doctrine of imputation, which, however, he totally misrepresented,—against this doctrine in name, and as he exhibited it,—he manifested a mortal antipathy; yet, in some passages, he seemed to teach, as if unconsciously, the true doctrine itself. In fact, the whole performance gave evidence of undue haste, and of immature study of both his own creed and that of his brethren.

<sup>1</sup> Book of Discipline, Ch. V. 7.



member. After a fair and full trial the Presbytery acquitted me; and I have taken the opportunity *after* the trial was passed, and I had been acquitted, to make these changes for the sake of peace, and not to appear to have been *urged* to make them by the dread of a trial.”<sup>1</sup> Could any imputation of dreading a trial be so serious a matter as a misunderstanding of the doctrines of Scripture by the “Bible Classes and Sunday Schools” for which Mr. Barnes had written? Were the claims of his readers to exact gospel instruction to come into consideration only *after* he had taken time to prove his own courage? The Synod, in October, with a near approach to unanimity, reversed the decision of Presbytery; and, by a somewhat smaller majority, condemned Mr. Barnes on every charge, and suspended him “from the exercise of all the functions proper to the Gospel Ministry,” until he should retract the errors condemned, and give satisfactory evidence of repentance. Mr. Barnes, of course, appealed from this decision to the General Assembly.

An unfortunate interlocutory decision of Synod was of itself enough to insure the reversal of its judgment. The Assembly of 1835, having declared the Synod of Delaware dissolved “at and after the meeting of the Synod of Philadelphia,” and the presbyteries belonging to the former re-attached to the latter “at and after” that meeting, the appeal had been taken to the latter Synod: the former, in fact, never met again. But, when the case was called up, the Presbytery refused to lay its record before the appellate court, on the grounds that, at the date of the trial and decision to be reviewed, the Synod of Delaware had been still in existence; and that, besides, the Assembly had passed no order for the transfer of the books, minutes, and unfinished business of that Synod to any other. The Synod of Philadelphia pronounced this refusal “*obstinate, vexatious, unjust, uncandid, contumacious and grossly disorderly*”—an accumulation of epithets perhaps undignified; much as the Presbytery may have deserved rebuke for willfully obstructing the course of justice by such doubtful technicalities; and the more especially because, in an informal manner, it had signified to Dr. Junkin the opinion,

<sup>1</sup> P. iv.

that the appeal lay to the Synod of Philadelphia and that only.

But not content with thus censuring the Second Presbytery, the Synod proceeded to try the appeal without the record; when, obviously, the right course would have been to compel its production, and postpone the hearing until that had been accomplished. This would, indeed, have involved delay; but "the law's delays" are often far better than the suitor's haste. Mr. Barnes professed to be quite ready for the trial, but objected to proceeding without the record; and when the Synod decided that an authentic copy of it, which they had before them, was sufficient, and entered upon the hearing, he refused to defend himself, or take any part in the business. Thus complicated, the case was carried up, by Mr. Barnes's appeal, to the Assembly of 1836.

Mr. Barnes then wrote to Dr. Miller asking whether he ought, in these circumstances, to go on preaching, or to be silent, while the appeal was pending. The latter replied as follows:—

'Rev'd and dear Brother,                    Princeton, November 11, 1835.

'Your letter of the 9th instant reached me yesterday. I had heard, before its arrival, of the doings of the Synod in your case. Of those doings you will not, of course, expect me to give an opinion.

'I should be glad, indeed, to be excused from giving an opinion on any one point connected with this case. Yet I cannot reconcile it with my feelings to refuse advice, on a question of real difficulty, to an old pupil, and one whom I regard as a brother in Christ. I cannot help recognizing your right to the counsel of your elder brethren, in a case in which it is of the utmost importance that your prospective movements be wise, constitutional, and for edification.

'In my opinion, then, you ought, by all means, in present circumstances, to *go on preaching*, until your appeal shall be issued, for the following reasons:—

'I. To do so will be, in my judgment, perfectly *constitutional*. The rule, you are aware, is, that the "operation of an appeal is, to suspend all further proceedings on the ground of the sentence appealed from. But if a sentence of suspension or excommunication from church privileges, or of *deposition* from office, be the sentence appealed from, it shall be considered as in force until the appeal shall be issued." Your sentence is, evidently,

not included in this exception; and, of course, as it appears to me, you will infringe no rule, nor violate any principle of constitutional respect to the Synod, by availing yourself of a privilege which the constitution gives you. Upon the very same principle, I felt constrained, last year, to justify your presbytery in continuing to live and act, notwithstanding the sentence of the Synod dissolving it, when you had appealed from that sentence to the General Assembly.

‘II. To go on preaching until your appeal shall be issued, will be, also, in my opinion, *wise* and *proper*, because your silence, until next June, could hardly fail of producing great mischief in your congregation. Were you entirely to suspend all ministerial acts until that time, it would keep all the members of the congregation, whether pious or otherwise, in a state of continual agitation, resentment and irascible feeling; totally unfitted either to receive benefit from gospel ordinances, or to impart benefit to others. Such a winter, I should suppose, could hardly fail of being eternally destructive to a number of souls.

‘Were I in your situation, therefore, though, under some aspects of the subject, a carnal policy might seem to dictate a different decision, I would go on to preach until the issue of the appeal by the next Assembly.

‘In the mean time, allow one word of counsel from an honest friend, who unfeignedly wishes well both to you and your people. If I were in your situation, I should consider it as equally a dictate of policy and of christian duty, to do every thing in my power to soothe and calm the feelings of the congregation: to keep them, not only quiet, but meek, submissive and perfectly orderly, until the great Head of the Church shall send regular and constitutional relief. I can say with truth, that I have a feeling of peculiar attachment to your church, and, of course, deprecate its taking any rash or wrong step. Rely upon it, whoever lives to see five years hence, will see the wisdom, on temporal, but above all, on spiritual accounts, of remaining in regular connexion with the General Assembly. Those who wish to avoid protracted civil litigation, as well as painful ecclesiastical feuds, ought to strive studiously and prayerfully to occupy this ground.

‘One word more. Longing and praying, as I most heartily do, for your increasing comfort and usefulness, both as a man and a minister; I earnestly hope, that the coming season, during which the constitutional provision allows you to lift up your voice for Christ, and to go in and out before your people, will be a season of great spiritual benefit to your own soul; a season of great searching of heart, and of calm, humble, profound ex-

amination into the motives and character of all that has passed. You say, in your letter, that you are suspended for holding "doctrines which you abhor as much as any member of the Synod." My dear Brother, how is this? Why have you been so entirely misunderstood, and so falsely accused? Is all the blame attributable to your accusers? Have you done all in your power to guard against suspicious and offensive modes of expression? Have you been as guarded in stating, and as frank in explaining, your views, as the exigencies of your situation evidently demanded? Or has an unjustifiable mixture of proud and independent feeling prevented you from giving that satisfaction to your brethren, which the state of their minds earnestly called for? Or have you been in any wise influenced, in any of these matters, by counsellors of inferior wisdom to yourself? If you will allow me to use that paternal freedom which you have invited, and which my own feelings prompt me to indulge, I will say, that I have thought you were in fault in these respects. If, in the course of the coming winter, you should re-examine this whole ground; and solemnly inquire, whether you have been, on all occasions, sufficiently frank, explicit, accommodating, and ready to consult the feelings, the prejudices, and even (if such in any case existed) the unkind suspicions of your brethren, and to give them all the satisfaction in your power; I shall hope, that you will find the season and the exercise truly profitable.

'You invite me to suggest any plan, by which this whole matter may be prevented from going to the General Assembly, and have a pacific turn given to it. I do not feel prepared, at present, to offer any suggestions of this kind. When I know more in detail of the proceedings of the Synod than I yet do, I may offer some hints; but I know not that I shall deem it proper to attempt anything of the sort.

'I am, my dear Sir, most sincerely, your  
 'friend and brother in Christ,  
 'Samuel Miller.

'P. S. Dr. Alexander is still in Virginia, and will probably not return for four or five days. If he were at home, I am sure he would promptly and cordially reply to the letter, which his son, Mr. J. W. A., informs me you have written to him.'

Mr. Barnes did not take Dr. Miller's advice, but ceased preaching until the General Assembly had removed the Synod's sentence of suspension.

#### 4. CORRESPONDENCE.

To Mr. Nettleton Dr. Miller wrote a letter on the 9th of February, 1836, from which the following extracts are

taken. Those portions which reflect severely upon Dr. Beecher would have been omitted, had they not appeared already in his *Autobiography*.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Nettleton permitted Dr. Tyler to see the Letter; Dr. Tyler copied the portions referred to; and they were communicated to others. All that can be said fairly is, that it seems to be a pity that the letter was written, and a pity that it went beyond Mr. Nettleton. To condemn the writer might be to fall into the very error attributed to him—the error of judging another upon insufficient evidence. Our horizon is too limited, for us to deny every luminary that does not rise in our visible heaven. Our own planet is as bright as any other wanderer in the sun's train, but not to the narrow vision of earthly eyes.

'I feel particularly indebted for your kindness in communicating a copy of Dr. Tyler's letter. \* \* I cannot but hope that such a letter's being shown to Dr. Beecher—as it doubtless was by Mr. Stowe—may have been useful to him. Yet, to say the truth, I was much discouraged in one thing in Dr. Beecher's trial: I mean, that he should, after making such explanations and declarations, as really placed him upon pretty thorough *old-school ground*, have spoken, as he did, of Dr. *Taylor* and Mr. *Finney*! I cannot ascribe this to the *want of discernment*. I fear it must be set down to the score of something which I hardly dare to *name* even to my own mind. Is it possible to reconcile that man's whole course with a sound, honest and straightforward purpose? I really have an affection for the man. It would give me pleasure—more pleasure than I can express—to see him come out *bright* and entirely consistent. But I fear there has been somewhere such a tampering with conscience, as will be found to eat like a canker both into character and usefulness.

'You ask, "Is it not amazingly strange, that men who profess to hold the doctrines of the Confession of Faith, and assure us that they abhor the New Haven speculations, should yet be always found contending and voting on the New Haven side, and against their professed conscientious convictions?" Truly it is above measure strange! I know not how to account for it but by supposing, that they are either hoodwinked and deceived by men more cunning and less honest than themselves; or that their instinctive party feelings, when brought to the test, triumph over conscience, and everything else that ought to govern their decisions. Surely if this practice be continued, the most gloomy anticipations must be formed of our prospects.

<sup>1</sup> II. Vol., 382, 3, 4, etc.

'You express some doubt how far those restricted views of the Atonement, which are popularly known under the name of the "Gethsemane" views, are now adopted by the ministers of the Presbyterian Church. My impression is, that the number of those who receive them is extremely small. Indeed, I can recollect, at this moment, but one man in our whole Church, who was ever known to me as having avowed his belief in that form of the doctrine; and that, strange to tell! is the Rev. Dr. Ely, late of Philadelphia, and now of Marion College. I doubt whether half a dozen men in our whole body unite with him in this opinion. The estimate of Mr. Plumer is, I am persuaded, greatly above the mark. Instead of a thirtieth, I do not believe that an eightieth—perhaps not a hundredth—part of our ministers embrace the opinion. Dr. Green, I happen to know, does not embrace it. \* \*

'I was much struck with Dr. Tyler's just remark, that "attempts are now made to account for all opposition to Dr. Beecher and Dr. Taylor, on the ground of sheer prejudice against the New England divines as a body." I am aware of this fact. Those who wish to make this impression, after presenting a dishonest caricature of old Calvinism—dressing it up in real verity, "in bear skins," try to persuade their disciples that none but such as adopt this ultra orthodoxy have any objection to the New Haven opinions. There cannot be a more unjust statement; nor can any one who is acquainted with facts believe it. For, on the one hand, it is well known, that a large number of the divines resident in New England, most eminent for talents, learning, and piety, are as strongly opposed to the New Haven errors as any of us. On the other hand, it is equally well known, that a number of revered and beloved ministers of our own church, originally from New England, and still possessing no small share of New England feeling, such as Dr. Richards, Dr. Spring, Dr. J. Woodbridge, Dr. Fisher, Dr. Hillyer, and a number more like them, while they enjoy the entire confidence of their brethren, think as unfavorably of the New Haven speculations as any of our number.

'I would, gladly, my dear Brother, take some public notice of Dr. Beecher's having, without permission, published the letter which I sent him in 1837. But it appears to me that the same reasons which operated three months ago to prevent it are equally strong now. His case is pending before the Assembly, and as nothing new has occurred, within the last three months, to call me before the public in reference to it, I cannot reconcile it with my sense of duty, to come out, at this late day, \* \* Dr. Beecher has thought proper to come out an *old-school man*.

If he will be a steady and consistent one, let *us* not present any unnecessary obstacle.'

The following letter was addressed to the Rev. David Magie, D.D., of Elizabeth, New Jersey.

'Rev'd. and dear Sir,                      Princeton, February 10, 1836.

'I cannot help feeling the deepest anxiety respecting the character and doings of the next General Assembly. It appears to me, that the proceedings of the Synod of Philadelphia, at its last meeting, have greatly augmented both our difficulties and dangers. But, while they have acted so unwise \* \* a part, I think I see clearly, that, if the General Assembly should condemn them throughout, and sustain Mr. Barnes, a foundation would be laid for an immeasurable amount of future litigation, strife and mischief. The following course, on the part of the General Assembly, as it strikes me, will have the advantage of being just and equitable, as well as adapted, more than any other course, to promote ultimate quietness and peace.

'I. Censure the Second Presbytery of Philadelphia for refusing to produce their minutes, and to let the trial of the appeal in Mr. Barnes's case, go on regularly; as manifestly unreasonable, contumacious, contrary to the evident intention of the General Assembly in dissolving the Synod of Delaware, and altogether disorderly.

'II. Censure the Synod of Philadelphia for going on to try the appeal, when Mr. Barnes was not really before them; when the authentic records of the preceding trial were not in possession of the Synod; and when, of course, no step could be taken in the case to give a constitutional issue to the appeal.

'III. Sustain the appeal of Mr. Barnes—in other words, take off his suspension, and restore him to the exercise of his ministerial functions, pronouncing the sentence of suspension unduly severe.

'IV. Pronounce Mr. Barnes's book on the Epistle to the Romans, to contain language of a very exceptionable character, not reconcilable with Scripture, or with our public formularies; and enjoin on him to review and correct it.

'V. Dissolve the Second Presbytery of Philadelphia, which the Assembly created three years ago, and attach its members to the First and Second Synodical Presbyteries, according to geographical position.

'If these five things are done, I think retributive justice will be well administered; the Synod of Philadelphia will be mortified, (which it deserves to be,) but will quietly submit; Mr. Barnes's party will consider themselves as having gained a sort of triumph, and will, of course, be quiet; and peace will be again restored to our ranks.

‘I take the liberty, my dear Sir, to transmit these suggestions to you, knowing the interest you take in the affairs of the Church; and assured, however you may differ from me in judgment, you will take kindly the expression of opinion which I have ventured to offer. I know not whether the meeting of your Presbytery, at which you make your appointment of delegates to the Assembly, has already taken place, or is yet to occur. But knowing, as I do, your great influence with the members of that body, and being perfectly confident that your judgment and feelings are both on the side of accommodation and peace, I am persuaded it is not yet too late (if your view of the subject will allow of it) for you to interpose such counsel as will secure a corresponding judgment and conduct on the part of your delegates. I commit the whole matter to your fraternal kindness and indulgence.

‘My great solicitude for the purity, peace and edification of our beloved church must be my apology for troubling you with this letter. \* \* \* \* \*

‘P. S. I think if you knew one half of the strange, disorderly doings of the unlucky Second Presbytery, (Assembly’s,) you would decisively adopt the opinion, that until it is dissolved, there can be no peace in the church.’

The Rev. William S. Plumer wrote to Dr. Beecher, on the 30th of January, 1836, making inquiry as to certain charges against the latter, and Dr. Beecher replied.

“Copies of these letters were carried to the East by Professor Stowe, in the earnest hope, to which Dr. Beecher clung so steadfastly to the very last, of assuaging or averting open rupture between brethren once tenderly united, to be submitted, if opportunity offered, to the brethren at Andover, East Windsor, and Princeton. In reference to the latter, Professor Stowe writes, May 2, 1836: “I have been providentially prevented from going to Princeton. Mr. Barnes said, if it was his case, he would not have me go on any account. He said it was of no use to pay court to Princeton; matters had come to such a pass that Princeton must be resisted and humbled rather than conciliated.”<sup>1</sup>

##### 5. MR. BARNES IN THE ASSEMBLY OF 1836.

While the case of Mr. Barnes had excited so much attention, and was becoming the acknowledged test of the Church’s recuperative power, discipline for error had not been in other quarters wholly unattempted. As early as

<sup>1</sup> 2 Autobiog. of Dr. Beecher, 392.



1832, the Presbytery of Carlisle had commenced proceedings against the Rev. George Duffield on account of his doctrinal aberrations. He was condemned, but only admonished; and, though he appealed to the General Assembly, did not prosecute his appeal. The Synod found fault with the Presbytery for its leniency, but nothing further, in this case, was attempted.

In 1833, charges were tabled, before the Presbytery of Illinois, against the Rev. Edward Beecher, President, and the Rev. J. M. Sturdevant and the Rev. William Kirby, Professors of Illinois College. They made a statement of their faith, of which the Presbytery decided that it exhibited nothing "materially or essentially at variance with the standards of the Presbyterian Church." The prosecutor, the Rev. Wm. J. Fraser, took an appeal to Synod, but "was induced to drop it, in the expectation that the other cases then pending would lead to a settlement by the Assembly, of the questions involved."

After some previous unsuccessful attempts to institute proceedings against Dr. Lyman Beecher, at the time President of Lane Seminary, Dr. J. L. Wilson had, in 1834, arraigned him before the Presbytery of Cincinnati. Not only was he acquitted, but the Presbytery manifested a disposition to inflict censure upon the prosecutor. The Synod, however, upon appeal, decided that there was no reason for such censure, and that, while Dr. Beecher's present explanations of his views were satisfactory, he had before given valid reason for suspicion of his unsoundness in the faith; and he was admonished to be more guarded in future. In this judgment he acquiesced, and, being advised by Synod to publish, in a concise form, the substance of his previous explanations, he issued a duodecimo volume of two hundred and forty pages, entitled "Views in Theology," so orthodox, that the worst his accusers could thereafter say was, that it was passing strange that the same man should be the father of this, and of some of the previous theological progeny of his brain, the two were so marvellously dissimilar.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Wilson appealed, but in the Assembly of 1836, agreed to drop his appeal, as the decision in Mr. Barnes's case would settle the questions at issue.

<sup>1</sup> See Baird's Hist. of New School, Chap. xxx.

When this matter was in negotiation, "Dr. Miller," said Dr. Beecher, "in high glee, hoped I would not object."<sup>1</sup> Such word-painting must be taken with some allowance. A desire to reduce the strife within as narrow limits as possible, was no evidence of satisfaction with any one's theological views or course of conduct.

With great expectation the case of Mr. Barnes came before the assembly of 1836. To that Assembly, again, Dr. Miller was a Commissioner. Pittsburgh had been avowedly chosen as the place of meeting, that the agitation which this case had produced in Philadelphia might be avoided. The New School now proved to have a decisive majority. The only question that could regularly have come before the supreme judicatory, without consent of parties, was, whether the Synod had rightly proceeded to hear the appeal in the absence of the Presbytery's record. But this may not have been discerned, and there was, apparently, a tacit acquiescence of all interested in the Assembly's disposing of the whole case.

Mr. Barnes, now, made such explanations of previous statements, that if his retractions, as they were considered, could have been put in a distinct form, Dr. Junkin would have yielded. True, the Notes on Romans, quite unsatisfactory, as they were, even after the author's emendations in 1835, were in a permanent shape, and were becoming widely circulated. But so painful had the controversy grown, that any escape from it, consistent with truth and righteousness, would have been gladly hailed on all sides. Mr. Barnes, however, stoutly insisted that he had not retracted, and never would retract, anything, and the trial proceeded.

This case furnished a forcible illustration of the imperfections, not at all of the great principles of Presbyterian church government and discipline, but of the ordinary forms of proceeding in our church courts, and of the very constitution of those courts, so far as judicial business is concerned. It is not to be expected that many ministers, or ruling elders, will ever acquire much skill in the management of such business. They may, in general, be quite competent to decide, righteously, upon most points put with distinctness and clearness before them; but very few minds

<sup>1</sup>2 Autobiography, 360.

are fitted to distinguish, nicely, questions of law and questions of fact, questions of form and questions of substance, questions of technical, and questions of moral, right; so as to simplify what is complex, and discern just what calls for decision. Unfortunately, our plan does not allow, as without any abandonment of principle it might, of committing judicial matters to the few who have made them a special study; therefore for such study there is small encouragement; and our rules of proceeding afford little opportunity for disentangling perplexed cases, until they are thrown before a loosely compacted crowd of unpractised judges. Judicial committees might do much more, to prepare cases for trial, than they usually attempt; but they do not always include the best juridical culture of the body, and they are hampered by the rules to which their recommendations must be conformed. No doubt, the compromises, and even irregular expedients, by which the burden of judicial business is so often thrown off, are due chiefly to its being felt, if not discerned and acknowledged, that complicated and perplexed cases are never likely to reach a satisfactory issue by the way which the Book marks out.

The appeal of Mr. Barnes, if the whole controversy was to come, as it did, before the Assembly, presented a number of distinct points. Was the Synod right in proceeding to trial without the record? Were any of the errors charged real errors, and errors sufficiently grave to justify discipline? If they were, were they actually taught in the Notes on Romans? Were they all thus real; all of such sufficient gravity; all so taught? If the proceedings and finding of Synod were right, was not the sentence too severe? Now, these questions, every one, without clear distinction or separation, were precipitated upon the Assembly. What if one third of the judges were prepared to sustain the appeal on the ground only of the record's absence; another third, on the ground only of the rigor of the sentence; and all the rest, on some other ground alone? The vote being taken, as it was, by the simple alternative, 'Sustained', or 'Not sustained', there might have been a unanimous decision to sustain the appeal, although two thirds of the body were opposed to that decision on every particular point. Sometimes the responses are, 'Sustained',

‘Sustained in part’, ‘Not sustained’; if a majority of all vote ‘Sustained’, that ends the matter; but if those who vote ‘Sustained in part’ are a majority, or are needed to make a majority with those who vote ‘Sustained’, it is customary to appoint a committee to draw, if possible, a minute satisfactory to that majority—a most difficult matter, it is obvious, and sometimes an impossibility.

But, in the case before us, with singular maladroitness, the leaders of the Old School party expressly agreed that all should vote simply ‘Sustained’ or ‘Not sustained’, knowing that the condemnation of the Synod on the grounds, at least, of the absence of the record, and the severity of the sentence, was certain; and proposing to bring in a minute afterwards, as a part of the judgment, censuring Mr. Barnes for the errors of his book. True, no skill of management would have varied materially the result. The appeal was ‘Sustained’ by a vote of one hundred and thirty-four to ninety-six. Then, by one hundred and forty-five to seventy-eight, the decision of Synod, suspending Mr. Barnes, was reversed. At once, Dr. Miller offered a resolution<sup>1</sup> condemning him for his Notes on Romans. But what? After his appeal has been, without exception, triumphantly sustained; after he has been acquitted in the only trial had; shall he, without any further trial, be condemned? The wonder is, not that the resolution failed, but that a hundred and nine votes—against a hundred and twenty-two—could be secured in its favor. No doubt,

<sup>1</sup> *Resolved*, that while this General Assembly has thought proper to remove the sentence of suspension under which the Rev. Mr. Barnes was placed by the Synod of Philadelphia; yet the judgment of the Assembly is, that Mr. Barnes, in his notes on the Epistle to the Romans, has published opinions materially at variance with the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church, and with the word of God; especially with regard to original sin, the relation of man to Adam, and justification by faith in the atoning sacrifice and righteousness of the Redeemer. The Assembly consider the manner in which Mr. Barnes has controverted the language and doctrine of our public standards, as highly reprehensible, and as adapted to pervert the minds of the rising generation from the simplicity and purity of the gospel plan. And although some of the most objectionable statements and expressions which appeared in the earlier editions of the work in question, have been either removed, or so far modified or explained, as to render them more in accordance with our public formularies; still the Assembly considers the work, even in its present amended form, as containing representations which cannot be reconciled with the letter or spirit of our public standards; and would solemnly admonish Mr. Barnes again to review this work; to modify still further the statements which have grieved his brethren; and to be more careful, in time to come, to study the purity and peace of the Church.”

Dr. Miller's idea was, that the vote had been taken, with a tacit understanding that some voters, by 'Sustained', meant only 'Sustained in part'; no doubt he regarded his motion as simply the conclusion of an otherwise incomplete decision; but certainly the New School members had laid themselves under no obligation to so regard it.

Two protests were presented, both signed by Dr. Miller among others, and expressing dissent, especially, from the refusal to condemn Mr. Barnes's theological errors. The answer to these protests, which seems to have been unanimously approved by the New School members, is a strange document, as a profession of orthodoxy, considering its origin, and as a defence of Mr. Barnes which he would hardly have ventured himself to indorse. For example, in his Notes on Romans, the latter had expressly denied that Adam was the covenant or federal head, or representative of the race.<sup>1</sup> The answer to the protest, however, declared that he had not denied it, but, without using the terms mentioned, had, in other language, taught the very same truths taught by these terms.

## 6. BOARDS AND PRESBYTERIES.

The committee appointed by the last Assembly had, in the plenitude of its power, concluded a contract with the Western Foreign Missionary Society for the transfer of its whole establishment to the General Assembly. This they reported, and a board or other agency alone was wanting to receive the transfer. The subject came before the Assembly in a majority and a minority report from the committee of reference; and, in accordance with the recommendation of the minority, the ratification of the contract was refused by a vote of one hundred and ten to one hundred and six.

In reviewing this act of the Assembly, it is manifest that it had a great deal to do with the final defeat of the New School party a twelvemonth afterward. Their so-called violation of a contract, added to the refusal to organize a Foreign Missionary Board, was very odious. It was, however, it may be, more of a blunder than of a wrong. The New School had a technical right certainly, to refuse to let the

<sup>1</sup> See previous page 274, Note.

Assembly engage in the work of Foreign Missions: so long as they had a majority, the opposite party could not compel them to enter, ecclesiastically, upon that work. Entirely resolved not to enter upon it, should they have fulfilled the contract with the Western Society, only to receive its missions, and then let them perish, or pass into the hands of the American Board? Considering their absolute determination that the latter should have no rival, they, perhaps, did what was best, though it had a bad appearance. Besides, was the Old School majority of the previous year—an accident, as they might well esteem it, after ruling in every Assembly, except that of 1835, beginning in 1831—was it to bind the Church forever? Had they been right, which they were not, in their opposition to the Church's conducting foreign missions by agencies of its own, it would be hardly fair to censure them for their action in 1836. Dr. Miller was, of course, in the minority on this question, and united with them in a solemn protest against the act.

The American Board of Commissioners took a part in the struggle just mentioned which seriously impaired its popularity in the Presbyterian Church. To influence the decision of the Assembly, Dr. Anderson, one of the Secretaries of the Board, issued a pamphlet, arguing the case, beforehand, against the Old School—no doubt a most unwise and indelicate interference with the business of the Church.

The Western Foreign Missionary Society, rejected by the Assembly, quietly resumed, in accordance with the advice of friends, and encouraged by promises of increased effort for its support, its missionary operations.

Emboldened by success, and not content with what they had already gained, the New School party now attempted once more the ruin of the Board of (Domestic) Missions and the Board of Education, and failed of their object by only a few votes. The attempt was made substantially as it had been, in regard to the former Board, in 1831—by endeavoring to elect members avowedly hostile to the very object of their appointment—the very interests committed to their hands.

The Synod of Philadelphia had, in 1835, agreeably to

the express permission of the Assembly, concurred in by the whole New School party, dissolved the elective affinity, or Assembly's, Second Presbytery, and, for gross, and otherwise irremediable irregularities, that also of Wilmington. Both Presbyteries, however, had appealed, and, of course, the appeal stayed their dissolution. The Assembly now reversed the action of the Synod, and continued both these inferior judicatories in being, only giving the Second Presbytery geographical bounds, and changing, in its title, Second to Third.

Says Dr. Baird, "During the exciting and anxious sessions of this Assembly, the Old School members held one or two meetings for consultation, in the Second Church. They were convened by public announcement, by the moderator, in the Assembly, inviting the presence of those who voted with the minority on Dr. Miller's resolution in Barnes' case. Before the business of the conference had commenced, the youthful pastor of the church, without consultation, announced that any who did not sympathize with the objects of the meeting, were requested to retire. This suggestion was at once repudiated, by a general cry of "No! no!" Dr. Miller emphatically stating that they had nothing to conceal, and no wish that any one should retire. This suggestion, which was thus, at once, repudiated by acclamation, was made the occasion of much invidious remark among the New School members of the Assembly, as to secret conclaves and conspiracies.

"At the very time that the Old School were thus stigmatized, the other party were holding meetings in the basement of the Third Church, which convened without public notice, and from which the public were actually excluded. Here, the reconstruction of the Boards was discussed; and here the question was anxiously considered whether the Seminary at Princeton should not be remodeled. But the conclusion was, that the Church was not yet ripe for a step so decisive."<sup>1</sup>

It is never wise to hold "secret conclaves" without good reason; and, probably, the position of the Old School members, in this particular case, dictated entire publicity as most politic; yet it is a right of contending parties, in both church and state, to meet separately, and without witnesses, to form and digest their plans of action. To condemn such meetings, or attach odium to them, is but a desperate party expedient.

<sup>1</sup> Baird's Hist. of New School, 502, 3.

While the appeal of Mr. Barnes was under discussion, Dr. Miller moved the appointment of a committee of thirty on the state of the Church. The motion was carried, and the committee appointed, with the mover as chairman; but they could not agree upon any report, and just before the close of the sessions were discharged.

The proceedings of the Assembly of 1836, so far as Dr. Miller was directly concerned with them, must occupy, under another head, a little further attention; but the following extract from a letter of Mrs. Miller's, dated the 8th of July, may, just at this point, illustrate the effect upon him of the exciting, agitating scenes, connected with the New School controversy, which have already, though inadequately, been exhibited.

'We had gone only a day's journey from Wheeling, when [Dr. Miller] was arrested at Uniontown by sickness, the consequence, I have no doubt, of his confinement and application to business, at Pittsburgh; and we were detained there nearly nine days: for, although only about half that time was necessary for his recruiting, the difficulty of recovering our seats in the stage, owing to the press of emigration from the West, and the impossibility of procuring any private conveyance, made us truly prisoners, although I trust in mercy for a more perfect rest. I can not say that I was wholly patient under this infliction. We sometimes thought that we should have to return to Pittsburgh, which we could have reached by a short way of thirty miles, and afterwards get into the canal boat; but at length a private carriage offered, and took us in two days to Cumberland, whence we found no difficulty in returning. We have had the satisfaction of finding all our family well.'



## CHAPTER THIRTY-THIRD.

### SOCIAL REFORM.

1836.

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#### 1. SLAVERY.

THE committee, appointed by the General Assembly of 1835, to report upon Slavery,<sup>1</sup> consisted of Dr. Miller as chairman, with Dr. Beman, Dr. Hoge, Mr. Dickey and Mr. Witherspoon. They, probably, never met, unless during the sessions of the Assembly; but Dr. Miller, by correspondence with one or more—perhaps all—of them, obtained their views on the subject, and then drew the following paper, which he afterwards, by mail, submitted to, perhaps, the whole committee.

‘The Committee to whom were referred, by the last General Assembly, sundry memorials and other papers, touching the subject of Slavery, with directions to report thereon to the General Assembly of 1836, beg leave to report,—

‘That, after the most mature deliberation which they have been able to bestow on the interesting and important subject referred to them, they would most respectfully recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of the following preamble and resolutions; viz.—

‘This General Assembly regards domestic slavery as one of those subjects which bear complicated and extensive relations to the political regulations and interests of the community; to the purity and happiness of domestic society; and to the edification of the Church of God. In respect to the political laws and arrangements which exist, in different States of our Union, on this subject, an Ecclesiastical judicatory cannot with propriety interfere. Christ’s kingdom is not of this world. It is manifest that the great Founder of our Religion, and his inspired Apostles, in proclaiming the Gospel of his grace to Jews

<sup>1</sup> See p. 266.

and Gentiles, among whom domestic slavery was established by law, did not denounce it as one of those evils which He required to be immediately abolished; but chose rather to enjoin upon masters and slaves those duties which are required of them respectively by their Master in heaven; and to inculcate those benevolent and holy principles, which have a direct tendency to mitigate the evils of Slavery, while it lasts, and to bring it to a termination in the most speedy, safe and happy manner for both parties. Their example, in this respect, this General Assembly considers as not only worthy of our imitation, but as expressly intended for our guidance under similar circumstances.

‘This General Assembly is further persuaded, not only that all interference, on our part, with the laws of any of the States in which persons in communion with the Presbyterian Church reside, is unscriptural and improper; but the Assembly cannot doubt that, in accordance with the testimony of all sober-minded, reflecting men, either resident in the slave-holding States or extensively travelling through them, that every attempt on the part of ecclesiastical judicatories to legislate on the subject, tends to create morbid excitement; to engender feelings altogether adverse to the mild and benevolent spirit of the Gospel; to render the condition of the slaves worse instead of better; to check the disposition to seek their intellectual and moral improvement; and to impair the opportunity and ability of the pious in the slave-holding States, to impart to them suitable religious instruction.

‘On the whole, as the Assembly believes that the most safe and effectual remedy for the evil in question will be found in the benign power of Christian principle, operating upon and forming public sentiment, and thus preparing both the master and the slave for the consummation desired; so it is convinced that it is the part of wisdom to leave the whole subject, so far as political enactments are concerned, to be disposed of by the States in which slavery exists;—and, so far as moral and spiritual duties, towards slaves within our bounds, are concerned, to commit those duties to the synods, presbyteries, and church sessions within the slave-holding States;—most of which have manifested a laudable desire to promote the temporal and eternal welfare of the slaves within their bounds, though their efforts in this interesting department of Christian benevolence, the Assembly laments to say, have been weakened, and, in some cases, totally frustrated, by measures adopted by pious and well-meaning persons in the free States. On these accounts the Assembly believes that much action on this interesting subject,

by the highest judicatory of the Presbyterian Church, composed as it is of delegates from most of the States in the Union, is adapted to inflame and divide, rather than to promote harmony and love. It is persuaded that every thing which Christian principle requires the Church to do, can be more safely and usefully done by judicatories within those districts in which the evil in question exists in its greatest force. These can act on the subject with less excitement of jealousy, as well as with more knowledge of it, and with more probability of success.

‘On a careful review, therefore, of the foregoing principles, this Assembly adopts, and recommends to the serious attention of all in the communion of the Presbyterian Church, the following Resolutions; viz.—

‘1. *Resolved*, That it be earnestly recommended to all in our communion in the United States to pray without ceasing, that He who sits as Governor among the Nations, and who has the hearts of all men in his hands, would be pleased to terminate, as speedily as may be, consistently with the temporal and spiritual welfare of the slaves themselves, as well as of the white population around them, the lamentable evil under consideration; an evil from which, however certain questions concerning it may be decided, all grant it would be happy for our country to be forever delivered.

‘2. *Resolved*, That it be earnestly recommended to all persons in our communion, who reside in States in which slavery exists, and especially those who hold slaves, carefully to examine the principles of God’s Holy Word in reference to the duties of masters, and conscientiously to regulate their conduct by those principles; doing the things which are just and equal, and exercising the gentleness and benevolence of the Gospel toward their servants; remembering that they have a Master in heaven, with whom there is no respect of persons.

‘3. *Resolved*, That it be earnestly enjoined on all the Church Sessions and Presbyteries in the slave-holding districts of our country, carefully to guard their members against all violations of Christian principle or practice in relation to slaves; and firmly to exercise on this, as well as every other subject, that ecclesiastical discipline which Christ hath ordained for edification, and not for destruction.

‘4. *Resolved*, That the Resolutions of the Synod of the Presbyterian Church in the United States in 1786, and of the General Assembly in 1816, respecting the baptism of infant slaves, on the profession of their masters or mistresses, be, and they hereby are, approved by this Assembly, and again recommended to the attention of all whom they may concern.

'5. *Resolved*, That the religious instruction of slaves by means of infant schools, catechetical and Bible classes, special addresses, and other methods of imparting knowledge (not contrary to the laws of the several States) so happily and extensively commenced in the Southern and Southwestern portions of our Church, meets the cordial approbation of this Assembly, and is earnestly recommended to the attention of all masters and public teachers in our communion.

'6. *Resolved*, That, in the opinion of this General Assembly, all harsh censures, and uncharitable reflections ought to be forborne toward those brethren of our communion who reside among and possess slaves, whom they cannot, consistently with the laws of their respective States, immediately emancipate; but who, at the same time, are really using all their influence and endeavors to effect this object, as soon as the way for it can be lawfully and safely prepared.

'7. *Resolved*, That this General Assembly does cordially approve of the principles and object of the American Colonization Society, as an institution of enlightened benevolence; pacific and salutary in its operation; opening a door for the manumission of slaves in a manner opposed to no law of either God or man; and likely, under the divine blessing, not merely to establish a Christian community in Africa; but, through that community, to extend the blessings of civilization and Christianity over a great part of that benighted continent.

'8. *Resolved*, finally, That, as the *notes* which have been expunged from our Public Formularies, and which some of the memorials referred to the Committee ask to be restored, never were adopted in any way by the Church, and, therefore, possessed no authority; the General Assembly has no power to assign them a place in the authorized standards of the Church.—'

The Rev. John Witherspoon, of Camden, South Carolina, the only Southern man on the committee, wrote in a conciliatory excellent spirit. He said,

'Abolition or emancipation, immediately or *in prospect*, by legislative enactment, is not to be looked for from the South. The freedom of the blacks would be a curse to them and to the whites also. Our Union must be *severed first*. You ask, what then? Is slavery to be perpetual? No, my dear Brother; God forbid that it should be: nay, *it cannot be*. Yet let us remember the expression of the poet—"Tantæ molis erat Romanam condere gentem."

Our own beloved country *grew* by inches. One hundred and fifty years hence, the sun will look down on our land, without

beholding one dark skinned slave. It will rise on Africa “redeemed and disenthralled by the Genius of universal emancipation.” And what, you ask, will accomplish this? I reply, the march of public sentiment, interest, benevolence properly exercised, piety, charity—that which “seeketh not her own.” My Brother, the cause was progressing faster far than the original settlement of our beloved country ever did, until the Abolitionist, in his new-light, ignorant folly, and *spurious, furious* charity, set his unhallowed foot upon the wheel of the *Colonization Society*, and retarded its progress for *years to come.*

As to Dr. Miller’s report, it proved too weak for the Abolitionists, too strong for the South; for some, too likely to make trouble, and for others, too unlikely to make it. Mr. Witherspoon said,

‘With the proposed report, I am, in the main, well pleased. And yet it is such an one as, I am well convinced, the Abolition party in our church would not accept; and still it goes *too far* for our Southern latitude. I am firmly persuaded, that any Southern minister who would advocate it, or vote for it, or act under its provisions, would be compelled to leave the South. With the preamble I am well pleased, and would leave the matter there. \* \*’

‘You have handled the subject in the most mild and judicious manner possible.

‘The first resolution we Southern ministers could not comply with in the language or spirit of the resolution. There are those amongst us who think slavery *no evil*. The Methodist Conference, which lately met in Charleston, thus decided (if I have been correctly informed, by a unanimous vote. \* \*’

‘Fifth, very well. Sixth will not do *at all—at all*. Seventh and Eighth will answer.

‘But, my dear Sir, my candid opinion is, that no report which we can make, based on a desire of compromise, will answer. \* \* Since I last communicated with you, the spirit of hostility to any action by the Assembly on this subject has greatly increased. \* \* it will require great wisdom and prudence to prevent a division of our beloved Zion—an event no one would more deeply deplore than you and I.’

Dr. Hoge, of Columbus, Ohio, said,

‘I have been strongly inclined to the opinion, that it would be best to make no report, or to report only a single resolution, preceded and introduced by a preamble similar to yours, proposing the dismissal of the subject from the General Assembly, and recommending it to the serious and thorough examination

of all the judicatories which are located in the Slave States. \*  
 \* I am horribly afraid of the discussion of this matter in the next Assembly, \* \* and if it is agitated in all its bearings, and should take the course that is to be apprehended, I shall not be taken by surprise, if the whole Southern delegation should, in pursuance of *instruction*, rise up as one man, and leave the Assembly, and that finally. \* \*

‘You are, no doubt, correct in supposing that you cannot hope to obtain Mr. Dickey’s concurrence in anything of this kind. \* \* I am confident that nothing short of a “whole hog” abolition report would satisfy him.’

Finally, a few diluted drops of Dr. Miller’s paper were offered to the Assembly, which could not, however, swallow even them. The Rev. James H. Dickey presented, at the same time, an extended minority report, of a decided abolition stamp. Neither paper was adopted, but a short resolution, offered by Dr. Hoge, postponing the subject, indefinitely, for lack of power to legislate upon it, and lack of time to consider it, as also on account of other pressing business.

Whether the Presbyterian Church, at the time now under review, was doing its duty in regard to slavery, recent events have certainly inclined multitudes of even conservative men to doubt. The General Assembly was, beyond all question, right, in declining to treat slaveholding as necessarily a sin, and to insist, contrary to Bible teaching, that it disqualified for church-membership. But surely it should have condemned, with constantly renewed emphasis, the doctrine that Slavery was a divine institution, to be carefully conserved; and all acquiescence in the prohibition of slaves’ being taught to read the Bible, being elevated by intellectual culture, or being emancipated without banishment. True, reading is not necessary to salvation; but the Presbyterian Church has ever consistently held, except in this one case of Slavery, that ignorance is not the mother of devotion; that learning is a help to religion—an important aid in seeking Christ. Had Southern legislatures enacted, that the right arm of every slave should be kept perpetually pinioned to the body, the whole Presbyterian Church would have cried out, in holy indignation, against the cruel outrage. Was putting perpetual fetters upon the mind, then, a venial sin, or not a sin at all? Moreover, the General Assembly should have carefully scrutinized

the treatment of slaves by their masters, and endeavored to secure for the former that which was "just and equal." When Sabbath breaking, intemperance, profanity, or uncleanness prevailed at the North, did the Assembly say, we must not testify against such sins; we must leave the matter, wholly, to the presbyteries and synods most infested by these evils? Ah, to touch slavery would cause strife and division! But even on this score, the way of duty was safer than the way of neglect. Strife and division were not prevented by the temporizing course of the Presbyterian Church. And now, Slavery has been abolished, but, humanly speaking, in the worst way—suddenly, without preparation, with "confused noise and garments rolled in blood"—by the triumph of infidelity rather than of religion—by the just judgment of God. In this great revolutionary emancipation, this stupendous overthrow of the slave-power, we see, indeed, looking to heaven, Jehovah's mighty and holy arm; but, looking to earth, the influence of a fanatical abolitionism, overshadowing, at least, the efforts of Christian philanthropy. God has permitted infidelity and state policy to boast themselves against his Church, as her superiors in righteousness. A faithful Church might have had the glory of a peaceful, happy emancipation.

In this connexion may be most intelligibly inserted a letter from Dr. Miller to the Rev. Dyer Burgess, of a New School presbytery in Ohio, although it was written several years afterwards—in 1843. It relates to the notes—particularly a note on Slavery—referred to in the eighth resolution of Dr. Miller's paper of 1836.

\* \* I have a very distinct recollection of having met you a number of times in the General Assembly; and, although we did not always think alike, or vote alike, in that body; yet I have no recollection of any conflicts which interfered with brotherly love, or which forbade the belief that we both acted in the spirit of honest conviction.

‘I have not the least objection to giving you my candid opinion as to the real meaning of the Greek word used to express *man-stealing* in 1 Timothy i. 10, and quoted, with an attempt to explain it, in a note inserted in our book without authority, and afterwards, by the Assembly of 1816, ordered to be expunged.<sup>1</sup> I wave, with yourself, all discussion of the

<sup>1</sup> The note in question, (Larger Catechism, Q. 142,) commenting upon the

point, whether the note referred to was rightly expunged; and shall confine myself simply to the question, whether it correctly explains the Greek word to which you refer. I have the note now before me, and have considered it seriously, and with, I hope, some degree of prayerful impartiality. I am, then, perfectly persuaded, that the word, ἀνδραποδιστᾶς, is *not* rightly explained in the note ordered to be expunged. The word occurs only this once in the New Testament. We must, therefore, resort to uninspired writers for its ordinary and popular meaning. And I am entirely confident, that a careful and enlightened attention to the use of the word by the best classic Greek writers will show that its strict and appropriate signification is, seizing or capturing prisoners in war, for the purpose of making slaves of them, or selling those, so taken, into slavery; or privately stealing or kidnapping human beings, and enslaving them, or selling them as slaves. In short, my judgment is, that this word always carries with it the idea of fraud and wrongful force; and is never applied, by any good Greek writer, to holding in servitude human beings who came into the possession of the holders, without theft, fraud, or wrongful force. Of course, I am of the opinion, that the author of the note referred to misinterpreted the apostle's meaning, when he explained the word as extending to those who merely detained slaves in bondage, or sold those who had come into their possession by inheritance, or in any way by no violence or theft of their own. This is my deliberate and firm opinion; in which I doubt not that I totally disagree with you; but I have quite as little doubt that I am sustained by the best authorities in Greek literature.

‘I have now, my dear Sir, complied with your request in giving you my judgment as to the meaning of a word. But permit me to say, without offence, that on the subject of Slavery, I will not allow myself to be drawn into a controversy. In the seventy-fourth year of my age, and in an office which brings with it incessant and almost overwhelming labors, I must decline, most respectfully, any further correspondence on this subject.

word “man-stealers,” in 1 Timothy i. 10, said, “This crime among the Jews exposed the perpetrators of it to capital punishment: Ex. xxi. 16. And the apostle here classes them with sinners of the first rank.—The word he uses, in its original import, comprehends all who are concerned in bringing any of the human race into slavery, or in detaining them in it. *Hominum fures, qui servos vel liberos abducunt, retinent, vendunt vel emunt.* Stealers of men are all those, who bring off slaves, and keep, sell, or buy them.—To steal a freeman, says Grotius, is the highest kind of theft. In other instances we only steal human property, but when we steal or retain men in slavery, we seize those, who, in common with ourselves, are constituted, by the original grant, lords of the earth. Gen. i. 28. *Vid. Poli Synopsis in loc.*”



‘I have, indeed, often declared, that I adopted the Confession of Faith *ex animo*, as you remark that you once heard me say. But the note in question made no part of the Confession, and ought never to have been in the book. Of course no inconsistency is chargeable here.

‘You are pleased to mention with approval an extract from a discourse of mine published nearly fifty years ago, and included, among many short pieces, in a school-book. A large part of the sentiments delivered in that discourse I still approve and cordially adopt; but I acknowledge that it contains some things which I could not now conscientiously write or speak.’

In the foregoing letter, Dr. Miller refers, doubtless, to his discourse before the Manumission Society, in 1797, which has been already noticed.<sup>1</sup> It will be observed that he here speaks with disapprobation, not of the school-book extract which Mr. Burgess had mentioned, and which referred to the African slave-trade only,<sup>2</sup> but of some things in the discourse at large.

Dr. Miller’s opinions respecting slavery have already several times been adverted to and illustrated. But greatly as he disliked the institution, he did not, we have seen, consider slaveholding in itself, of necessity, a sin; and even during the earlier part of his residence in New Jersey, at different times, held several slaves under the laws providing in that state for the gradual abolition of human bondage. In fact he held them only for a term of years, in a sort of apprenticeship, excepting in one case, in which he found himself deceived by the vendor as to the age of a man-slave, and obliged, by law, to hold him and provide for him for life. It was difficult otherwise to secure domestics; but this experiment of slavery, what with some that ran off, one that he could not get rid of, and the short-comings of all, was not very encouraging.

## 2. TEMPERANCE.

Dr. Miller was an early and earnest promoter of the Temperance Reform. At first, as many will remember, the disuse of ardent spirits, or distilled liquors, alone, was urged. It was soon discovered, however, that the princi-

<sup>1</sup> I Vol., 92-94.

<sup>2</sup> Beginning with the words, “While the friends of humanity, in Europe and America, etc.” and ending with, “show a Christian world thou canst suffer and forgive!” p. 93.

ple of total abstinence from every species of intoxicating drink was the only safe and effectual remedy. Both the earlier and the later phase of this reformation found in him a ready and zealous advocate. The following letter, detailing a part of his own experience, was widely circulated soon after its date. A Boston correspondent of the New York Observer, communicated it to that paper, saying, "Those who have seen the writer of it, of late, must have remarked his ruddy and firm appearance, and will unite with us in the prayer that his valuable life may be long preserved to the church, and especially to the seminary of which he is so distinguished an ornament." The letter was addressed to the Rev. Justin Edwards, Corresponding Secretary of the American Temperance Society.

' Rev. and dear Sir,

Princeton, January 1, 1836.

' Your communication of November 17th, reached me on the 25th, and would have been acknowledged before, had not engagements of the most urgent kind deprived me of the requisite leisure. It gives me peculiar pleasure to comply with your request, in regard to the use of all *intoxicating drinks*, because I verily believe that the well-being of society, and especially the best interests of the *rising generation*, must be considered as deeply involved in the banishment of such drinks from habitual use. You request a statement of my own experience in reference to this matter. I never was in the *habit* of using ardent spirits, and during the earlier periods of my life seldom drank wine. Yet my abstinence from it, prior to the forty-third year of my age, cannot be said to have been either systematic or rigid. In that year I had a severe fit of illness, in recovering from which, the use of some sound old wine, which was providentially within my reach, was so strikingly beneficial, that my physician advised me to continue it after my recovery; and, indeed, he expressed the opinion that I ought to take at least one glass, if not two, of good wine daily to the end of my life. I followed his advice for more than sixteen years. I very seldom drank more than one glass, and never more than two glasses. In this moderate use I was almost invariably regular; and great were the pains to which I submitted, from time to time, for obtaining wine of pure and indubitable qualities, not as a matter of *luxury* but of *health*.

' During all this time, my health, though not bad, was *delicate*; and, toward the latter part of the sixteen years just mentioned, there was every appearance that my constitution

was giving way, and that a premature and feeble old age was creeping upon me. Still, I had no suspicion that wine was hurting me, and only supposed that, *in spite* of its benefits, my sedentary habits were undermining my strength. More than six years ago, when I was approaching my *sixtieth* year, hearing so much said about the mischiefs of stimulating drinks, and entering as I did with cordial zeal into the Temperance Reformation, I determined to go beyond those around me, and to abstain not merely from *ardent spirits*, but to make the experiment, for at least three months, what should be the effect of an immediate and entire abstinence from wine and all intoxicating beverages. Accordingly, I broke off at once, and from that day to this, have not tasted wine, excepting at the sacramental table. I have also abstained, during that time, from cider, beer, and every species of drink stronger than water, and never set any of them on my table, unless they are called for by peculiar circumstances.

‘The experiment had not proceeded more than a single month, before I became satisfied that my abstinence was not only distinctly, but very strikingly beneficial. I was so far from suffering any injury from the abstraction of my accustomed stimulus, that the effect was all the other way. My appetite was more uniform and healthful; my digestion decidedly improved; my strength increased; my sleep more comfortable; and all my mental exercises more clear, pleasant, and successful. Instead of awaking in the morning with parched lips, and with a sense of feverish heat, such feelings were almost entirely banished; and instead of that nervous irritability, which, during my indulgence in wine, was seldom wholly absent, I am now favored with a state of feeling, in this respect, very greatly improved. In short, my experience, precludes all doubt, that the entire disuse of all intoxicating drinks, has been connected, in my case, with benefits of the most signal kind, with much firmer health than I enjoyed twenty years ago, with more cheerful feelings, with greater alacrity of mind, and with a very sensible increase of my capacity for labor of every kind. I can never cease to be grateful that I was led to make this experiment, and think it highly probable, that if I had not adopted this course, I should not now have been in the land of the living. I have had occasion, frequently, to observe that some who, like myself, drink nothing but water, are very *liberal* in their use of that element. They drink it often and largely, and especially make a very free use of it at dinner. This was once my habit, but I became fully convinced that it was not salutary, at least to me. The truth is, since I have left off

the use of all intoxicating drinks, I seldom experience the sensation of thirst. Often I do not touch a particle of any kind of drink at dinner, and even when I am overtaken with thirst, I find that, in my case, it is better slaked with a few tea-spoonfuls of water, taken slowly and at several swallows, than a whole tumblerful, or double that quantity, as many are accustomed to take. I am very confident that we may take too much even of water, and that deluging the stomach, even with the most innocent fluid, tends to interfere with perfect digestion.

‘I feel a deep interest, my dear Sir, in the reception and prevalence of these opinions. It would be well for the church and the world, if our present race of young men, especially those in our seminaries and colleges, could be prevailed upon to enter into the spirit and practice of this doctrine. How many broken constitutions; how many cases of miserable nervous debility; how many degraded characters; how many melancholy wrecks of domestic peace, and of official usefulness, would be spared, if we could make our beloved young men believe us when we speak thus! May the Lord enlighten and counsel them in his time! With many prayers that you and your associates may be guided and prospered in your benevolent labors,

‘I am, Rev. and dear Sir, your friend and brother,  
‘Samuel Miller.’

Upon a paper attached to a copy of the foregoing letter, which Dr. Miller preserved, was found the following memorandum:—

‘The inclosed is a printed copy of a letter on *Temperance*, which I wrote thirteen years ago, to Dr. Justin Edwards, and which I am still disposed to abide by and warmly approve. I wish it to stand as a testimonial of my early and zealous adhesion to the cause of *pledged abstinence from all that can intoxicate*. That cause I love, and hope I shall have the privilege of promoting as long as I live.

‘Princeton, April 2, 1849.’

This account of Dr. Miller’s experience, often drawn from him by ardent Temperance men, and retailed by them in oral address and in print, needed only a little perversion to make him out a “reformed drunkard;” and this turn was actually given to the story; he had been, it was said, upon the very verge of utter, hopeless ruin, and had been rescued by the total abstinence pledge; he was a miracle of

the great Temperance Reformation. At length, he was obliged, as the wonder increased at every roll of the ball, to interpose, disclaim the heroship of the current version, and restore the account to its original, modest and truthful proportions.

While Dr. Miller continued to take a daily glass of wine, he attended to the duty with the most scrupulous exactness. To illustrate this, it may be remarked, that when he went to preach, of a Sabbath morning, in a neighboring church, proposing to drive away homeward, immediately after the service, from the church-door, he generally, if the drive were of some length, took provision for a plain dinner, for himself and his attendant, in the carriage; and this was discussed, commonly, with great relish on the way. On such occasions, the frugal glass, accurately measured, and corked up in a vial, was never forgotten: that glassful only was needed; for one of his sons, if anybody, was his attendant, and had never been commanded to drink wine as a medicine.

Not only did Dr. Miller make his example promotive of temperance; but he was always ready to speak, preach or write in commendation of temperance principles. Particularly in his works for the young—his “Letters on Clerical Manners and Habits,” his “Letters of a Grandfather,” and his “Letters of a Father to his Sons in College,” he failed not to urge abstinence from intoxicating drinks, as by self-interest and duty, both alike, required. In fact, there was hardly any subject upon which he appeared to speak or preach, with greater zeal or earnestness than upon this. Frequently, when the subject was to be reported upon, in Presbytery or Synod, his known activity and interest in the Temperance cause led to his appointment upon the committee—often as its chairman.

As suggested in the letter to Dr. Edwards, he took great pains, seeing he must, as he thought, drink a little wine, to secure the veritable juice of the grape. Through friends in New York, he managed, at intervals, to purchase small quantities of the very best—so declared—in the market. It would, of course, improve by keeping, and, with characteristic exactness, the several purchases, in demijohns and bottles, distinctly labelled, were stowed away in a cellar

wine-closet. After he had given up the habit, this vinous store was left to mature by age, excepting when a little was drawn out for a sick person—one of the family or a neighbor. After his death, the question arose—What is to be done with that prime old wine—Madeira, Sherry and of other kinds? One suggested its being kept for the sick: another that it should be presented to the church for sacramental occasions. At length, it was proposed to employ an experienced taster, to determine, before a great ado was made over the precious stuff, what its real worth might be. The expert arrived, and was left, without remark, to form his own judgment. A little of this brand and that, with due solemnity, he put to his delicately appreciative lips, smacking them ever and anon, as if with unusual enjoyment. No wonder, since the wine had been so costly, and was so old! Said he at last when he had tasted all, ‘My advice is that you just pour the whole together, and use it for cooking. It is fit for nothing else.’

During Dr. Miller’s earlier years in Princeton—while he drank wine himself—it was always upon his dinner table, whenever he entertained the clergy, or others; and there was even brandy, in the sideboard, for those visitors who thought they needed it. Then, as the temperance reformation advanced, the brandy disappeared; when he gave up his own daily glass, he would still, for a time, tell his guests, that he had in the sideboard, a little wine “for the weaker brethren;” but, soon, the decanter was entirely banished, unless medicine was called for. Thus in his own house, the progress of reform was very clearly and happily marked and illustrated. No feature of this reform has been more noticeable, than the almost entire disuse, among the so-called evangelical clergy of the land, of everything that can intoxicate—all fermented, as well as spirituous, liquors.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-FOURTH.

### MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS.

1836, 1837.

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#### 1. THE BIBLICAL REPERTORY.

THE Biblical Repertory for 1836 contained five articles, at least—altogether ninety-three pages—from Dr. Miller's pen. The *first* on "Christian Union,"<sup>1</sup> noticing a work on this subject by Abraham Van Dyck, Esquire, of New York City, and a review of it by Bishop Smith of Kentucky, brings us to the conclusion, that outward union cannot possibly produce, but, to be profitable, must be produced by, doctrinal agreement and mutual love; and that mere organic separation is not necessarily schism, as to either of two denominations which recognize each other as Christian churches, and commune together; but that it is clearly schismatic to refuse such recognition or communion, except on plain scriptural grounds. In regard to his own Church he remarks,—

"We think we do no injustice to any other portion of Protestant Christendom, when we say, that we are confident no denomination of Christians exceeds the Presbyterian Church in genuine Christian liberality, and in a readiness to unite in Christian effort with all classes of credible professors of Christianity. Our system is absolutely less exclusive, and more pacific than any other in our country, which admits the importance of truth at all. We are really almost the only denomination of Christians in the United States whose views of truth, of the Gospel ministry, and of ecclesiastical order, present no obstacle to our communing and co-operating with any and every denomination who hold fast the essentials of true religion. Nor can we hesitate to assert, that the most conspicuous and edifying examples of such union and co-operation, within the last

<sup>1</sup> P. 11.

twenty years, have been actually presented by the Presbyterian Church. Why, then, it is, that we are everywhere calumniated as eminently *sectarian* in our character; why the most mild and respectful attempts to defend our own opinions, and to show to our members our reasons for differing from sister denominations around us, are stigmatized as violent and unprovoked attacks; and why these charges happen to be most clamorously urged by those of our neighbors whose *sectarism* is acknowledged on all hands to be the most rampant and exclusive in the land; are questions, the responsibility of answering which, we are glad, does not lie at our door."<sup>1</sup>

The *second* article is upon "The most suitable Name for the Christian Sabbath,"<sup>2</sup> and closes as follows:—

"We have said, that we prefer "the Lord's day" to any other title. We are aware, that this can never be the name employed by the mass of the community. There is something about this title which will forever prevent it from being familiar on the popular lip. The title, "the Sabbath," is connected with no such difficulty. It is Scriptural, expressive, convenient, the term employed in a commandment which is weekly repeated by millions, and so far familiar to all who live in Christian lands, that no consideration occurs why it may not become universal. "The Lord's day" may, and perhaps, ought ever to be, the language of the pulpit, and of all public or social *religious* exercises; meanwhile, if the phrase, "the Sabbath," could be generally naturalized in worldly circles, and in common parlance, it would be gaining a desirable object."<sup>3</sup>

The *third* article on "*Toleration*"<sup>4</sup> must be passed by; but a short extract from the *fourth*, a review of "The Practical Church Member."<sup>5</sup> by the Rev. John Mitchell, may prove seasonable. After discussing the "Plans of Union," between Congregationalists and Presbyterians, Dr. Miller remarks,—

"For ourselves in fine we are constrained to say, with emphasis, the longer we live, the deeper is our conviction, that, if the Presbyterian Church desires to have a healthful and solid growth, and to accomplish the greatest amount of good in our own body, and to all around her; her true policy is, not to level the walls which divide her from other denominations; not to seek a rapid enlargement, by gaining numbers at the expense of surrendering her peculiarities as a denomination. Our strength and glory, as a Church, consists in our simple, pure, apostolical

<sup>1</sup> P. 35.<sup>2</sup> P. 64.<sup>3</sup> P. 73.<sup>4</sup> P. 185.<sup>5</sup> P. 243.



doctrine and government, accompanied by the Holy Spirit's awakening and sanctifying power. The moment we give up these, we are, like Samson, shorn of his locks. The Philistines will be upon us, and will prevail against us. All history bears witness, that when Presbyterians degenerated into Arminianism, or Pelagianism, and consented to exchange their government and discipline for a more lax system, their glory departed. Their peace was gone. They gained in numbers; but they lost in purity, in harmony, and in strength. The true way for every denomination (and we should say the same if we were conscientious Congregationalists) is faithfully to hold fast and maintain that system of truth and order which it verily believes to be founded on the Word of God, without surrender or compromise; to treat all denominations around it with respect and kindness; to indulge in no exclusive claims, or denominational reproaches; to co-operate with others in enterprizes of general Christian benevolence, as far as can be done without the sacrifice of a single principle; and to employ its utmost strength in sustaining at home, and spreading as far as possible abroad, that system of doctrine, worship, and discipline, which it believes to be scriptural. This is the true way to peace, to harmony, to brotherly love, and to spiritual strength. No denomination of Christians ever faithfully and prayerfully pursued this course without being blessed of God, and largely prospering. And were the Presbyterian Church, from this hour, sacredly and strictly to adopt this plan in conducting all her affairs; acting faithfully in conformity with her own established principles; seeking no additional alliances; making no compromises, for the sake of gaining either money or men; receiving none either as ministers or elders, but those who appeared truly and sincerely to love her system as a whole, and decisively to prefer it to all others; were she, henceforth, simply to take this course; turning neither to the right hand nor to the left for the purpose of enlarging her borders; and exerting herself to the utmost, to give her system, in its simplicity and purity, as far as possible, to all nations; her growth would be not, perhaps, quite so rapid; but it would be healthy, homogeneous, and peaceful. Every accession to her numbers, instead of introducing disaffection and division into her camp, would be an increase of real strength. Such a policy, faithfully pursued, would be the precursor of the most happy and prosperous day she has yet seen; and render her a richer blessing than she has ever yet been to the religious denominations around her, to our country, and to the world."<sup>1</sup>

The *last* article by Dr. Miller in this volume of the Re-

<sup>1</sup> P. 267.

pertory, is entitled "Thoughts on Evangelizing the world," the title of a sermon by Thomas H. Skinner, D.D., advocating, virtually, voluntary associations in opposition to church boards. A lecture by John T. Pressly, D.D., in favor of close communion, as exhibiting another extreme, is connected with the former in a short review, commencing thus:—

"*Ne quid nimis* is a good practical maxim, no less in theology than in morals, in literature, and in domestic economy. Extremes are seldom either wise or safe. Of this we have a striking example in the Discourses, the titles of which stand at the head of this article. The first is a specimen of anti-sectarianism run mad; the second of the "high-pressure" principle on the opposite side. We can agree with neither. We regret to announce such publications in the nineteenth century. They both argue a morbid state of the public mind in regard to the great subject of which they treat."

## 2. A REMINISCENCE:

The author of the following reminiscence, which appeared in *The Presbyterian* nearly a year, as the date shows, after Dr. Miller's death, is unknown: it was, however, contributed "by a lady." The visit of which it gives account was paid in 1836.

'Mr. A. was educated at Princeton. He had an exalted respect for the venerable Professors of the Seminary, and a strong personal attachment to them, and other friends in the place. A few weeks after our marriage, he proposed a visit to Princeton. Accordingly, one pleasant afternoon, in the early part of June, we made the brief journey from this city, and reached the place of our destination about sunset. The evening was passed at our hotel, in receiving the visits of two or three young friends, who were then members of college. The next morning we visited the Seminary and College buildings, called upon a suffering invalid, who had long been the object of Mr. A.'s special sympathy, and whom he desired me very much to see; and then walked about the town, to view various places, which were pointed out to me as peculiarly interesting from their associations.

'In compliance with a polite invitation, we spent the afternoon at Dr. Miller's. We were cordially received by the ladies of the family, and soon after I was seated in the parlour, (my husband having left to make two or three calls elsewhere,) Dr. Miller entered. Those who knew him personally remember

the commanding dignity of his manner, and the awe which his presence almost insensibly inspired. I was fifteen years younger then than I am now, and I distinctly remember the timidity with which I entered into a conversation with one so much my superior.

The conversation was at first of a general character, but *very soon* was directed to a practical subject, and this was treated in such a manner as to make a deep impression on my mind. It seemed to be the object of this venerable man, absorbed as he was in the high duties of his office as a theological Professor, to make this interview with a young woman—a casual visitor at his house—one of permanent advantage to her, while at the same time there was nothing in his remarks, or his manner, which indicated the intention of exhorting me to “well-doing.”

‘Dr. Miller remarked, that persons were apt to wait for great occasions for doing good. That it was common for ladies at that time, (and I think he would not have changed his opinion had he lived to this,) to think that everything really useful must be done in societies and associations; while others felt as if there was nothing left for them to do. But there was one thing he would specify, as a means of usefulness, within the reach of every young woman. It was *to visit aged persons and invalids in one’s immediate neighbourhood, for the purpose of reading to them.* An occasional hour thus spent, might be greatly blessed both to the listener and the reader, and a great amount of happiness thus secured. He spoke feelingly of the fact, that the comfort of aged people, as to their intellectual wants, was too often overlooked, even where every attention was paid to their physical necessities—and that we become so accustomed to witnessing their infirmities, that we cease to estimate their sorest privations. This was true of many an invalid also, whose long confinement had perhaps greatly added to the cares of a household. Many such were compelled to spend hours in “solitude,” which the presence of some useful and untiring visitor might have “sweetened.”

‘I was greatly delighted with much more which fell from the lips of this “mighty man of God” on this subject. I had not the courage to assure him that the truth of his remarks was enforced upon my own mind by the experience I had had by a long companionship with an aged grandmother. I knew I had never felt the importance of the duty he was urging, as I ought, and I received his counsels as fresh instruction which

I would lay up in my heart, and practice with more faithfulness in future.

'This was the only interview I ever had with Dr. Miller. He took pains to make that hour's conversation profitable to me. I never saw him afterwards. But brief as was this opportunity of acquaintance, I have ever remembered him, not as the august stranger, to whom I looked up with deferential awe, but as a faithful counsellor and Christian friend.

'New York, January 1, 1851.'

### 3. MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS.

Dr. Nevins, of Baltimore, died in the Autumn of 1835. Dr. Plumer prepared a Memoir, to which Dr. Miller contributed a letter, dated, January 29th, 1836.<sup>1</sup> Besides this, his Repertory articles, and perhaps some fugitive pieces, his only publications, in this year, were three sermons. The first was preached at the installation of Mr. Backus, and printed at the request of his church, in Baltimore.<sup>2</sup> The others were contributed to *The American National Preacher*.<sup>3</sup>

Here is an entry from Dr. Miller's diary:--

'October 31, 1836. \* \* My health, blessed be his name, is remarkably good. I perform labor with as little fatigue as ever, perhaps rather less than ever. I am enabled to preach as often, and with as little sense of weakness or weariness, as I did twenty years ago. And I am more free from aches and infirmities than most men, as I suppose, at my time of life. Oh, could I only say, that my soul, in a corresponding degree, is prospering and in health, I should indeed be a happy man. Yet, if I do not deceive myself, I have a deeper sense of my own weakness and unworthiness; a more heartfelt impression of the Saviour's excellence and glory; and a more fixed and habitual desire to be conformed to his will, and to be made instrumental in promoting his glory, than in times past. Oh, for more grace to glorify my dear Saviour in body and spirit, which are his!'

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 71-77.

<sup>2</sup> "The Sacred Office Magnified: a Sermon, delivered in the First Presbyterian Church, in the City of Baltimore, September 15, 1836; at the Installation of the Rev. John C. Backus, as Pastor of the said Church. By Samuel Miller, D.D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey. Baltimore: 1836."—Romans xi. 13.—8vo. Pp. 46.

<sup>3</sup> For December, 1836. "Vol. XI., No. 7. Sermons cexxx, cexxxi. By Samuel Miller, D.D., Princeton, New Jersey. Christ our Righteousness.—Jeremiah xxiii. 6."—Pp. 16.

To the Rev'd Dr. Andrew Reed, of London, who, with Dr. Matheson, had lately visited the United States, Dr. Miller wrote, on the 28th of November, 1836,

'The state of our Church remains very much as it was when you left America. The New-school men, in the General Assembly which sat in May last, had a majority, and refused to condemn certain errors which were brought up for consideration and judgment; and also refused, as an ecclesiastical judicatory, to commence the work of foreign missions. These proceedings have given great pain to the friends of truth and order, and also to those who wish our beloved Church to be engaged in the great work of evangelizing the world; and thus, while she does good to others, to receive, herself, the benefit of this hallowed employment. But we are not, it seems, to be gratified as yet. After all, however, I am persuaded, that the refusal of the Assembly to act as we wished, in the cases referred to, has made such an impression on our churches, and especially on a number of excellent brethren who have hitherto acted with New-school men, as will hereafter place them on the right side in counsel and effort.

'I am truly sorry to say, that the abolition question continues to agitate our country and our church; though not, I think, so much as it did the two preceding years. I believe, however, that there is no opinion more firmly fixed in the minds of nine-tenths of all the thinking, pious, sober-minded people in the United States, than that the publications and the frantic efforts of the Abolitionists have done incalculable injury to the best interests of the slaves themselves, and put much further off the termination of slavery. \* \*

'I deeply regret, my dear Sir, the language which some of the friends of abolition in your country have permitted themselves to use concerning American ministers and American Christians in relation to the business of slavery. I have scarcely seen a speech or a communication from any individual on your side of the water, which did not appear to me to argue a wonderful want of knowledge both of principles and of facts belonging to the subject, in reference to the United States. I hold myself to be somewhat of an impartial judge in this matter, as I am a warm friend to abolition as speedy as is consistent with the best interests of the slaves themselves. I really am afraid that some of the proceedings of the friends of religion in Great Britain will break up all that ecclesiastical intercourse, which was so happily begun, and which you so ably contributed to promote. I am perfectly persuaded, that, if the language and conduct of

certain ecclesiastical bodies in your country, in relation to American slavery, should be persisted in, our General Assembly will never send another delegate to England. I speak, of course, as an individual; for when the General Assembly was last in session, some of the most offensive things reported from some of your ecclesiastical bodies had not reached America; so that that body could not act on them. But, unless I am greatly mistaken, when it next meets, there will be little disposition felt to continue the intercourse. How many pious hopes will be disappointed by such a result, I need not say to a brother so accustomed to take large views of the communion of saints, and of what is desirable in the co-operation of Christians.

‘I am, Rev’d and dear Sir, with much respect, your friend and brother in the bonds of the Gospel,

‘Sam’l Miller.’

#### 4. CHURCH TROUBLES.

Thus far, as tacticians, the New School had far excelled the Old. Nor was this, necessarily, to their discredit. They might be able, and yet honest, fair, Christian tacticians, endeavoring only to bring out their whole force, and secure the prevalence of opinions which they deemed orthodox, and of plans which they considered for the edification of the Church. The Old School, conscious of the righteousness of their cause, and sure that they were in the majority, had too much neglected the proper means within their power of uniting and marshalling all their adherents. Whichever party was right in its principles was right, also, in exerting itself manfully and intelligently for the success of those principles.

The decisions of the Assembly of 1836 completely opened the eyes of all who were opposed to laxity of creed and laxity of ecclesiastical order in the Presbyterian Church. Some of these hastily concluded that their cause was lost, and they were ready to secede from the New School, leaving in their hands all church funds and every church institution: the purity and peace of Christ’s Kingdom, said they, are worth any and every sacrifice. Others, more prudent and more hopeful, endeavored, not without success, to restrain the rash, and encourage the faint-hearted. Let us make further efforts, they said, to arouse the Church to a sense of her danger: let us only bring out our whole force, and, with God’s blessing, we shall yet triumph. Or,

even if disappointment and humiliation yet await us, let us cling to the Church of our fathers, so long as we are free, ourselves, to teach the truth, the truth only and the whole truth, and to protest against error: in the last extremity alone, and when we can otherwise no longer keep a good conscience, should we abandon her to her enemies. The question is not only whether we are willing to go forth empty for Christ's sake; but also whether those funds, institutions and interests of which he has made us custodians, should be surrendered without a more determined struggle.

Nothing had astonished the Old School, and nothing, except the prevalence of doctrinal error, had alarmed them, more, than the assertion now currently made by their opponents, that the General Assembly had, under the Constitution, no right to conduct foreign missions, or indeed any missions, by means of a board or committee. All the Boards of the Church had been before assailed, but here was an attempt to deny their very constitutionality—a blow at the root of the whole system. The great principles of Presbyterianism were becoming more and more involved in the issue: everything distinctive in her doctrine and order was really at stake.

Before leaving Pittsburgh, the Old School members of the Assembly of 1836 appointed a committee of ten—seven ministers and three elders—to correspond with Old School men throughout the country, collect and publish information of the true state of the Church, and form a rallying point for all who could be united in the defence of orthodoxy and strict Presbyterianism. They were, likewise, if it were judged expedient, to call a convention to meet prior to the meeting of the next Assembly, and prepare for the great struggle by which, it was foreseen, that body was to be profoundly agitated. This committee issued first a circular of inquiry, the responses to which enabled them the more intelligently to prepare and publish “An Address to the Ministers, Elders and Members of the Presbyterian Church.” The New School, in the mere spirit of party, stigmatized these measures, though modelled, chiefly, after their own example, as underhand and disorderly. Dr. Peters, Corresponding Secretary of the Home Missionary Society, and others, who, for years, had been

writing and working, both secretly and openly, against the Boards of the Church, and in favor of a lax orthodoxy, denounced the Corresponding Secretary of the Board of Missions, Dr. William A. McDowell, the Corresponding Secretary of the Board of Education, Dr. McFarland, and a Professor in Princeton Seminary, Dr. John Breckinridge, as members of the committee. They professed to be scandalized by the issue of a "secret, confidential circular", and the other prudent efforts of their opponents to call forth the strength of the Church for her preservation. The real trouble was, that rival tacticians were now successfully at work in the Old School body; and were practising too well some of the lessons of sound policy, which their New School brethren had taught them.

The Presbytery of New Brunswick, to which the Seminary professors belonged, had been divided in opinion, all through the struggle, but had, upon the whole, approved the course which those gentlemen had pursued. Upon the recommendation of a committee, of which Dr. Miller was Chairman, the Presbytery had, in 1834, expressed its concurrence with the Act and Testimony's protestation against prevailing errors, though declining to express an opinion as to other portions of that document, or to send delegates to the convention which it proposed. In February, 1835, the Presbytery had expressed a unanimous dissent from the previous Assembly's denial of the right to condemn a printed publication, without having tried its author; and of the right to examine applicants for admission to presbyterial fellowship. Now, in October, 1836, a paper drawn by Dr. Miller, but incorporating large portions of one previously offered by the Rev. Isaac V. Brown, was adopted. It condemned, in really too personal a manner, Mr. Barnes's Notes on Romans. It virtually denied the correctness of a statement made by Mr. Barnes in his vindication:—"I have not changed my views materially since I was licensed to preach the Gospel. In the theological seminary at Princeton, my views, which were the same as now, were fully known: by the Presbytery of New Brunswick, by which I was licensed, they were, or might have been, fully known." It condemned all qualifications and reservations, not openly declared, in subscribing the stand-



ards. It asserted the duty of the Church to engage, as a church, in mission work at home and abroad; and, perhaps disrespectfully, characterized the refusal to ratify the contract with the Western Society as a breach of good faith; declaring the Presbytery an auxiliary henceforth to that Society. In fine, it accused the Assembly itself of having favored the introduction of false doctrines, and screened their authors; and of having given their sanction to disorganizing assumptions. This paper, though in some respects, perhaps, more discriminating, was more pointed in condemning the General Assembly, than the Act and Testimony itself. Why should not the "logic of events"—events most portentous—have modified the judgment of many in regard to the crisis?

But, meanwhile, the Old School leaders had advanced rapidly in their plans of reform. They now distinctly avowed the conviction, that the Presbyterian Church must be divided: it was impossible to restore harmony and peace between two parties differing so radically in opinion, and so widely alienated in feeling. The Address of the Committee of Ten, declared, "Whatever else may be dark, this is clear, we cannot continue in the same body. \* \* In some way or other, therefore, these men must be separated from us." What zealous Presbyterian can now say that they were wrong? But who can wonder that Dr. Miller and others, who were carefully feeling their way along an unknown and dangerous path, shrank back from the gulf thus suddenly opening at their feet? There was still felt to be a serious angle of divergence between the "gentlemen of Princeton," not including of course, Dr. Breckinridge, and the Old School leaders and provisional committee.

In the autumn of 1836, the three Senior Professors of the Seminary, with the Rev. James W. Alexander, met, in Dr. Hodge's study, a deputation of the more advanced Old School men, informally appointed to confer with them upon the state of the church. The deputation consisted of Dr. James Blythe of Indiana, Dr. C. C. Cuyler of Philadelphia, Dr. George Junkin of Easton, Dr. W. W. Phillips of New York, and the Rev. Isaac V. Brown of Lawrenceville. The conference was a fraternal one, but resulted in

nothing decisive, yet seems to have done good. Mr. Brown relates, that the position of the Seminary Professors was so unsatisfactory to some of the Old School ; and the danger that the New School would gain control of the institution was considered so imminent, that Robert Lenox, Esquire, of New York, with others like-minded, had well-nigh resolved to establish another Seminary ; and had gone so far as to select a suitable site, and place funds in bank, for the undertaking ; but that the deputation who visited Princeton reported, on their return, that things did not look so desperate as had been imagined ; and the project, at least as to its immediate execution, was abandoned.<sup>1</sup>

One thing is certain—that those who were eagerly intent upon precipitating a division of the Church greatly needed restraint ; and Dr. Miller, with others of like views, doubtless, to the extent of his influence, was effectually serving the cause of truth and righteousness, by holding back the men, who, if a division had been effected any sooner than it was, or in a different way, would have found themselves out of doors, instead of in lawful possession of the domicile. The following letter to the Rev. David Elliott, D.D., illustrates his view of ecclesiastical secession.

‘ Rev’d. and dear Brother, Princeton, December 23, 1836.

‘ I have intended, for several weeks to write to you ; and, although I now sit down to fulfil my purpose, my time is so straitened by engagements, that I must be more brief and general than I originally contemplated.

‘ You will naturally expect, from this preface, that it is not on any private business I address you, but on the affairs of our beloved church. I fear from what I hear, that a great majority of the ministers of your Synod are warmly in favor of a division of the church ; that they are intent on it ; that some of them wish it to take place immediately ; that they are hardly willing to wait for the meeting of the next General Assembly ; but are resolved, if possible, to bring it about, at any rate, then ; and it has even been said, that, if a division should not be then accomplished, some ministers, now belonging to your Synod of Pittsburgh, will undoubtedly withdraw and join the Seceders ! I am sorry to receive this impression, but cannot resist it, from some communications which have been made to me.

<sup>1</sup> See his *Historical Vindication*, 175, 176.

‘ My views of the subject will be comprised in the following articles.

‘ 1. I am perfectly prepared to say, that, if we must go on as we have done for the last five or six years—in a state of perpetual strife and conflict—we had better separate, and the sooner the better. But

‘ 2. I am persuaded that by prudence, fidelity, patience and firmness, we may avoid a separation. I have no doubt that by a calm, steady, wise course, we may constrain the ultra New School men to withdraw from our own ranks, and leave us in a state of comparative purity and peace. My impression is, that Old-schoolism is gaining ground every day; and that the proceedings of the last Assembly have done much to open the eyes of many persons on the New School spirit and plans, who will hereafter act with us.

‘ 3. I do not see how we can possibly effect a separation (provided we should be a minority in the next Assembly) upon any other plan than marching out from the majority, and leaving them in quiet possession of all our institutions, funds and boards, without any exception. All our Seminaries, with their funds, and all the funds of our boards, and of every other kind, are vested in the Trustees of the General Assembly. These trustees are bound by the charter of incorporation to obey the General Assembly. The funds, then, are in the power of the General Assembly. In whatever direction the General Assembly goes, all these funds will of course go. But would it not be a breach of trust to abandon to New School men all that we have been begging and obtaining, chiefly from the pockets of Old School men, for the last fifteen or twenty years?—for during that time, New School men have pretty much ceased giving us any thing. Could you consent to give up your seminary, funds, buildings, books, etc., into their hands, and we, ours, and begin again from nothing?

‘ 4. Some have talked of the Old school part of the church, if they should prove a minority in the next Assembly, breaking off and solemnly declaring themselves the “*True Presbyterian Church* ;” and, as such, claiming everything now vested in the church. But the longer I reflect, and the more carefully I inquire, on this subject, the less is my confidence in the possibility of doing this. If we were to attempt it, the New School men would, undoubtedly, commence a suit at law for the funds, etc.; and if, in the prosecution of this suit, they were to make such professions and protestations, as they did in the last Assembly, of adherence to the Confession of Faith, etc., there is not a court and jury in Pennsylvania, that would give a ver-

dict against them. I am persuaded this course is impracticable. If we should prove to be a minority in the next assembly, and should break away, in my opinion it would be, to give up all and go off beggars.

‘5. Might we not more successfully promote and extend the truth, by remaining in the body, and endeavoring, by faithful and persevering striving against error, to extend the influence of sound opinions? Drs. Witherspoon and Nisbet did not withdraw from the Church of Scotland, but remained and contended for the truth; and their successors did the same; until now the tide is turning, and orthodoxy is gaining ground in that country. If the friends of truth were to throw themselves out of the body, they could exert little or no influence within it.

‘6. I am perfectly persuaded, that only a small fraction of the Old School brethren would consent to a division, or actually take a part in it. The whole Synod of Virginia, that of Kentucky, that of South Carolina and Georgia, and also those of Cincinnati and Ohio, though, I believe, substantially Old School, would, probably, decline participating in the division; being persuaded that less violent means would answer the end quite as well, if not better. Now, what would become of our institutions, if a division should be violently made, and only a quarter or an eighth part of the Old School men and churches should join in it?

‘7. I need not say, that, if a division takes place, not only Synods, but Presbyteries and individual churches will be torn in pieces, and innumerable lawsuits for church property be instituted. In short, where the mischief will end, Omniscience only can foresee.

‘My dear Brother, knowing your wisdom, and also your influence in your Synod, I throw out these ideas in sacred confidence and in great haste. Let me know your heart about them. If it differs from mine, I shall not love or respect you the less.

Sincerely your brother,

‘Sam’l. Miller.’

Of course, this letter had no reference to the plan of excision, carried out by the next Assembly—a plan excogitated, under the pressure of circumstances, after that Assembly met. Division, as it now presented itself to Dr. Miller’s mind, was a totally different thing from the division which subsequently was accomplished.

##### 5. PUBLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

About the beginning of the year 1837, a small volume was published in New York, entitled, “A Plea for Vol-

untary Societies, and a Defence of the Decisions of the General Assembly of 1836, against the Strictures of the Princeton Review and others. By a member of the Assembly." From this volume, while passing through the press, extracts were transferred to the columns of the New York Observer of the 5th of November; and in the same journal for the 3d of December, appeared a letter, of some length, signed "Pacificus," from the pen of Dr. Miller, controverting the opinions advanced in those extracts. The measurable change which had occurred in his posture toward certain voluntary societies may be explained by quoting a few paragraphs from this letter.

"I, for one, not only consider private Christians as having a *right* to associate for pursuing an object of Christian benevolence, and for disposing of the property which God has given them as they think proper; but I believe that great good may result from such associations when rightly conducted. It is only when they deny to the church that right which they claim for themselves; it is only when they contend that the church ought to abandon this whole field of Christian enterprise, and yield it up entirely to *them*, that I am constrained to suspect their motives, and fear their spirit. *Once*, if I understand the matter, the Home Missionary Society only contended for *full liberty* to associate, and to do all in her power to spread the gospel with the aid of those who, with herself, preferred voluntary to ecclesiastical organizations. They tacitly agreed, as I supposed, to stop here, and let the friends of the ecclesiastical plan pursue their own course without molestation. \* \* But the reasoning of your author goes much further. He is not willing to concede the same liberty to the church which he and his friends enjoy. They will not consent that an ecclesiastical judicatory, sustained by those of her members who think with her, should go forward and comply with what she deems her Master's command. All—all action in this hallowed field must be surrendered into individual and irresponsible hands. This gentleman avows the opinion, that it is not suitable or right that the church, in her organized capacity, should meddle with the matter at all. He thinks that the work can be better done, and ought all to be done, by her private members; and accordingly, not very long since, a zealous and active friend of the Home Missionary Society openly and unequivocally said to an Old School brother, "Our Society and the Assembly's Board of Missions cannot both continue to live and act. One or the other **MUST DIE**. Of course, if our society lives, your

board MUST DIE." This is now the doctrine. It was the avowal and zealous maintenance of this doctrine, Mr. Editor, that first opened my eyes as to the real designs of some of the advocates of voluntary associations. I wished them well. I united with them as adapted to do great good by stimulating the church to greater zeal and activity, and supplying her "lack of service." But when I found the watchword to be, "*The Boards of the Church MUST DIE!*" I became convinced that it was the duty of every good Presbyterian, not to put down or even molest voluntary associations, but to cling with new affection to the Boards of the General Assembly, and to sustain them with increasing zeal. I can truly say, that the language and conduct of the brethren, who have taken the lead in these associations, have done more, a thousand times, to convince me that many of them, at least, cherished a deadly hostility to the best interests of the Presbyterian Church, and were determined to depress, if not to prostrate, her influence, than all the complaints of the ultra-partisans of orthodoxy."

One of the arguments of this author against church-boards was, that the possession and control of so much property, and pecuniary patronage, could not be safely entrusted to the General Assembly! In replying to this, Dr. Miller wrote,

"But who does not see that all this writer's suggestions about undue and dangerous power, may be, with more justice, turned against himself? There is unspeakably more danger from the undefinable and uncontrollable power of a voluntary association. Who that is at all conversant with our voluntary associations does not know, that each of them *may* be governed by *two or three men*; perhaps in some cases that might be mentioned, by *one man*; that the whole machinery may be in the hands of an adroit Secretary; and that the annual meeting *may* easily be so managed, by the same agent, as to answer the purpose of *excitement only*, and not of real *counsel* or *responsibility*? If there is a power in the United States which the religious community have reason to regard with apprehension, it is that of the shrewd and busy general agent of a voluntary association, annually disposing of \$100,000; sending out *six or seven hundred* ministers into every part of the country; and holding in his hands the patronage on which so many pastors and congregations are habitually dependent. It was not without reason that a sagacious civilian once said of such a secretary, "Sir, he is virtually the Archbishop of America." "

Dr. Miller's correspondence with Mr. Nettleton seems to have been just now unusually brisk. The following extracts are from a letter of the 4th of February, 1837.

'Your interesting and very acceptable favor of the 26th ultimo. came to hand four days after its date. \* \* I had been, for several weeks, beginning to think that it was high time to take some measures for brightening the chain of fraternal intercourse with you; \* \* When an indisposition, which has confined me to my room almost entirely for a fortnight past, came on, and set aside most of my plans. In this situation your letter found me. I am now, however, through the goodness of God, much better, and hope to be going about as usual in two or three days. \* \* \*

'If I had needed any proof, my dear Brother, that my beloved Brethren, Nettleton, Woods, Tyler, Cogswell, Humphrey, Church, etc., so far agreed with old school Presbyterians, as to have their high affectionate, and unwavering confidence, this letter, [From Dr. Porter to Dr. Beecher, a copy of which Mr. Nettleton had sent,] and its accompanying comments, would have entirely satisfied me. But I did not need such proof. I have been long persuaded that our old school New England brethren ought to be considered as one with us, and that the cords of friendship ought to be drawn more closely every day. \*

'By the way, do you read B. B. Edwards's Biblical Repository? The last two numbers of it have contained matter which has shocked me. I must give up Mr. Stuart as having any pretension to orthodoxy. He appears to me to be fast verging to the Rationalism of the Germans. His manner of speaking of the righteousness of Christ, in the last number but one, convinces me that—if *Professor Stuart understands himself*—consistency must soon drive him away from evangelical ground.

'With great affection, your friend and brother.'

In a letter of the 28th of April, Dr. Miller said to Mr. Nettleton,

'I have just received a letter from Mr. Musgrave, of Baltimore, which informs me that a very late communication from Dr. John Witherspoon, of Camden, announces, that you and Dr. Tyler propose to visit Princeton, in a few days, for the purpose of having a fraternal conference with a few brethren who are requested to meet here. \* \* The names of the Presbyterian ministers mentioned are Dr. Hoge, Dr. W. A. McDowell, Dr. J. Breckinridge, Dr. Witherspoon, Mr. Mus-

grave and myself—no doubt meaning to include in the list all my beloved colleagues.

‘This proposal was perfectly new to us; but it gives us pleasure. We shall be cordially glad to see you and your venerated colleague, and hope that much good will result from the interview. \* \* \* \* \*

‘Dr. Witherspoon, in his communication to Mr. Musgrave, spoke also of Dr. Beecher as being invited, and expressed an expectation that he would be present. This proposal, I, for one, could not help regretting. \* \* I should be sorry to have him introduced into a meeting intended to be cordial, confidential and conciliatory. \* \* \* \* \*

‘When you arrive in Princeton, please to come immediately to my house. \* \* \* \* \*

‘Since I wrote to you, I have had a long and tedious confinement by sickness. I was three weeks confined to my bed, and for six weeks to my chamber. By the blessing of God, I am now not only convalescent, but tolerably well again. I ride and walk out as usual, and go to the Seminary. I am still, however, weak, and am glad to escape all labor, especially of the mind and the pen, that I possibly can.’

Some of the gentlemen mentioned in the foregoing letter actually visited Princeton—Mr. Nettleton and Dr. Tyler, certainly, and, doubtless, some of the others. There is no probability, that they avoided all allusion, in their conferences, to church troubles; but the New School commentators went widely astray, who declared, as if by inspiration, that the meeting was intended to *prepare business for the General Assembly!* In May again Dr. Miller wrote to the same,

‘In the course of my return from the meeting of the American Board at Utica, two years ago last October, I travelled in the canal-boat with the Hon. John C. Smith, late governor of Connecticut. We had much conversation respecting the New Haven theology, Dr. Taylor, etc. I found him strongly opposed to the errors of that gentleman, and ready to express his unfavorable opinion of them without scruple or reserve. Among other things, I asked him what he thought of the establishment of a new seminary at East Windsor. He said, that he did not think it necessary or wise. He seemed to think that the true plan would have been to make an authoritative investigation into the doctrine and teaching of Dr. Taylor, and, if he was found so erroneous as he thought he would be,



to remove him, and thus supersede the necessity of another institution. I remarked, that I thought such an investigation had been already had, on the motion of the Rev. Dr. Dow; and that, strangely as it had issued, nothing more seemed to be intended. I understood him to say, that that investigation had not been conducted with sufficient energy or fidelity;—that another ought to be had, and must and would be had, which could not fail of bringing to light what would show that Dr. Taylor was unworthy of public confidence, and warrant the friends of truth in going forward and putting a sounder man in his place. I do not pretend to give his language; but simply to state the impression which what he said made on my mind. \* \*

‘ P. S. Although there was nothing in the foregoing conversation which appeared to me, at the time, confidential; and certainly no intimation was given by Governor Smith, that he was unwilling to have what he said repeated; yet I have such a deep impression of the impropriety of revealing private conversation, that I must utterly and solemnly interdict the publication of any part of the above, or making any public use of it whatever.’<sup>1</sup>

In 1837, Dr. Miller contributed to Sparks’s Library of American Biography, a Life of Jonathan Edwards.<sup>2</sup> Referring to previous controversies between him and Mr. Sparks, Dr. Sprague says,

“But notwithstanding Dr. Miller and Mr. Sparks were thus brought into an attitude of theological antagonism, it seems not to have affected their relations in after life; for, in 1837, Mr. Sparks requested Dr. Miller to write, for his “American Biography,” a memoir of Jonathan Edwards, one of the mightiest champions of Orthodoxy; and, as I know from the testimony of each of them, Dr. Miller disappointed Mr. Sparks by readily acceding to his request, and Mr. Sparks disappointed Dr. Miller by printing his manuscript without even asking for the alteration of a single word.’<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Governor Smith died in 1845.

<sup>2</sup> “Life of Jonathan Edwards, President of the College of New Jersey; By Samuel Miller, D.D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey.”—Vol. VIII. 1837.—12mo. Pp. 256.

<sup>3</sup> 8 Sprague’s Annals, xviii.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-FIFTH.

### CHURCH REFORM.

1837, 1838.

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#### 1. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF 1837.

THERE were few Old School men, now, who did not clearly discern the importance of the crisis at hand. The Presbytery of New Brunswick appointed delegates to the convention which was to precede the Assembly in Philadelphia, and recommended to all the churches within their bounds to observe the first day of its meeting—the second Thursday of May—as a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer—prayer that the Great Head of Zion would restore purity and peace to the Presbyterian Church. Says Dr. Baird, referring to the interval between the Assembly of 1836 and that of 1837,

“In the mean time, publications made by such men as Dr. Miller, of Princeton, Dr. John Breckinridge, and Dr. Francis McFarland, and the editors of the Princeton Review,—men of the mildest spirit and most moderate sentiments, attested the reality and greatness of the danger, indicated the modified views of Princeton, and did much to unite men of like sentiments and spirit, in approval and support of the decisive measures which were about to be employed for the reformation of the Church.”<sup>1</sup>

It might have been added that, not improbably, “Princeton”, meanwhile, saved the Church from a hopeless secession of the more impulsive Old School men, which would have left to the New School such a preponderance as must have given them complete control of everything. Moreover, to justify before the public and even the Church itself,

<sup>1</sup> Hist of New School, 414, 415.

the final measures of reform which were adopted—severe, as they were, though strictly constitutional and, in the circumstances, necessary—the long-suffering of “Princeton”, its tender concern for erring brethren, and its opposition to hasty and extreme attempts, may have been of signal advantage. Before the struggle came to an end, the New School had had full opportunity—once and again even in the flush of seeming triumph—to disclose their true character and their real designs: it was at last patent, to all who were not willfully blind, that the proper tendency of their efforts was to corrupt, as to both creed and order, the very distinctive essence of Presbyterianism.

Most obviously the New School had not been always wrong, nor the Old School always right, in the course, hitherto, of their controversies and conflicts; but the unspeakable importance of every great principle, for which the latter contended, the lapse of time has but more and more clearly demonstrated. The New School insisted on the maintenance of the Plan of Union of 1801, and the continued formation and existence, under it, of churches not strictly Presbyterian, yet to be represented in Presbyterian judicatories. They insisted that the work of missions and education should be conducted, not by church agencies, but by irresponsible voluntary union associations. Above all, they contended for lax terms of subscription to the Confession of Faith—the reception of it only for the “substance of doctrine”, or as containing “the fundamentals of Christianity”, or so far as it agreed, in the opinion of each subscriber, with the Scriptures. This plea for laxity was, of course, not without an object. Under its cloak, some of the worst errors of New Haven<sup>1</sup> had gained

<sup>1</sup> The following remarks of Dr. Fisher, in the *New Englander*, are a striking exposure, though by a professed advocate, of New Haven errors, or Taylorism:—

“It is true that Dr. Taylor was a life-long opponent of the Princeton theology. Gratuitous condemnation for Adam’s sin; congenital sin inflicted upon the sinless by a judicial decree prior to their existence; sin meriting damnation before the least consciousness of a rule of right; absolute natural impotency of the soul to throw off the bondage to evil thus engendered in it; literal endurance of the legal penalty by Christ, but only for a part of mankind, selected by mere will, without reference to results in the general good; right of this fraction to claim salvation as a matter of strict justice, their punishment having been endured; conversion of this fraction by dint of creative omnipotence acting irresistibly within their souls; perdition for all the rest, judicially inflicted for a sin done before they were created, for propagated sin

currency, had been sheltered and encouraged, and had escaped effective rebuke. In every case, in which discipline for such errors had been attempted, the New School party had made the cause of the accused their own, and had earnestly resisted the attempt. No doubt, their repeated successes in this course of resistance might be attributed, immediately, to the repeated technical mistakes of their opponents; but as little doubt is there, that they were resolved upon securing, if possible, entire immunity for the errors which they could not prevent, and for not believing in an atonement never provided for them, and when all power of thus believing had been extirpated from their souls, through the necessary effect of an ancestor's transgression: this system Dr. Taylor thought, in its logical implications, blots out human probation, and with it the moral government of God." October, 1868. Pp. 760, 1.

Of course, it is old Augustinianism or Calvinism, the system of the Westminster standards, the system which was universally received in the early New England churches, the system which is now taught in every Old School seminary in the land, and to which every Presbyterian minister regularly ordained subscribes, which, as "Princeton theology", is thus caricatured, that it may be branded a monster. Yet the men who write thus, or approve of what is thus written, have always claimed to be consistent Calvinists! Certainly there are Calvinists, that can make out, too, for themselves, a legitimate doctrinal succession, who, had they met with the passage above quoted, without knowing its author, would have said, unhesitatingly, "An enemy hath done this": surely it is the work of a Socinian, or infidel: even a sober-minded Arminian could not have so written. The truth is, that Taylorism, in its very genesis, was a concession to the Socinians of New England—a boasted discovery of a better way to meet their objections than the way of the old Puritan theology: and the Socinians hailed the teachings of Mr. Barnes as an approach to their own system. The Christian Examiner, a leading Unitarian periodical, said of his Notes, "On the atonement, our author's views are far in advance of those of the church to which he belongs. Though he maintains that Christ was, in some sense, a 'substitute in the place of sinners', he denies a strictly and fully vicarious atonement, and makes the Saviour's death important chiefly as an illustration of the inherent and essential connexion between sin and suffering." "On the subject of man's nature, capacities and duty, our author is sound and lucid. The idea of hereditary depravity he spurns, as unworthy even a passing notice. He asserts repeatedly, that men sin *only in their own persons, sin themselves*, as, indeed, *how can they sin in any other way?* The imputation of Adam's transgression, he treats as a scholastic absurdity. Of the figment of Adam's federal headship, and the condemnation of his posterity for partnership in his sin, Mr. Barnes says, 'there is not one word of it in the Bible.' It is a mere philosophical theory, an introduction of a speculation into theology, with an attempt to explain what the Bible has left unexplained." "In conclusion, we would say, that while our orthodox brethren publish, and circulate, and receive with favour such books as these 'Notes', we most cordially extend to them the right hand of fellowship, even though they refuse to return it. We regard them as fellow-labourers with us for the overthrow of time-hallowed absurdities, for the cleansing of the Christian creed 'from whatever defileth and maketh a lie.'" *March, 1836, pp. 69, 70.*

The reformers of our church, in 1837, agreed, in their opinion of Taylorism, with the (Unitarian) Christian Examiner, and now, Dr. Fisher. This should be taken into account in judging of their acts. See the Biblical Repertory, January, 1869, pp. 144-146.

in question. To accomplish their purpose, presbyteries, and at least one synod, had been constructed, according to elective affinity and otherwise, which, with all the decidedly New School judicatories, not only shielded the propagators of false doctrine, but were also constantly increasing their numbers, by lax ordinations, and the easy, unquestioning reception of men of erroneous views, particularly from among the Congregationalists. To maintain their power in the Church at large, they were notoriously making use of the American Education Society to train New School ministers, and of the American Home Missionary Society to send them out, and plant them just where they might most effectually hold the balance of ecclesiastical power; and, to secure majorities in the General Assembly, they were multiplying small presbyteries, so as to obtain an undue representation in that body.

The preparatory convention really and effectively represented the Old School party, which had never before been so thoroughly aroused and united as now. A "Testimony and Memorial" was prepared for presentation to the General Assembly, which carried out substantially the reforms proposed by this document; though in a way, as to some points, and with a thoroughness, that probably no one had contemplated, until little by little, out of the exigencies of the case, the plan evolved itself, and stood forth complete. The "statement of prevalent errors, [against which the convention testified,] after being framed by the committee, was, at their request, carefully revised by the Rev. Dr. Miller, than whom no man in the Church was less open to the charge of giving countenance to false accusations, or imaginary alarms."<sup>1</sup>

In the Assembly, there proved to be a very decided Old School majority. The great decisive measures adopted need alone be here noticed. The Plan of Union, by a vote of one hundred and forty-three to one hundred and ten was abrogated. Then, at the suggestion of the New School, a committee of ten—five from each party—the majority and minority—was appointed to negotiate for a voluntary, peaceable division of the Church. They could not agree: the simple fact was, that the New School were determined to consent to nothing

<sup>1</sup> Baird's Hist. of New School, 521.

final—nothing that would not leave all power in the hand of a majority, could they secure it, in the Assembly of 1838, to reverse the action of that of 1837, and put them again in the position of command. To this, of course, the Old School would not listen; and they now proceeded to declare the Synod of the Western Reserve “to be no longer a part of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.”

What was this Synod, and what, if any, the defensible ground of its being thus disowned, or, to use a current, though not a very happy, term, excinded? It had grown up, confessedly, under the operations of the Plan of Union, in Ohio—the region known as the Western Reserve. That plan had provided, in utter, though inconsiderate, disregard of the Constitution, that, in new settlements, a church composed partly of Congregationalists, and partly of Presbyterians, might govern themselves by a standing committee, instead of a bench of elders; and that a delegate from this committee might sit, as an elder, in Presbytery. Unhappily, settlements never became so old, that the irregularity was not pleaded for and continued; committee-men, openly or covertly, forced their way into synods and the General Assembly; and what was clearly unconstitutional in itself became, from grievous abuse, a hot-bed of evil things. Of about one hundred and thirty-nine churches belonging to the Synod of Western Reserve, only about thirty were Presbyterian; the rest were all of the mixed character, derived from the Plan of Union; yet were regularly represented in Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly—in the two former always by committee-men, in the latter, sometimes in the same way, at other times by ruling elders, in the choice of whom, however, committee-men must always have taken an influential part. This Synod was a stronghold of New Schoolism, and one of those which was expected to contribute effectively to the maintenance of New School majorities in the supreme judicatory of the Church.

Each presbytery, according to the Constitution, must be composed of at least three ministers, and each may send to the General Assembly two commissioners. A presbytery containing over twenty-four ministers may double, and, over forty-eight, triple, its representation; and may enlarge

it, in the like proportion, for greater numbers. Such a ratio evidently gives an advantage to small presbyteries: that of three ministers has an equal influence with that of twenty-four. Now, in 1836, the Synod of New Jersey, with six presbyteries and one hundred and forty-eight ministers, was entitled to twenty commissioners; while the Synod of Western Reserve, with five presbyteries and one hundred and seven ministers, was entitled to fourteen. But, in 1837, the latter, by sub-divisions, appeared with eight presbyteries, claiming an equal representation with those of the Synod of New Jersey, though with but a trifling increase of the numbers represented.<sup>1</sup> The unfairness of such management was, of course, greatly magnified by the fact, that the Synod of Western Reserve embraced but thirty Presbyterian churches; and the case of this Synod, as a flagrant one, was made a test of the General Assembly's judgment upon the principle of the disowning acts. Subsequently, the Synods of Utica, Geneva, and Genesee were in like manner disowned.

Of course, reasons given for an act are of no consequence, if the act be, in itself, right. The Synod of Western Reserve was "declared to be *no longer* a part of the Presbyterian Church", and this was attributed to "the operation of the abrogation of the Plan of Union." The other Synods, by the light elicited from further consideration and discussion, were treated as never having been properly in connexion with the church, because organized under a plan unconstitutional, and void. The latter was, doubtless, the more logical representation of the case; which, however, by the acts themselves, not the logic of the enactors, was to be adjudged. Perhaps a more plainly irrefragable statement is, that, under a strict Presbyterian Constitution, bodies originally organized in large part of Congregational elements could not be proper Presbyterian bodies, or have any legal standing in the Presbyterian Church.

The Assembly provided fully for the relations of all ministers, churches, and even presbyteries, embraced within the disowned Synods, which could make out a true Pres-

<sup>1</sup> It may be added, that owing to their hasty, imperfect organization, its being judged expedient to keep information back, or something else, no one of the three new presbyteries of this Synod sent any proper report to the General Assembly.

byterian character. Prevalent errors and disorders were specified and condemned; church judicatories were admonished to correct them; the Third Presbytery of Philadelphia was dissolved; a Board of Foreign Missions was established; the organization and operations of the American Home Missionary Society, and American Education Society were pronounced "exceedingly injurious to the peace and purity of the Presbyterian Church", within which it was recommended that their operations should cease; the Trustees of the Assembly and its clerks were directed, and the latter pledged themselves, to carry out, within their respective spheres, the reforming measures which had been adopted; a pastoral letter was addressed to the churches under the care of the General Assembly, and a circular letter to all other churches, justifying those measures as demanded by extraordinary circumstances; a letter also to the disowned Synods. The *circular* was, in substance, written by Dr. Miller, at the request of Dr. Robert J. Breckinridge, chairman of the committee appointed to prepare it, who sent a special messenger to Princeton, in haste, to secure his object. Writing to Dr. Miller, afterward, in regard to this paper, Dr. Breckinridge remarked,

"You will perceive that we were obliged considerably to curtail the admirable letter you were good enough to send us, especially the latter, and, if anything, most striking part. This resulted from some unaccountable mistake. A committee, consisting of Dr. Alexander, Dr. Baxter and another, was appointed to write a *pastoral* letter to our own churches; one, of Dr. Witherspoon, Dr. Leland and another, to write a letter to the synods declared out of our communion; and a third, of Mr. Plumer, Mr. W. Latta and myself, to write a circular *Epistle* to all other denominations, and especially to those with whom we are in correspondence. It was this last form of the three, which we desired your letter to assume; but it came to us under the first form; and that after the pastoral letter had been read to the Assembly, and only on the forenoon of the day on which the body finally adjourned. In this state of the case, the committee was obliged to take the great and painful liberty of twisting your fine paper into a new aspect, by leaving out parts, by slightly changing other parts, and by adding a few paragraphs at the conclusion. This became the more serious to us, because the paper, even thus mutilated, commanded such warm and general applause, when read, that we were obliged, in *self-*



*defence*, immediately to avow the real author. I think, my dear Sir, a more acceptable and highly useful tract has rarely issued from your pen; and this, I think, is also the common opinion amongst the friends of truth in our Church.'

## 2. AFTER THE ASSEMBLY.

The general measures of this reforming Assembly met with Dr. Miller's entire approbation. Their necessity had, at length, become too apparent to be questioned. They gave, to be sure, a great shock to the body ecclesiastical, the effects of which, however, it proved able to bear and soon to overcome. To judge of them fairly, we must remember that strong and ably directed forces had well nigh accomplished what Old School men verily believed must, without extraordinary divine interposition, result in the ruin of the Presbyterian Church. The advocates of error and of lax terms of subscription, the advocates of voluntary societies, and the advocates of a Congregationalizing policy were in the closest alliance, and with their threefold cord would soon have bound Presbyterianism so fast, that no power of successful resistance would have remained. And, no doubt, to ultra men, so called, the Church was mainly indebted, under God, for her deliverance. The emergency demanded them. But many less stern and adventurous than they hailed their achievements with unfeigned joy. Dr. Sprague says,

"Dr. Miller was an honest, vigilant and devoted friend of what he believed to be the true interests of the Presbyterian Church. In the controversy which issued in its division he was inflexibly with the Old School, though he had many warm friends on the other side with whom he continued to maintain the most friendly relations."<sup>1</sup>

The Presbytery of New Brunswick adopted the report of a committee, of which Dr. Miller was chairman, justifying fully the acts of disownment, on the ground that the Synods in question had never had any proper constitutional connexion with the Presbyterian Church. It had been alleged, that portions of some of the disowned bodies owed their ecclesiastical status, not to the Plan of Union of 1801, but to a plan of 1808, which had not been formally

<sup>1</sup> 3 Sprague's Annals, 604.

abrogated. The report declared the latter plan even more objectionable than the former, as having admitted directly into the Presbyterian body a large number of Congregational churches already organized, with their ministers, neither churches nor ministers being required to conform to the Presbyterian standards. When the acts of the Assembly came before the Synod of New Jersey, Dr. Miller constantly voted to sustain those acts, but, towards the Presbyteries which hesitated to fulfill their requirements, was in favour of an indulgent course, allowing them another year for consideration. The next spring, the clerk of Synod presented its minutes for revision to the New School Assembly; but the Synod promptly ordered the leaf, on which that Assembly had certified its approval, to be removed; and now took decided steps, Dr. Miller heartily concurring, for separating from itself those presbyteries which adhered to the New School secession.

Writing to Dr. Sprague, on the 7th of August, Dr. Miller said,

‘I feel persuaded, that, however repulsive or indefensible those acts may now appear, the more they are reflected on, and the more their bearings and consequences may disclose themselves, the more will sound and judicious men be reconciled to them. I do believe, that, long before the meeting of the next Assembly, the friends of truth and order will be convinced that the last Assembly had no other method of effectually putting an end to controversy, and restoring harmony to our beloved church, than by taking the course which they did—to disown, and declare no longer connected with them, the morbid members of the body.

‘To retrace our steps, and take back the New School presbyteries, which have been declared no longer to belong to us, would not only be a retrograde movement, but would be, also, in my opinion, to fix on ourselves, another seven years’ conflict, with all its deplorable evils.’

It has often been asserted and persistently repeated, as an overwhelming reproach to the Old School leaders in the controversies and measures which resulted in the division of the Presbyterian Church, that their real object was *power*—power to control either the whole Church, or a divided portion. Of course it was; but was this a just ground of reproach? Much eloquent declamation was

wasted in the endeavour to fix upon them a charge which they never denied. Their desire, nay, their determination, to secure all the power that they could, lawfully, for the reformation and purification of the Church, they never disguised. They fully believed that the doctrines, order, purity, and real prosperity of their beloved Zion were endangered by the course of the New School; and were certainly bound to employ all fair and christian means to obtain whatever power was necessary to avert the threatened evil. As to what means were fair and christian, opponents, in such circumstances, were not likely to be agreed; and, on this score, there were criminations and recriminations which cannot here be noticed; but, to simplify the issue, let it be admitted, that for each party to strive for the mastery, to the extent of its honest convictions, was not in itself blameworthy—nay, was required by simple fidelity to its distinctive principles. The striving was clearly right in itself. Did each party “strive lawfully?” was, indeed, an important question; and still more important was it to decide, which was, where both could not be, right as to the grand principles of creed and church-order which distinguished them. Certain it is, that it was not the ambition of the Old School to rule the New, but to be entirely separated from the latter was their ardent desire.

On the 31st of August appeared the first number of the “Watchman of the South”, a weekly religious newspaper published at Richmond, Virginia, under the able management of the Rev. William S. Plumer as editor. This number contained a letter from Dr. Miller, defending the Old School against some of the charges of their opponents; and he afterward, from time to time, continued his contributions to the paper, for the editor of which, an alumnus of the Seminary, he had long entertained an affectionate regard.

In a letter of the 29th of September, Dr. Miller says to Mrs. Wales,

‘I had a severe and very protracted fit of sickness in the winter, which confined me to my room for nearly three months. This threw me back in my work as professor, gave rise to a great accumulation of unanswered letters, and placed everything in arrears. I have reason to be thankful, however, that

my health is now restored to nearly, if not quite, as good a state as before my illness; so that I am able to go on as usual with my official duties.'

The Synod of Philadelphia had, in 1836, requested Dr. Miller to preach before them, at their next session, upon the dangers of educating Protestant children in Roman Catholic institutions. He accordingly preached before that judicatory, in Baltimore, and, at the solicitation of friends in New York city, repeated there his sermon, which the Synod afterwards published.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Miller, amidst the labours of this year, found time for but one short article of eight pages, for the *Biblical Repertory*—a review of a sermon, entitled "Decline of Religion, and its Causes,"<sup>2</sup> by the Rev. Evan M. Johnson, Rector of St. John's Church, Brooklyn. Assuming a sad decline of religion in the United States, Mr. Johnson sagely attributed it to the prevailing neglect, by the *sects*, of the paramount claims of the Episcopal Church; to religious controversy, especially between the Old and New School Presbyterians; to the "combined effort to suppress Popery in our country;" to the temperance societies; and to "the revival system,"—truly a nice little nest of buzzing, stinging insects into which to thrust a stout, sharp Puritan stick.

### 3. FOREIGN MISSIONS.

The Board of Foreign Missions established by the General Assembly fulfilled, as it had been authorized to do, the contract formerly made with The Western Foreign Missionary Society. The new organization held its first meeting at Baltimore, on the 31st of October, when the Synod of Philadelphia also met in that city. Dr. Miller was chosen President of the Board, and continued to preside over it, whenever he could be present, until his death. He was now appointed to preach before it, in Philadelphia,

<sup>1</sup>"The Dangers of Education in Roman Catholic Seminaries. A Sermon, delivered by Request, before the Synod of Philadelphia, in the City of Baltimore, October 31, 1837; and afterwards in the City of New York, November 26, 1837. (Published by Request of the Synod.) By Samuel Miller, D.D., Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government in the Theological Seminary at Princeton. Third Thousand. Baltimore: 1838."—Deuteronomy vi. 6, 7.—Svo. Pp. 15.

<sup>2</sup>P. 588.

during the sessions of the next Assembly. To the Hon. Walter Lowrie, Corresponding Secretary, he wrote on the 18th of November,

‘I know that you will pardon me for making any suggestions to yourself and the Executive Committee, which may possibly tend, in the least degree, to forward the great object of our Missionary Board. I do it with the freedom of a brother, and recollecting that, although, standing at the centre of information, you can judge of the wisdom of measures better than I can, yet a hint concerning a plan that is not feasible, may sometimes put wiser men on a track which is more feasible, and far more important.’

Dr. Miller first suggests the publication of a brief newspaper notice of the meeting and proceedings in Baltimore, in anticipation of the fuller account to be issued in pamphlet form, and for the thousands who would never see the latter. He adds,

‘It seems to me that our Yankee brethren set us a good example in keeping their Board and its doings, in one form or another, constantly before the public mind. They take good care not to suffer themselves to be forgotten.’

He then recommends the appointment of an assistant secretary, or general agent—if possible a preacher; the sending of a well-qualified missionary to France; and an effort for Africa, in connexion with the Colonization cause; saying, in conclusion, ‘Receive these suggestions as flowing from the fulness of a heart deeply solicitous for your success, and which daily prays for it.’

To Dr. Green Dr. Miller wrote on the 8th of January, 1838,

‘ \* \* when the transfer of the United Foreign Missionary Society was made to the American Board, I do not now remember.

‘One thing, I hope, will be somewhere recorded, *in perpetuum rei memoriam*—that, while a debt of near \$10,000 was transferred by the former to the latter; at the same time property to that amount in full, if not more, was transferred with it. I remember, most distinctly, to have heard Mr. Evarts say, that his board had received from the U. F. M. S. such an amount of property, as ought to prevent any mention’s ever being made of the debt transferred as being a burden. There is an “immense littleness,” in certain quarters, which, in my opinion, ought to be rebuked, in anticipation, by this statement.

‘I rejoice to hear, that there is a prospect of Dr. Witherspoon’s life and works being soon given to the public. By the way, do you not owe it to your friends, and to those who shall come after you, to leave some ample materials for your own life? I take much interest in this thing. That it will be called for cannot be doubted; and that some one of your survivors, worthy of the undertaking, and who will engage in it *con amore*, will stand ready to enterprise it, I do earnestly hope.

‘Though my own health is remarkably good, for which I have reason to be daily and hourly thankful, yet, in my sixty-ninth year, I feel that whatever I do must be done quickly.

‘I am, Rev’d and dear Sir, most respectfully  
 ‘and affectionately, your brother,  
 ‘Rev. Dr. Green. Sam’l Miller.’

According to appointment, Dr. Miller preached the first sermon before the New Board of Foreign Missions in Philadelphia, while the Assembly was in session. In this discourse, which was published,<sup>1</sup> the following passages occur:—

“We are assembled, as the representatives of our beloved Church, to recognize for ourselves, and to endeavour to impress upon the minds of others, the duty and importance of engaging with zeal, as a Church, in the great cause of Foreign Missions. It is well known to those whom I now address, that a large number of the friends of truth and order in our body, have been earnestly desiring, for a number of years past, to engage in this work in an ecclesiastical capacity. After many a painful and unsuccessful struggle to attain the privilege, God has been pleased, at length, to grant us the desire of our hearts. Need I say, Christian brethren, that the history of the conflict by which we have gained the position which we now occupy, is deeply interesting, and greatly increases our responsibility? Have we been contending for a mere nominal honor; or for a precious, practical privilege? Surely every consideration of worldly consistency, as well as of sanctified principle, calls upon us to arise in all the strength that God may give us, and to pursue in good earnest the object which we profess to love, and which we have solicited the power of pursuing. Oh, let us not contradict or disgrace our oft-repeated profession. Let us not manifest by our indolence, now that the point is attained,

<sup>1</sup> “Zion called upon to Awake. A Sermon preached in the Second Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, May 22, 1838, before the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. By Samuel Miller, D. D., Professor in the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church, Princeton, N. J. New York: 1838.”—Isaiah lii. 1.—Svo. Pp. 20.

that our object was, not to perform the work, but to gain the victory. Let us rather testify, by our zeal, diligence and energy in this cause, that the love of Christ does indeed constrain us; that the love of souls does indeed fill our hearts; and that we regard it as our highest privilege to be engaged in the great work of converting the world to God.

“That we have been, as a Church, greatly and deplorably remiss in regard to this duty, we must all acknowledge. And how far a righteous God may have permitted, as a judgment for this criminal remissness, so much coldness, and leanness, and error, and strife, to enter and distress our Zion, I pretend not to decide. I can only say that the very same effects followed the same neglect of missionary efforts, on the part of the Church, sixteen hundred years ago; and that similar results may, in all similar circumstances, be expected. And although we have begun to arouse ourselves, and to act in this great field of benevolence, we are yet but half awake. \* \* Oh, that another *Isaiah* might be raised up—another *Isaiah* in spirit and in eloquence—to go forth through the length and breadth of the land, proclaiming again in the language of our text, “Awake! awake! O Zion! put on thy strength.””<sup>1</sup>

Such was the spirit in which good men rejoiced and congratulated one another, over the victory which they believed they had won for Christ and for his Church. Their joy was by no means unmingled with sorrow; yet it was a “joy of the Lord,” which proved to be their strength. The history of the Board of Foreign Missions, from that beginning, is a history which, at least, has fully justified the principles and struggles of its founders; while its very opponents have abandoned the ground of their opposition.

#### 4. THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF 1838.

The New School party, intent upon retrieving its fortunes, was by no means a unit in opinion as to the measures necessary for this purpose. It was easy to accuse the Old School, as they did, of an unholy alliance with the slave-power in the Church; of lust for authority; of Antinomianism and High-churchism; of being the “New Discipline”, and “New Basis” party; of bigotry, malignity, and all unrighteousness; of having violated the Constitution, forfeited the charter of the Assembly, and dissolved

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 16, 17.

the Church. It was not, however, quite so easy to determine how all this iniquity was to be counteracted and punished. But it was finally agreed, that commissioners regularly appointed by the disowned presbyteries must present themselves, at the time and place of meeting of the next General Assembly, and formally claim their seats. If denied, they were to transfer the question of their rights, as most properly they might, and as, where civil interests were involved, they certainly could, into the civil courts, for adjudication. The particular plan, however, which was finally decided upon for putting the case in a legal form for trial, was, probably, understood by a few of the leaders, alone, and their counsel; and, for reasons to be mentioned by and by, was never disclosed to the public—as it is now, by even a death-bed confession, never likely to be. A cardinal idea, however, of this plan evidently was, that while the Old School commissioners organized, as they were expected to do, *an* Assembly, if not *the* Assembly, on the basis of their disowning acts, the New School commissioners, including those from the disowned presbyteries, and on the basis of the supposed equal right of the latter, were to organize *the* Assembly, or, at least, *an* Assembly, which was afterwards to dispute the true succession with the other organization. Beyond this, it is possible to explain only what they might properly have done, what they actually did—so far as that is known, and what they afterwards claimed to have done.

The New School commissioners, even counting the disowned, proved to be in a hopeless minority by more than thirty. This fact, in itself, limited very much their powers. Had they been a majority, a plan of proceeding was open to them which to a minority was impossible. The members of every deliberative body, which, like the General Assembly, needs, from time to time, a complete re-organization, have, as the bearers of credentials *prima facie* valid, an unquestionable, equal, and fundamental right to secure an organization, including all thus accredited. Generally, these bodies are organized according to express rule or precedent. But such rules or precedents, intended to facilitate, cannot justly be allowed to prevent, a constitutional organization, or to exclude any whose credentials give



them, *prima facie*, a perfect equality with the rest. The old clerk, according to rule, was presiding, in a well-known case, in the national House of Representatives, while that body was taking on its organic shape; and, for party ends, was preventing the very thing which he had been appointed to accomplish. John Quincy Adams, at length, rose, made a motion, and immediately, ignoring the clerk, put it himself. He had, however, a majority of the accredited Representatives to sustain him; else he could not have secured his object. Had a majority voted against him, or refused to vote, he and his adherents would have remained powerless. Now, the General Assembly is organized by rule: the old moderator and clerks are the regular instruments of its new organization. But, if they pretend to exclude commissioners with credentials *prima-facie* constitutional, any member may make and put a motion, to supersede those officers by the appointment of others. The proper constituents of every such body have an inherent right, superior to all by-laws at least, to effect an organization rightfully. Those constituents are the body, first, to organize themselves, afterwards to act organically. But the New School had not a majority, and, therefore, could not, in this way, accomplish their object.

But, as a minority, they had a remedy of equal value, so far, at least, as the presentation to the civil courts of the naked question of the legality of the disowning acts was concerned. The supposed rights of the commissioners from the disowned presbyteries having been denied *by a vote of the majority*, those commissioners, and all who chose to join them, might have treated the body excluding them as a nullity, and, by themselves, might have organized the true General Assembly—that Assembly which the civil courts must pronounce the true one, if they should pronounce the disowning acts unconstitutional. This minority proceeding was probably what, beforehand, the New School leaders and their counsel contemplated: for they must have known, beforehand, that their adherents were a mere minority.

The organization of the General Assembly, it has been already said, is regulated by definite rule. The moderator of the former Assembly is to open the sessions with a

sermon, and preside until the new moderator has been chosen. The old clerks are a committee to receive the commissions, and from them make out a roll to be reported to the yet unorganized body. Irregular, doubtful, or disputed commissions they report at the same time, and lay before the inchoate Assembly, composed of those whose names are upon the roll; and who are now organized for business, but must, as their first act, appoint a Committee of Elections, to which the questionable commissions reported must then be referred for consideration. The earliest moment when any motion could, regularly, be made, for obtaining a direct decision of the Assembly, that is, of the majority, upon the case of commissioners from the disowned Presbyteries, was immediately after the appointment of the Committee of Elections; and, even then, no motion would have been in order, excepting to refer to that committee the commissions which the clerks had refused to receive.

Each party held a preliminary meeting. The Old School, informed previously that the New were meditating a *coup d'état*, went early to the Seventh Church, where the Assembly was to convene, and, at the hour appointed for the opening exercises, were closely arranged in the front seats around the moderator's chair. The New School members, coming in together from their preparative deliberations, necessarily sat back of the others. After a sermon by the old moderator, Dr. Elliott, he took the chair, and proceeded to organize the judicatory according to rule. He had just called upon the clerks, as the Committee of Commissions, to report, when Dr. William Patton, of the New School, offered certain resolutions concerning this report; but the moderator declared them out of order, as he did, also, an appeal from his decision made by Dr. Patton: there was, as yet, no Assembly to appeal to. This point was yielded; the New School leaders seemed to admit their error; and were evidently disconcerted and thrown into confusion by the rebuff. The report of the Clerks was made; the moderator announced that any commissions not yet handed to them might now be presented; but just then, Dr. Erskine Mason rose; said that he held in his hand certain commissions—those of commissioners from the disowned Presbyteries—which had been rejected

by the Clerks; and he moved that the names in these commissions should be added to the roll. The Moderator declared his motion, as also an appeal which he then took, out of order *at that time*. The Rev. Miles P. Squier, one of the rejected commissioners, now arose, tendering his commission, and claiming his seat. Learning whence he came, the Moderator said, "We do not know you, Sir." Dr. Mason and Mr. Squier resumed their seats. Hitherto, what it seemed to be the object of the New School to obtain—a vote of the majority—they had utterly failed to secure, because they had called for it prematurely, and the clear-witted, self-possessed, determined Moderator had rightfully disappointed all their expectations, and frustrated all their efforts.

Mr. Squier was, perhaps, entirely self-prompted in presenting his claims. Dr. Patton and Dr. Mason were evidently acting in concert with other leading men; but Dr. Beman, who sat near them, was clearly the master spirit of the occasion, and the Rev. John P. Cleveland had been selected to execute the most important and difficult part of the plan.

"At this moment, Mr. Cleveland seems to have been greatly embarrassed and agitated. His countenance was flushed and his frame trembled. Apparently, he hesitated, and held a hasty conference with those around him. With excited countenances and eager gestures, the voices of Drs. Beecher and Taylor were heard in low but earnest tones urging him, "Go on! Go on!"<sup>1</sup>

The critical nature of the act he was about to perform may have occasioned Mr. Cleveland's perturbation; but it is more probable, that the preceding events, on which his action was based, had not gone as he had expected: he half discerned, at least, that refusals by the Moderator and Clerks were not refusals by the Assembly, or the majority. He may, at any rate, have had a confused idea that the course of things had not been exactly that marked out by their counsel; either because the rules, sternly enforced by the Moderator, had not been sufficiently studied by either lawyers or clients; or because divines and other unprofessional persons are not very safe executors of a legal brief. He suffered himself, however, to be hurried into ac-

<sup>1</sup> Baird's Hist. of New School, 550.

tion. Under his leadership, the New School organized their new body, and carried it off to glory over it, without discovering—some have not discovered yet—that it was a simple abortion.

Mr. Cleveland rose, with a paper in his hand, from which he seems partly to have read, while partly, as if to accommodate them to unexpected circumstances, he extemporized, certain reasons for what he was about to do. Then he moved, put the motion, and declared it carried, that Dr. Beman should be temporary chairman. The latter stepped into the aisle, and, under his presidency, first, temporary clerks, then, a permanent moderator and permanent clerks, were hastily chosen. Afterwards the new body resolved to meet, forthwith, in the First Presbyterian Church,—Mr. Barnes's,—and moved off thither in triumph.

During this hurried scene, the Old School and their moderator, after a few idle efforts to transact the regular business of the Assembly, and a few still more idle calls to order, had quietly taken their seats, and waited for the other party to retire, before they resumed action. On the part of the New School, it had been a scene of great excitement, and rather boisterous noise; but it is not probable, that any set of men would have performed such a duty—as these esteemed it—in such trying circumstances, with any greater decorum than they manifested. How loudly or eagerly they cried “Aye! Aye!” was a very little matter to concern one's self about, considering the vital importance of other issues involved. Even Dr. Edward Beecher and the Rev. Eliakim Phelps can hardly be said to have lost their dignity, because, with stentorian voices, they proclaimed at the doors, that the General Assembly would meet, forthwith, in the First Presbyterian Church. They may have been instructed to regard this as a legal requirement.

The truth, however, is, most plainly, that supposing the plan of the New School to have contemplated the simple, proper minority proceeding above described,—an organization by themselves, on the ground that the other organization had been fatally vitiated by the refusal of the majority to admit the commissioners rejected by the Clerks,—they were far more punctilious than necessary about the time,

place and other circumstances; while they made, with all their imaginary exactness, a serious blunder, in choosing permanent officers, before they were constitutionally prepared for such business.<sup>1</sup> Especially, since the trustees of the Seventh Church had expressly prohibited their attempting any organization in that house, the malcontents might, without losing any advantage, have quietly withdrawn and organized themselves, at the nearest convenient time and place. An organization just then and there was not a matter of legal necessity. *De minimis non curat lex*. Their claims were to be determined upon principles far more important than these; and it was idle to insist upon minutes and superficial square feet, when they were avowedly sacrificing the ordinary rules of organization to a higher law, and for the security of essential rights.

But what was Mr. Cleveland actually attempting? The paper which, in part at least, he read, and which must, of course, have exhibited the original New School idea of the proceeding, was carefully suppressed—was not produced even upon the trial of the cause before the civil court. Mr. Cleveland might have testified to both his own extemporaneous remarks and what he had read; but he, the chief actor in the most critical part of the proceeding, was carefully kept out of the witness-box. Inferior actors were examined, to testify as to what he had done; but he himself, the one who could have best told the whole story, was not summoned. Dr. Beman, who managed the proceedings, as temporary chairman, after Mr. Cleveland had led the way, had gone to England a few weeks before the trial commenced. The depositions of both these gentlemen were in the hands of the New School counsel, but were not produced. The “substance” of Mr. Cleveland’s paper and remarks was said to have been given in the minute of the transaction afterwards adopted by the New School Assembly; but that minute had been drawn by a committee subsequently appointed for the purpose, and, as it appeared, under the superintendence of counsel learned in the law.

And, when now the case had come before the tribunal of justice, the New School, through their counsel, seeing that their proper minority proceeding had been a failure, because they had not waited to secure that essential condition

See Form of Government, Chap. xii. 7.

—the vote of the majority, boldly claimed that the proceeding had really been the other one which has been described—that, proper and, indeed, possible for a majority alone. To make out their case, they contended that Mr. Cleveland's motion had been offered to all the commissioners present, and that, according to the settled rule, the silent Old School portion of them must be counted as if they had voted, aye, in the election of Dr. Beman and the temporary Clerks. But "he who seeks equity, must do equity." The civil law, which is *ratio summa*, will not override minor regulations, to do substantial justice to one party, without taking care, at the same time, to do substantial justice to the other also. The New School had, confessedly, disregarded, as, on their principles, they righteously might, the ordinary rules of proceeding, in order to secure a higher end; and could they now turn round, and, contrary to the evident fact and all justice, claim that the Old School, by their constrained silence, were, according to a mere technicality, to be regarded as having joined with them to defeat their own purposes? It is perfectly clear that neither Mr. Adams, nor Mr. Cleveland, if, indeed, the latter was seeking the same object as the former, could successfully appeal to the inchoate house, without an absolute majority on his side, ready to follow his lead. Could a helpless minority, on a sudden, through a self-constituted chairman, spring a question upon a deliberative body, and then claim, in their own favour, the votes of a momentarily bewildered majority, who for peace' sake had simply sat still, and tried to behave as decently as they could under great provocation?

It is perfectly evident, that the counsel for the New School claimed for their clients a plan and an attempt which were a sheer afterthought. Even their minute, so carefully drawn, near the time of the event, did not justify the assumption which ten months' further reflection led them to make upon the trial. It represented Mr. Cleveland as proposing to secure a constitutional organization of the Assembly at that time and place; as trusting that his attempt would not be considered an act of discourtesy; and as intending to accomplish his object in the fewest words, in the shortest time, and with the least interruption

practicable. Discourtesy to whom—interruption of what—if they were not acting independently of the Old School? Did Mr. Adams talk of discourtesy, or interrution, when he avowedly did what the counsel afterwards asserted that Mr. Cleveland had done? And, though much of the evidence was made to square marvellously with this figment of the lawyers, they could not, with all their care, prevent the naked truth's appearing now and then. Dr. William Hill, a New School man and witness, to the discomfiture, plainly of the counsel on that side, who hastily sought to arrest him, said, "I had opposed the separate organization."<sup>1</sup> Instead of then regarding the majority as voters, the New School were simply afraid that they might vote, and embarrass, as clearly it would have embarrassed, the whole proceeding. Said Dr. Hill, "I heard a few scattering noes, only from the direction of the Old School— \* \* I was astonished at this, because I expected a thundering "No!" as they claimed to be the majority. As there were so few negatives, I was surprised that there had been any. I thought they were, at least, not well trained. \* \* I was surprised at hearing any noes, and disappointed. I had expected that the noes would be of another character, and was agreeably disappointed. I had anticipated these events, and had feared that a great riot would take place."<sup>2</sup> Were the New School, while hoping that the Old would not vote, and what?—arrest the proceedings?—No, but to maintain their vote, cause a riot,—were they really, with this hope, entertaining the thought of torturing their opponents' silence into consent? It is true, that the project of a "separate organization" forbade the exclusion from a vote of any lawful commissioner. Such an exclusion, as they regarded it, was the very thing of which the New School had complained. But to keep the way open for the majority to rejoin them, was a very different thing from regarding that majority, while actually in a hostile attitude, as consenting to be, as an organic body, destroyed.

Dr. Miller, though not a commissioner, was a most deeply interested witness of the whole scene. Upon the trial of the case, he was called to give evidence, and was asked,

<sup>1</sup> Report of the Presb. Church Case, 212.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*

upon cross-examination by the New School counsel, whether he had not passed hastily to the moderator, and begged him not to permit them to be organized. He had done no such thing. It seems scarcely credible that any one could have suggested the Moderator's realizing the English clerical wit's idea, of using a mop to keep out the waves of the Atlantic.

With the scenes just described, the controversy of so many years, between the Old and New School, ended, so far as the floor of the Assembly was concerned—ended forever, unless the two parties should come together again to renew their conflicts.



## CHAPTER THIRTY-SIXTH.

### CHEQUERED SCENES.

1838, 1839.

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#### 1. DEATH OF MRS. BRECKINRIDGE.

IN the annals of every household the tide of earthly grief must ever swell above and beyond the tide of earthly gladness. It is the law of nature, that joy shall be lost in sorrow, as it is the law of grace that sorrow shall be swallowed up in joy.

The General Assembly of 1835 had elected Dr. John Breckinridge Professor of Pastoral Theology in the Seminary at Princeton. He had accepted the appointment, and had been inaugurated on the 5th of May, following. For some time the continuance of his connexion with the Board of Education had been a subject of solicitude, and this new call was considered decisive of his duty. Yet Mrs. Breckinridge, delightful as the prospect was of returning to the scenes of her youth, and almost to her early home, was perhaps the last to assure herself that she might accept release from the trials which for nearly five years she had resolutely endured. The decision, however, was made; Princeton was henceforth to be her residence; and a few noble-hearted friends in Philadelphia, uniting in the purchase of a commodious dwelling near the Seminary, presented her with the title deed for herself and her children. She would have put aside the gift in favor of the Seminary; but the donors would permit it to be nothing else than a testimonial of regard to her and her husband. Yet this new home, which promised so much to earthly comfort and affection, promised but deceptively. Dr. Breckinridge's time was divided between the ordinary duties of his profes-

sorship, and an active agency, in behalf of the funds of the Seminary, which took him very much away from his family. Then, after only eighteen months in Princeton, he was urged to undertake an agency for the new Board of Foreign Missions; and, though declining the proposal, consented to spend the winter of 1837-8 in the City of New York, laboring in this cause. Thither, to a hotel, the entire family removed. Under date of the 17th of December, Dr. A. Alexander wrote,

‘I cannot conclude, without a word to dear Mrs. Breckinridge. I admire her ready submission to the calls of Providence. For although she cannot help dropping the silent tear, she makes no complaint, but shuts up her comfortable house, leaves her home and her friends, and, as cheerfully as she *can*, goes to live in a hotel, and among strangers. Well, she shall not lose her reward. For these sacrifices she shall have rich compensation; and our sweetest earthly pleasure is in doing the will of our Heavenly Father.’

At the close of the winter the family returned to their delightful home in Princeton. Mrs. Breckinridge’s health was very delicate, but for a time her condition excited no alarm. Then she was prostrated by a violent attack of illness, which filled the minds of all around her with gloomy forebodings. Recovering a little, she was taken, about the first of May, at her own request, to try the waters of Saratoga; and there, before the season for crowds of visitors, spent three weeks, but without benefit. Her debility was extreme; she could not walk many steps by herself, but was borne about in her husband’s arms. Wasted and frail, gentle and patient, her face, in its chastened loveliness, seeming like a transparency, through which the soul shone forth, she was an object of interest to all who passed by; how much more to those bound to her by ties the most precious, yet just ready to snap asunder. Leaving Saratoga, she tried to reach the Red Sulphur Springs of Virginia, but could go no further than Philadelphia. While there, she received the following letter, dated the 8th of June, from her father:—

‘I now see, my dear Margaret, more than ever, what a happy providence it was, that you concluded to take medical counsel in Philadelphia, and that your journey to Virginia was postponed. We can now perceive how great would have been your

distress and peril had you pursued that journey. God, in his mercy, interposed to prevent it; and who can tell but that this first mercy may be followed by a train of mercies, which shall issue in your happy restoration? The great Physician of soul and body is able to heal and restore you. Our hope and prayer are that this favor may not be withheld. I trust, however, my dear Daughter, that you will be enabled, with humble and cordial confidence, to resign yourself into the hands of a God of infinite goodness and mercy, and to leave the event with him. Happy, thrice happy are those, who, on a bed of sickness, can repose with calm, unshaken trust on the merit and grace of the Saviour, and rejoice in him as the Lord their righteousness and strength. Look to him, my beloved Daughter. Pray without ceasing for the aid of his Holy Spirit, to enable you to lay hold of his exceeding great and precious promises, and more and more to renounce all confidence in yourself. It is, indeed, a precious privilege, to know that our Redeemer is almighty and all sufficient, and as full of love as of power. Oh, what a mercy to be allowed to plead his finished work, as the ground of all our hopes, and to go without reserve to that fountain that is opened for sin and for uncleanness, that we may be cleansed from all our pollutions, "and find grace to help in time of need." I cannot help hoping that this blessed Saviour is "precious" to my beloved child; and that on the bed of sickness on which he has been pleased to lay her, she enjoys something of those consolations which are neither few nor small.

'Remember, that "we have not a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Blessed be his name, "he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him."

From Philadelphia, by easy stages, Mrs. Breckinridge was brought back to Princeton; there to linger only three days in her earthly tabernacle. Of a self-distrustful habit, and convinced of the evil of talking much of one's own religious experience, she however said enough, with a child-like simplicity of faith and feeling, to satisfy the minds of those who longed for her eternal welfare. "I am only afraid," she remarked, "of the article of death: I know that when this is over, I shall be in Jesus's arms." "On the evening of June the 13th, she reached her children and her earthly home. On the morning of the 16th, a quarter before ten o'clock, with her reason unclouded, in a frame

of calm and holy triumph which marked the dawning of heaven on her soul; with a meek prayer for permission to die, and with but a single pang, she bade the world farewell, and ascended to God!"<sup>1</sup>

To a large and deeply affected congregation, in the Presbyterian Church, Dr. Alexander preached at her funeral.

"She was brought up among you, from her childhood," he said to the audience, "and enjoyed the affectionate regards of this community in no common degree, as is manifest by the general and tender sympathy felt on this occasion. By her sweet simplicity, engaging vivacity, affectionate temper and affable manners, our beloved friend endeared herself to her acquaintances and neighbors, wherever she resided. And in regard to her Christian character, she adorned her profession by a consistent life and conversation, in all the relations which she sustained."<sup>2</sup>

A little more than a year after Mrs. Breckinridge's death, a "Memorial"<sup>3</sup> was printed for private circulation, consisting of brief notices of her life and character by Mrs. Miller, supplemented by Dr. Breckinridge; Dr. Alexander's funeral sermon; and "Letters of a Grandfather," by Dr. Miller. In his diary, Dr. Miller wrote,

'June 16, 1838. This is a mournful, solemn day. This morning, soon after breakfast, my eldest daughter, Mrs. Margaret Breckinridge \* \* departed this life. She has been declining in health for six months; and, for the preceding three months, had been thought in a very perilous situation. She suffered much from extreme weakness and frequent pain, but was patient and composed, and departed in the calm enjoyment of Christian hope. Blessed be the God of all grace for this inestimable favor.

'Thus my first-born has gone before me. May the Lord enable me and my beloved wife to make the proper use of this bereavement. Why are the parents spared and the daughter taken? "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight."

<sup>1</sup> Memorial of Mrs. Breckinridge, 59.

<sup>2</sup> Memorial, 89.

<sup>3</sup> "Memorial of Mrs. Margaret Breckinridge." I. "A Memoir of Mrs. Margaret Breckinridge." "Submission: a Sermon occasioned by the Death of Mrs. Margaret Breckinridge. By the Rev. A. Alexander, D.D." II. "Letters of a Grandfather, to the Surviving Children of Mrs. Margaret Breckinridge. By the Rev. Samuel Miller, D.D." "Philadelphia: 1839."—12mo. Pp. 90 and 103.

The titles of the "Letters" are 1. Introductory. 2. Human Nature. 3. The Way of Salvation. 4. The Bible. 5. Prayer. 6. Cultivation of the Mind. 7. Cultivation of the Heart and Moral Habits. 8. Manners.

Oh, that we also may be ready! And Oh that we may manifest such an improvement, on our part, of this dispensation, as to benefit our younger children, and glorify Him who gave them! “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord!”

‘May God, of his infinite mercy, support the bereaved and mourning husband! Never was there a more affectionate companion, and never any one who appeared more borne down by bereavement. May He, who has sent the stroke, send the balm of consolation, and enable him with confidence to say, “It is good for me that I have been afflicted.”’

‘By this mournful death, our dear daughter’s three children (she had lost three, and had only three surviving) are likely to be devolved on our care. Solemn charge! May we be enabled faithfully and wisely to discharge all the duties connected with this tender and interesting trust. Dear motherless children! they stand in peculiar need of a guide. O Lord, wilt not thou be the guide of their youth?’

## 2. PUBLICATIONS.

Early in the year 1839, Dr. Miller contributed to *The Presbyterian* several short articles, entitled “*Micæ Ecclesiasticæ*,” and signed, *Biblicus*. In one of them he said, on the subject of “Occasional Communion,”

“My own practice, as a pastor, has always been, to invite to the communion table over which I presided, all those members of “sister churches” who felt inclined to unite with us. This, I believe, is the common practice and language of Presbyterian ministers. And by *sister churches* I usually explained myself to mean all those who, in the main, agreed with us in the great principles of our common salvation. In this class I included, not only the Dutch Church, the various classes of Presbyterian Seceders, and the orthodox Congregationalists, but also the Methodist and the Protestant Episcopal Churches. Both these I consider as holding the fundamentals of our holy religion; always excepting, however, from this estimate such Methodists and Episcopalians as appear to be open and thorough *Pelagians*—concerning whom I must say, with the excellent Dr. Witherspoon, that I cannot consider them as deserving the name of Christians at all. These include, however, but a very small portion of the mass of those denominations.

“I once saw a Methodist and two Episcopalians at a Presbyterian communion-table. We knew them well, and considered them as truly pious. They requested to be permitted to com-

mune with us, and were promptly and freely allowed to do so. They all received the elements *kneeling* by the side of the table. This not only gave no offence to the pastor or elders, or the other communicants; but was regarded by them all rather with pleasure, as an example of the "communion of saints," which, in its liberal and delightful spirit, could overleap the bounds which names and forms had erected.

"This was called, in our technical language, admitting them to *occasional communion*. There were Methodist and Episcopal churches in the town; but these individuals had a strong desire, on that occasion, to participate with us; and we had no scruple which forbade it. Had the same persons come to me, and requested to be received into *regular and stated* membership in our church, informing me, at the same time, that they were conscientiously scrupulous in favour of *kneeling* at the Lord's table, I should certainly have advised them to withdraw their application, and to commune *statedly* with churches within their reach, with which they could entirely harmonize in this respect. But, if I were the pastor of a church in a place where there was no Methodist or Episcopal \* \* worship on which they could attend, and two or three individuals of those denominations should request to be admitted *statedly* to my communion-table—advertising me, at the same time, that they always wished permission to *kneel* in receiving the sacramental elements, I, for one, should not object to receiving such persons, provided I thought them substantially orthodox and truly pious."

The following two paragraphs are from a review, by Dr. Miller, of a "Bible Class Manual," in the Repertory.

"Were it possible, therefore, so to lift up our voice as to cause it to be heard by every pastor, by every ruling elder, and by every professing Christian in our beloved church, we would exert it in saying to them, let the children of the church be the objects of your vigilant and unceasing care. Let them be familiar, from their mother's lap, with the Bible, with the Catechisms of the church, and with such judicious compends of Christian doctrine as shall preoccupy their minds with divine truth, to the exclusion of the countless errors which are ever found to assail their opening faculties. Let the officers of the church, as their moral parent, regard them as, in some respects, the most precious part of their charge; providing for their instruction; suppressing every kind of vice and immorality in them; reminding them of their baptismal dedication; putting in the Master's claim to their affections and services; and ac-

comparing every effort with unceasing prayer with them, and for them, that the Holy Spirit may accompany and crown with success all the means employed for their benefit.

“Such must be among the means unceasingly employed, if we wish our church to be built up in knowledge, in piety, and in peace; if we wish harmony and orthodoxy to reign in all our borders; if we desire our children to take the place of their fathers when we are sleeping in the dust, and to bear forward the ark of God to victory and glory in the future contest with error and sin, when we shall have resigned to them our armour. He who expects the church to gain such blessings without the use of such means, may just as well hope to gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles. Without the faithful use of such means, if the church were to-day perfectly pure and united, we might expect to find her, in a few years, torn by divisions, forsaken of her children, and her best interests given to the winds.”<sup>1</sup>

From a review, also by Dr. Miller, of Dr. Griffin’s Sermons, in the same volume of the Repertory, the following extracts are taken.

“Dr. Griffin continued to be the pastor of the Park Street Church between three and four years. During this time, he was diligent, eloquent, and popular, both as a preacher and pastor. During this period, too, he delivered and published his “Park Street Lectures,” which have generally been considered as the ablest of all his publications. And no one acquainted with the consistency and uniformity of his character can doubt that he preached now with an ardour and a power as great as ever before. And yet, if we mistake not, Dr. Griffin’s ministry in Boston was not attended with anything like the success with which it pleased God to connect it in every preceding and subsequent stage of his pastoral life. We know not whether we are justifiable in attempting to account for this fact—supposing it to be a fact; but we will venture to make one suggestion which our readers may regard as little or as much as they think proper.

“We are constrained then seriously to doubt, whether the enterprise of those public-spirited and excellent men who undertook the erection of the “Park Street Church,” was not undertaken and conducted in a spirit of a very questionable character. We have no doubt they were pious and sincere men, who really believed as they professed to believe, who were filled with a laudable zeal, and who honestly aimed to oppose

<sup>1</sup> 11 Biblical Repertory, (1839,) Pp. 36, 37.

error, and to promote the reign of truth and righteousness. But what we doubt is, whether they did not calculate too much on carrying their point by means of outward splendour and human eloquence. They felt that there were great learning, and wealth, and taste, and eloquence firmly entrenched in Boston, and to be met and opposed by the friends of truth. And the calculation seems to have been to meet and vanquish the adversary by corresponding weapons. Hence they concluded that it was necessary for them, in order to insure success, to erect a splendid house of worship, in a public, prominent, and commanding situation; and to call a minister whose pulpit talents would enable him to cope with the most admired of their opponents. They acted upon this plan. They erected a church among the most spacious and splendid in Massachusetts, if not in the United States; and they called a pastor among the most eloquent and admired pulpit orators in the country. The question which arises in our minds, in contemplating these facts, is, Did the leaders in this undertaking go to work in the best way? Did they not count too much on human instrumentality? Were they not chargeable, in too great a degree, with "making flesh their arm"?

"\* \* \* Would not the undertaking have been more likely to succeed, had it been entered upon and pursued with less of a spirit of worldly calculation; had outward splendour been less consulted; had, of course, a less profuse expenditure of funds been indulged, and a heavy and oppressive debt been more carefully avoided;—in a word, had there been less reliance on carnal weapons, and more on those of a purely spiritual kind? We know nothing, we decide nothing concerning this matter. But the longer we live, the more considerations of this kind impress us as deeply important. The more we look above and beyond human instrumentality the better. The King of Zion will not give his glory to another. None, we believe, are so likely to succeed in spiritual enterprises as those who place least reliance on human resources, or "the enticing words of man's wisdom;" and most on the Spirit of the living God, who can make the humblest and feeblest instruments to triumph over the proudest and most mighty. We think, if the Apostle Paul had gone to Boston twenty years ago, to stem the tide of Unitarianism, and to restore "the truth as it is in Jesus," he would hardly have adopted just the course that the excellent men did who planned and executed the establishment in "Park Street." He would have gone to work on a less ambitious plan, and on a smaller scale. He would not have "despised the day of small things;" but would have calcula-



ted, by the divine blessing on much prayer and patience, to form a body of spiritual worshippers, and as their number increased, to increase the means of their spiritual accommodation.”<sup>1</sup>

### 3. CORRESPONDENCE AND DIARY.

DR. MILLER had undertaken to write the Life of Dr. Nisbet, which he afterwards published. To Judge Nisbet, of Baltimore, he wrote on the 4th of April, 1838,

‘I have not yet begun the composition of the volume. My manner of doing such things is, to collect materials; to digest the whole plan in my mind; and, having done this, then to begin the work of actual writing. This last I do not calculate to commence in less than four or five months \* \* as I have another volume now in hand, which I commenced six months ago.’

To the Rev. Dr. Elliott he wrote as follows:—

‘Rev. and dear Brother,                      Princeton, August 10th, 1838.

‘Your letter of the 1st came to my hands on the 6th. It found me busily engaged in assisting to celebrate the centennial anniversary of our presbytery, in the city of New Brunswick, where it was first constituted on the 8th of August, 1738. I returned last evening, and take the earliest opportunity of answering your query.

‘I have no doubt, whatever, that the ordination of Cumberland Presbyterian ministers ought to be sustained as valid; and, of course, could not conscientiously vote for re-ordaining one of their number, who should connect himself with our church. I presume no one would think of re-ordaining a Congregational minister from Connecticut or Massachusetts, who should come into our body. This we have, as a church, practically decided in a variety of ways. Now, it appears to me, that the ecclesiastical character of the Cumberlands stands on grounds quite as good as that of our Congregational brethren, and ought to be treated with equal favour.

‘But I consider the General Assembly of 1825 as having decided this question. If the *baptisms* of the body alluded to ought to be deemed valid, and not to be repeated, it seems to me that the point is settled. This evidently presupposes the claim to *official character* to be good.

‘As to the point of *uninterrupted succession*, whatever else may be said about it, the Cumberlands can trace quite as good a line, at least, as our New England brethren, about whom we have no scruple.

<sup>1</sup> 11 Biblical Repertory, 408, 409, 410.

‘I feel gratified, my dear Sir, in gathering from your letter, that, in these opinions, I concur with you. This gives me, I confess, much firmer confidence that my opinion is right. What I have said agrees entirely with what I have been in the habit of expressing in my lectures on Church Government, whenever I have had occasion to speak to my pupils concerning the Cumberland Presbyterians.’

On the 8th of August, the Presbytery of New Brunswick, had celebrated, in the city which had given it its name, the centenary anniversary of its organization. Dr. Alexander preached in the morning, Dr. Miller in the afternoon, and both sermons were requested for publication.

In his diary, Dr. Miller says,

‘August, 1838. I have some reason to hope that the Lord has been pleased to impart his grace to my son, ———. I can hardly express the gratification I feel in cherishing this hope. He has always been a moral, amiable and dutiful son. But now, I trust, the Holy Spirit has taken a saving hold of his heart. A sermon delivered by Professor J. Addison Alexander, at an evening service in the church in this place, seems to have been first blessed to his awakening. God grant that the dear boy may not deceive himself with a false hope.’

‘September 10, 1838. I am happy in being able to record, that my son, ———, a few days ago, united himself with the Lord’s people by sitting down at a sacramental table. He cherishes the hope that he has given himself to the Lord in an everlasting covenant. May the Lord, in the riches of his grace, make him sincere and devoted! He is, I am rejoiced to say, looking toward the holy ministry, and has thoughts of entering the Seminary this fall.’

‘October 31, 1838. I am sixty-nine years old. Having obtained help of God, I continue to this day; and have abundant reason to bear witness for him, that he is a covenant-keeping, faithful and merciful God. Oh, how many mercies have I experienced during the past year! And, amidst all these mercies, how multiplied and aggravated have been my sins! When I look back for twelve months, and ask how much I have done, during that time, for the best of Masters, compared with what I ought to have done, and with what others have done, I feel called upon to humble myself before God in the deepest abasement, and to “repent in dust and ashes.” And I feel the more inexcusable in this matter, when I recollect that the service of Christ is perfect freedom; that his ways are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths peace. Oh, how inexcusable for those

who bear the name of Christ, and especially for those who bear the office of his ambassadors, to be so languid and indolent in his service; when that service is but another name for happiness!

‘I desire, this day, to make a new and unreserved dedication of myself to the service of God; and although all my experience leads me, not only to be very distrustful of my own heart, but also to place no dependence whatever upon the strength of my own resolutions, and the firmness of my own purposes; yet I dare not decline this dedication. Here am I, Lord! I am thine by creation; I am thine by preservation; I trust I am thine by a holy regeneration and a gracious adoption; and, if I am not self-deceived, it is my supreme desire to be thine in heart and life, in soul and body, now and forever.

‘I would, therefore, on this 31st day of October, 1838, solemnly renew my dedication to the service of God, in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. I am, indeed, most unworthy. I have been a miserable sinner ever since I came into being. My nature is polluted; my heart is corrupt; I am a guilty and vile transgressor before God; and deserve to be forever cast off, and made as miserable as I have made myself sinful. But, blessed be his holy name!—there is forgiveness with him that he may be feared: with him is plenteous redemption. This is my hope. “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ!” “This,” if I am not deceived, “is my Beloved, and this is my Friend.” He is the Lord my righteousness, and the Lord my strength. Here I desire to rest for time and eternity. In this new and living way would I approach my Father in heaven. I would consecrate myself, with all I have and am, to his most blessed service. Lord Jesus, accept of the humble dedication! Make me sincere. Help me to devote myself, with all my faculties, and powers, and possessions to thee. I would be pardoned through the blood of Christ, sanctified by his Spirit, adorned with his image, and prepared, by the unsearchable riches of his grace, for the holy joys of heaven. Lord Jesus! dispose of me as thou wilt, and, when I have done thy will here, receive me, though most unworthy, to the glories of thy presence hereafter; and there may I appear clothed in the righteousness and bearing the likeness of my dear Saviour. On this blessed foundation would I place all my hopes. In this new, and living, and most glorious way of imputed righteousness, and in the purifying power of the Holy Spirit, I would rejoice and make my boast. As I have borne the image of the earthly, Oh, that I may, more and more, bear the image of the heavenly! Oh! that my conversation may be

in heaven: may my heart be there also; and may I be daily ascending thither in holy contemplation and spiritual desires. Amen! Amen!

‘Samuel Miller.’

‘November 23, 1838. My dear son,—, has just taken his place in our Seminary as a student of theology. I have been ever anxious that all my sons should be ministers of the Gospel; and as each one, in succession, made choice of a profession for life, my heart almost sunk within me to find that they all, with one accord, turned away from the ministry of reconciliation to some secular calling. I began to fear that no one of them would choose the best of all employments. At length, however, I am gratified to find — turning his mind toward this noble, heavenly profession. The Lord grant that he may be sincere. The Lord grant that he may be a minister after his own heart! Oh that he may be like Christ and glorify Christ! I would unspeakably rather, if I know my own heart, see him an able, faithful, successful minister of the gospel, than President of the United States, or the occupant of an imperial throne.’

In a letter to his son, a practitioner of law, Dr. Miller said, on the 4th of October,

‘P. S. My dear son, I repeat, the fiftieth time—Do not be discouraged about getting into business. It will be a very slow affair. I fully expect that, for four or five years to come, your largest fees will be from your father. I shall not be at all discouraged if this should prove to be the case. Be thankful that you have a father, whom God enables to help you.’

To Henry Ledyard, Esquire, of New York, Dr. Miller wrote the letter following, which explains itself.

‘My dear Sir, Princeton, December 1, 1838.

‘I received last evening your kind letter of November 26th, together with the “Olive wood cane, cut with your own hands on the Mount of Olives,” which accompanied it.

‘For this testimonial of your highly valued friendship, and of your kind recollection when in a far distant land, I am truly thankful, and beg you to accept of my grateful acknowledgments.

‘It gratifies me, too, my dear Sir, not a little, to find that, amidst all the allurements of foreign travel, the associations which your letter recognizes with Jerusalem, and its deeply interesting history and localities, so strongly occupied your mind, when surveying them. I cannot frame a more favorable wish for you, than that the great scenes, and the transcendently glorious persons and events, which were once connected with

that city, may ever be the objects of your practical attention, and your supreme interest. May you be so happy as to live under the smiles and the benediction of Him who suffered and died there for the sins of the world; and habitually look forward to the "Jerusalem which is above" as your eternal home!

'Mrs. Miller and myself feel much indebted for the kind invitation which you convey from our valued friend, your Mother, to visit the city before the commencement of the new year, and make your house our home. The winter is advancing so rapidly, that I fear we cannot deem it prudent to venture on such an excursion before the return of a milder season. When we do find it convenient to visit the city, it will give us pleasure to accept of your friendly hospitality.

'With respectful salutations to your Mother, in which Mrs. Miller joins, I am, my dear Sir, with much regard,

'Your obliged friend and servant,

'Henry Ledyard, Esquire.

Sam'l Miller.'

On the 4th of March, 1839, began, in Philadelphia, before the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, Judge Rogers sitting at *Nisi Prius*, the trial of the case of the New and Old School, founded upon the proceedings detailed in the chapter immediately preceding this. The action had been commenced soon after the adjournment of the Assembly of 1838. On the 26th of March, receiving from the Judge a charge strongly in favour of the New School, the jury retired, and, in about one hour, brought in a verdict in accordance with the charge. Upon the 17th of April, before the Court in bank, the argument commenced, on a motion for a new trial, and was continued until the 27th, inclusive, of the same month. Mr. Sergeant, who was one of the counsel for the Old School, wrote to Dr. Miller on the 6th of May,

'The danger, I believe, is over. The opinion will be delivered on Wednesday. I have no knowledge of what it will be, but no one seems to doubt that the verdict will be set aside, and upon grounds which will end the controversy.'

On the 8th, he wrote again as follows:—

'My dear Sir,

Philadelphia, May 8th, 1839.

'The Chief Justice delivered the opinion this morning, setting aside the verdict, upon grounds which finally decide the whole matter. Judge Rogers stated that he adhered to the opinion framed at the trial.

‘There was a great assemblage to hear the decision, and one of the most gratifying circumstances in the scene was the great decorum which accompanied and followed the annunciation. It was in strong contrast with what occurred at the time of the charge. This was, in part, owing to the decision’s having been anticipated, and men’s minds being prepared for it, but also, in part, to the character of our friends. The joy *felt* was not less, perhaps greater, and certainly deeper and more pure. But there was no ebullition—no clapping of wings and crowing. The opinion goes with us, out and out, upon every point.

‘I sincerely congratulate you that peace is restored, without sacrifice, and that the power will remain where it will be employed only for the good of the Church. The next Assembly will meet in comfort, and be secured from the disturbance which, of late years, has been so frequent, inasmuch as the refractory members have been removed. I hope, and I believe, there will be no undue triumph. On the other hand, there must not be too much generosity; which is the greater danger, as it sometimes leads to injustice. If it be reasonably practicable, it seems to me that Doctor Elliott ought to have some special mark of regard and confidence. He has been at a post of danger, where he has well performed his duty, but where he could not escape suffering. He is entitled to much consideration from those for whom he was thus exposed. Would it be fit to make him moderator of the next Assembly? Dr. McDowell, too, and Mr. Krebs have done their duty manfully.

‘Give my congratulations also to sister. I have a little curiosity to know what the precise point of consolation and support was which she found in the book of Esther.

‘Yours very truly,

‘Rev’d Doctor Miller.

John Sergeant.’

To one of his sons, on the 11th of May, Dr. Miller wrote,

‘I think exceedingly well of Judge Gibson’s written opinion of the court—i. e. of the *substance* of it. It is just the thing that we could have wished; but it seems to me very badly written—some parts of it anything but lucid, and others more like the composition of a sophomore than of a judge of sixty. On one or two points, he seems to me to be not only *good*, but *too good*.’

Eight days before, he had written to the same son,

‘I have an increasing uneasiness about you. I am told you look thin; and I wonder you are not thinner, and even sick, in consequence of what you have gone through within the last seven or eight weeks. My dear son, rely upon it, you are standing on the brink of a precipice; and if you go a little too

far, your health may be irreparably and fatally undermined. I have two pieces of advice to give you.

'1. As long as your pressure of writing continues, double your quantity of *exercise*. You may rest assured, this is true economy of time. You will be able to accomplish far more in a given week, or month, by taking this course.

'2. As long as you continue thus extremely busy in a sedentary way, be very abstemious in *diet*. This alone is, under God, one of the best defences against injury by excessive application to study. If I had a great and protracted effort to make in composition, I would live the greater part of the time on tea and crackers.'

#### 4. BAPTISMS AND FUNERALS.

Writing to the Rev. James T. English, on the 19th of August, in answer to a letter of inquiry, Dr. Miller said,

'I do not wonder that the subject of the baptism of children perplexes you; for although there is no subject on which my mind is more fully made up than on that of Pedobaptism—no point which appears to me more incontestably plain, from both Scripture and ecclesiastical history; yet \* \* the mismanagement of that ordinance, in the Christian church, has given rise to a great deal of perplexity and difficulty. The truth is, as matters now stand, whatever ground a pastor may take on this subject, he will find himself reduced to straits on some accounts, unless he adopt the most lax plan, viz.—to baptize all children, without exception, for whom the ordinance is requested.

'The ground which I take, and which appears to me attended with fewest difficulties, is the following:—

'1. I consider baptism as a seal of the same covenant with the Lord's supper, and inferring the same qualifications.

'2. If an adult desires baptism for himself, or for his infant children, I would consider the same qualifications necessary, as I would, if he applied for admission to the Lord's table. This is indispensable, because in his own baptism, or in the baptism of his children, he makes a profession of faith which implies genuine reliance on the Saviour, and, of course, genuine friendship to him.

'3. Still I would not make it indispensable to a man's having his children baptized, that he should have previously come to the Lord's table. You, of course, would not require one to come to the Lord's table *before* he was baptized *himself*: you would not even allow him to do so. \* \* But if, after examining a parent, who applies for baptism for his children, I

feel satisfied that I would be willing to admit him to the Lord's table, if he applied for it, I would, without hesitation, baptize his child.

'I am more free and liberal in the baptism of children than many of my brethren; but I cannot adopt the plan of admitting all. If I were to consent to baptize the children of intemperate, profane, or entirely careless people, I should consider myself as prostituting an ordinance of God. But, if parents are strictly moral, have competent knowledge, appear truly serious, and profess a sincere desire to follow Christ, and that they and their children may be within the bonds of the New Covenant, I baptize their children without hesitation; telling them, at the same time, that it is their duty and privilege to come to the Lord's table; but not compelling them to come, under the penalty of refusing baptism to their children.'

Another letter, on the same subject, may best be inserted here, although written about nine years later. It was addressed to the Rev. Cyrus Huntington. Without differing, at all, from the other in principle, it differs otherwise so much, that it will be deemed repetitious to only the slightest extent. It was dated the 27th of October, 1848.

'When I first settled as a pastor in New York, fifty-five years ago, I found what is popularly denominated the *law* plan of baptism in universal use in the Presbyterian Church. That is, it was not required that *either* parent should be a communicant in order to open the way for the baptism of their children. But, if the parents were of unimpeached moral character, had been baptized themselves, had competent knowledge, were substantially orthodox in their doctrinal views, and stood ready to make the profession which the baptismal rite included, I baptized their children. This had been the case in my father's congregation, in Dover, Delaware, in which I had been brought up, and in which I had been first admitted to communion; and I fell into it naturally, and without difficulty, and have practised it ever since.

'In administering the ordinance, I was accustomed to make use of the following formula, by which you will be enabled to judge of the *profession* that I speak of as included in the baptismal rite.

'“Do you, the parents of this child, profess that it is your desire to dedicate him to God in the ordinance of baptism? Is this your profession?

'“Baptism is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ, in which by washing with water, in the name of the Father, the Son and



the Holy Ghost, is signified our need of the pardoning and renewing grace of God by a crucified Redeemer, etc. \* \* You, therefore, the parents of this child, in presenting him before God to be baptized, make a solemn profession, and lay yourselves under very solemn obligations. The amount of your profession is, that you yourselves believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, that you rely upon him for pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace yourselves, and that you desire this, your child, to be made a partaker of the same saving benefits. It will therefore be your duty, in all time to come, to treat this child as one that you have given away to God; to train him up in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord"; to instruct him in the principles of our holy religion, as contained in the Holy Scriptures, and excellently summed up in the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of our church; to pray with him and for him, and teach him to pray; and, in a word, to endeavor, by precept and example, to educate him for the Church of God and for the heavenly inheritance. Do you promise, as God shall help you, that you will endeavor to live in the discharge of these duties?"

'I then made a short prayer, baptized the child, and closed with another short prayer.

'A solemn mode of administering baptism, I have sometimes thought, has a strong tendency to make a just impression of its nature, and, of course, to deter the careless from applying for it, especially if, after baptism, you often, in prayer and preaching, remind parents of the duties which the ordinance implies.

'You will perceive, in a moment, that the above profession can be made only by a real believer. And yet I have no doubt that it was often made by persons who were not renewed in the spirit of their minds. And I have quite as little doubt, that where no children but those of communicants are baptized, the same want of sincerity, perhaps not quite so often, yet very often, in fact, occurs. So that insincere profession is not prevented in either case.

'I found, or thought I found, the above mentioned plan to operate most happily and beneficially, so far as my experience went. I observed that some of my brethren out of New York, who refused to baptize the children of any but communicants, never failed to drive off a number of the most desirable members of their congregations to different sects around them; and even in cases where they did not leave the Presbyterian church, their children remained unbaptized, and the pastors had no hold of them, and could not put in Christ's claim to them and their

children. I found that my plan gave me a great advantage in addressing parents, and gave a hold on numbers who would have been, otherwise, out of my reach.

‘I am aware, that on this plan, cases will sometimes occur, which will be perplexing, and give rise to some difficulty. But, on the whole, I have never yet seen occasion to change my course as to this point. But the truth is, adopt what plan you will, you will find some perplexing cases, unless, indeed, you go to the utmost extent of laxness, and baptize every child that is offered, without scruple or exception, which I trust you will never think of doing.

‘In regard to *funerals*, I think very much depends on the custom of the neighborhood. I should not be willing suddenly to adopt any violent departure from the uniform practice of those around me. I am, myself, fond of dropping a few words, in a few pointed, pithy sentences at the grave, and sometimes, but not always, uttering three or four sentences of prayer. I say, not always; for I would give the people to see by my practice, in very cold, or very stormy weather, that I did not mean to be the absolute slave of any custom. I should be the more disposed to say a few words at the grave, especially where it was wished or expected, if I lived in a region where the Episcopal burial service was often repeated. But I would always try to have the principal part of the public service, on such occasions, in the church, or in the dwelling of the deceased, and say only a few solemn, emphatic words, at the grave. All that is said there, on ordinary occasions, prayer and all, ought not to exceed five minutes, consisting, usually, of some pointed solemn passages of Scripture.

‘\* \* \* \* \* Let me urge you to pay particular attention to the children and young people. Make a list of them. Meet them, if possible, once a week, or once a fortnight. Recognize their persons. Call them by name, etc. God bless and guide you, my dear young friend.

‘Very sincerely and affectionately,  
‘Samuel Miller.

‘Since sealing my letter it has occurred to me to ask, upon what principle we can withhold one privilege, because another is not attended upon. Suppose a man in the communion of the church should omit to have his children baptized, should we, because he omitted a known and plain duty, set up a bar, and refuse him the sacramental supper? I think not. I never could see the propriety of making one ordinance a *whip* to drive to another.’

The following letter was written to the Rev. William J. Monteith, of Broadalbin, New York, who referred the case mentioned to Dr. Miller, for the satisfaction of a person, who had applied to the church of which he was pastor for admission and baptism, thinking that her baptism, in the Dutch Church, when she was an infant, had been invalid, because neither of her parents had been a communicant. It bears the date of the 23d of December, 1840.

‘I am no friend to the administration of baptism upon the *half-way covenant* plan, as I do not think that plan can be defended. But, at the same time, I have not the smallest doubt that baptisms administered upon that plan are just as valid as any other. In fact, I suppose that any baptism, dispensed by a regular minister of the gospel, in the name of the Holy Trinity, and in connexion with a church which holds to the fundamentals of religion, ought to be sustained, without hesitation, as perfectly valid. Our Episcopal brethren baptize all the children that are presented to them, covenant or no covenant, and on the principle of baptismal regeneration; but would you re-baptize the children baptized by them? I take for granted that no Presbyterian would think, for a moment, of such a thing.

‘Nothing, I apprehend, can vitiate a baptism but one of three things:—*first*, that the man who administers it is not a regularly ordained minister of the gospel; or, *secondly*, that he is radically unsound in the faith; or, *thirdly*, that the baptism was not performed in the name of the blessed Trinity. Now, none of these defects exist, as regards the mass of the baptisms performed on the half-way covenant plan. \* \* I am now speaking of those baptisms which were administered in what we popularly call the Orthodox churches in New England. For as to those which were performed among the Socinians and Arians of that country, our General Assembly has decided that they ought not to be sustained; not because they were administered upon the half-way covenant plan, or some plan even greatly worse; but because their administrators did not believe the gospel—in other words, could not be regarded as belonging to the Church of Christ at all. This was their decision in respect to baptisms administered by Dr. Priestley and his disciples. \* \*

‘I should say the same of the baptisms performed in the Dutch Church, or in any other Church, in the case of children of non-professors. If you pronounce these invalid, you will, *ipso facto*, reject full one-third of all the baptisms administered

in the Presbyterian Church connected with our General Assembly.'

The question, before referred to, as to the validity of Romish baptisms, is one that will not cease to divide Protestants. When Dr. Miller was consulted, on behalf of a mother whose child had been baptized in the Papal communion, he recognized the fact, that a change of opinion, in this respect, was coming over the Presbyterian Church—that its younger ministers generally decided in favor of re-baptizing; yet for himself he still expressed the conviction that the Reformers and Presbyterian Fathers had been in the right, advising the mother to be content, if possible, with the baptism which her child had already received, and to be careful only to bring it up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. She thankfully received the advice, and gave herself no further concern about the matter.

#### 5. CORRESPONDENCE AND DIARY.

The letter which follows was written to one of the Secretaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

'Rev'd and dear Sir,                      Princeton, September 7, 1839.

'It is now twenty-seven, or twenty-eight, years since I have had the privilege and the honour to be a member of your Board. On this happy connection, and on all the pleasure which has attended our meetings, from year to year, and the success with which our counsels and labours have been crowned, I look back with a degree of gratification which it would not be easy for me to express.

'My interest in the Board, and my cordial wishes for its prosperity and usefulness, are not diminished. It would give me unfeigned pleasure to continue my connection with it. But, as the General Assembly of the Church of which it is my privilege and happiness to be a minister, has formed a Board of Missions of her own, it seems to be incumbent on me to bestow my first and principal attention on this. And as I have found, on several occasions, that my remaining a corporate member of the American Board, while I hold an important office in the General Assembly's Board, is misapprehended, and sometimes misrepresented, I think it my duty to resign that membership; and you will be pleased to consider this letter as conveying to the Board my resignation accordingly.

‘I shall never cease to take a lively interest in the proceedings and success of your venerable body, and to pray for the divine blessing on all its efforts.

‘May the presence and guidance of the great Head of the Church be abundantly vouchsafed at your approaching and all future meetings, and continually attend all your plans and labours!

‘I am, rev’d and dear sir, your respectful and affectionate brother in Christ,

Saml. Miller.

‘Rev. Dr. Anderson.’

The following letter from Dr. Miller to Dr. Nettleton bears the date of the 5th of October, 1839.

‘I take great pleasure in announcing to you, that, at the Commencement in Jefferson College, Pennsylvania, last week, the degree of D.D. was conferred on my excellent and beloved Friend, the *Rev’d Asahel Nettleton*, of Connecticut.

‘This literary honor is of Princeton origin. Your friends here, with one consent, were of the opinion, that this testimonial of respect ought to be bestowed, and, indeed, ought long ago to have been conferred, on a brother who has long deserved so well of the Christian Church. It would have been conferred here, this fall, had it not been for some peculiar circumstances, not referable to you at all, which rendered it impracticable. In these circumstances, it was judged best to cause the thing to be done, without the loss of a single year, elsewhere.

‘Your friends here, my dear Brother, greatly rejoice in this event. For, although they know that these honors are trifles in themselves, and that you so regard them; yet, amidst the conflicts through which you have for some time been, and are now, passing, we take pleasure in all public testimonials of respect to one whom we so cordially revere.’

In his diary Dr. Miller wrote,

‘October 31, 1839. This day completes my *seventieth year*. I spend it at home in quietness and retirement. I returned, last evening, from a short visit to New York. I am more and more out of my element amidst the bustle, noise and allurements of a large city. They distract the mind, lead it away from the highest and best objects, and are, of course, unfriendly to spiritual edification and comfort. Oh, how delightful to be in the bosom of my own family; to enjoy the counsels and the sanctified wisdom of the best of wives; and to be united with her in hope and prayer!

‘Many years ago my health was very infirm, and rather declining; but having “obtained help of God, I continue unto

this day;" and am now permitted to enjoy a measure of health and strength, which I suppose to be rather uncommon at my time of life. Oh, that I could say, with equal confidence, my soul prospers and is in health! I think I can truly say, that I am more sensible than formerly of the vanity of the world, more desirous of being weaned from it, and more truly anxious to be like Christ, and to glorify Christ, than in any former year of my life. But, alas! how unspeakably do I fall short, in all these respects, of what I ought to be! O Lord teach me thy way; show me thy path; lead me in thy truth and guide me; what I know not, teach thou me; and wherein I have done iniquity, grant that I may do so no more!

'I once thought, that, if I lived to my present age, I should habitually feel myself on the brink of eternity, and keep the close of life and the judgment seat constantly in view. Yet I do not find this expectation realized. Alas! how unspeakable the deceitfulness of the human heart! How prone are even the old and grey-headed to forget the uncertainty of life, and to be borne away by secular objects and plans, at times nearly as much as in the heyday of youthful hope! Truly "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?"

'Oh, that I might be taught more effectually the emptiness of all portions other than a reconciled God and Father in Christ! God of all grace! teach me by thy good Spirit,

"How vain are all things here below—  
How false and yet how fair."

Oh, make me thankful, truly thankful, for my prolonged life; for my multiplied mercies; especially for the greatest, richest of all gifts, the unspeakable gift of a Saviour; and the glory of that inheritance which he has purchased with his own precious blood. Help me to feel the value of every hour, and to fill up every day with faithfully serving my generation by the will of God. Oh, to be more diligent and self-denying in time to come!

On the 11th of November, Dr. Miller wrote to one of his sons,

'I gather from J., that you wished for some expression of my opinion respecting the best investment of the money in your uncle's hands. I have nothing, my dear son, to offer on that subject, except to say, that I should be very sorry to have any portion of my little property invested in stock, the avails of which are drawn—in part at least—from the habitual violation of the Lord's day, as I believe most all of the Canal Nav-

igation stock is. It was on account of a serious scruple of this kind, that I refrained from investing anything in the Delaware and Raritan Canal stock. That company habitually violates the Sabbath. I sold my stock in the Erie Canal of New York for the same reason.

‘Tell your uncle, therefore, that I commit the whole matter to his wisdom, with the single restriction above mentioned. I am no judge of what is best; and I am perfectly aware, that even he can only form a conjectural estimate, which may entirely fail of being realized. But he is far more likely to go right than I should be, if I were on the spot. I would much rather receive a small interest, than live on the *wages of iniquity*. \* \* I hope neither you nor your uncle will be disposed to call this superstition, or hyper-scrupulosity.’

Again he wrote to the same on the 28th,

‘I have this moment received your letter of yesterday. I am amazed at my own inadvertence in regard to the D.D. Let it by all means be, THE REV'D CHARLES NISBET, D.D. I thank you for interposing with so much zeal in favor of the “Semi-lunar fardels,” as Dr. Cox calls them.’

## CHAPTER THIRTY-SEVENTH.

### GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS.

1839.

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#### 1. DR. CARNAHAN'S REMINISCENCES.

“BY reason of strength,” Dr. Miller outlived four score years; and, as yet, though he had reached the Scriptural goal of three score and ten, he had hardly begun to experience the “labor and sorrow” of which the Psalmist speaks. For his age, he was still remarkably healthful, fresh, vigorous and elastic; he really enjoyed living, and was not burdened by his ordinary toils. It may be better here to take some general views of his character and life, than to postpone them until the record of his decline and departure shall have been made up. With greater interest, perhaps, as yet living and laboring, he will now be regarded.

After his death, the venerable Dr. Carnahan, an intimate associate for twenty-seven years, furnished reminiscences for the brief memoir found in Dr. Sprague's *Annals*.<sup>1</sup> From the same pen, the following contribution, to this work, was afterwards requested and obtained. Upon comparison, it will be found to have been substantially copied from the other, but with frequent minor variations.

‘For half a century, Dr. Miller occupied a prominent and distinguished place in the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America; so that his biography, in his public relations, would be the history of that Church for fifty years. It is to be hoped that the ample materials which the long and useful life of this excellent man furnish, will at no distant period be collected and arranged, by a competent hand, for the

<sup>1</sup> III. Vol., 607-610.



instruction and benefit of coming generations. My small tribute to his memory must be confined to a few general remarks.

‘Fifty years ago, I knew him from reputation, and from his published writings, especially his review of the eighteenth century, and his defence of the validity of Presbyterial ordination, in opposition to the exclusive claims of Episcopacy. Since that time, the published works of Dr. Miller have been numerous and various, so that as a writer on theological subjects, he is better known, in Europe and America, than any other author in our country of the same period. In every thing that he has written, there is a clearness of thought, and a purity and precision of diction, which render his style as fair a specimen of good old English as our country affords. You will find no labored effort to involve in mist a common thought, in order to give it the air of novelty; so that you have to read the passage more than once to find the meaning. In the writings of Dr. Miller every thing is plain, clear, transparent: you see at once, without effort, just what is intended to be conveyed. If he proposed no new theory on the subject of morals and religion, and maintained old doctrines by no original arguments, he did all that can be done at the present day—stated in a perspicuous manner the teachings of the Bible, and refuted prevailing errors with the courtesy of a Christian gentleman. In the latter respect, he is a model for religious controversy. He never substitutes personal abuse of an opponent, for arguments in refutation of his erroneous doctrines. While he states with fullness, and maintains by solid reasoning, what he believes to be the truth, he abstains from all attempts to render those who hold different opinions ridiculous or odious.

‘Until 1823, my personal acquaintance with this excellent man was transient. From that time until his death—a period of twenty-seven years—it was my happiness to live in his neighborhood, and to have frequent, nay, almost daily, intercourse with him; to see him in the pulpit, in the presbytery, in the Board of Trustees of the College, in the social world, and in private interviews; and I must say, that my respect and admiration for him, as a man and as a Christian, increased every year, until he was removed from this world.

‘In the pulpit I have heard men who, by the ardor of their utterance, the boldness of their imagery, and the energy of their action, could rouse the attention and excite the feelings of a popular audience more deeply than Dr. Miller; but for solid, rich gospel truth, presented in a clear, regular, distinct manner, in chaste and appropriate language, the hearer was seldom dis-

appointed when he occupied the sacred desk. If the gospel theme which he presented did not elevate to the highest heavens, it never suffered to grovel on the earth. Solid, rich, profitable instruction might always be expected from Dr. Miller's preaching. He loved to preach, not for the sake of human applause; for he continued to stand in the pulpit, once at least on the Sabbath, long after he had reached the zenith of his fame. When his services were not required in the Seminary, or College, or Princeton church, he was in the habit of riding to some neighboring congregation, and volunteering his services; which were always acceptable to the pastor and to the people. In leading the devotions of the large assembly, or of the social meeting, Dr. Miller was peculiarly happy. In his addresses to a throne of grace there was a reverential simplicity in his manner and language, and an appropriateness in the topics of adoration, thanksgiving and intercession, which led all present to lift up their hearts in emotions corresponding with the words of the speaker. There was no repetition in his prayers, yet, from the fullness of his heart, he sometimes violated the rule which he prescribed to his pupils on this subject—to be brief. In the pleasure which he took in communing with his Father in Heaven, he sometimes forgot the infirmities of others. At whatever time or place he was called on to lead in prayer, he was ready to engage in it in a solemn and devout manner. From social and cheerful conversation, in which he greatly delighted and frequently participated, the transition was easy and natural to acts of devotion; because he seldom, if ever, indulged in such levity as was inconsistent with a devout spirit. The whole demeanor of Dr. Miller, in public and in private, in the pulpit and in the family circle, showed that he acted habitually under a feeling of the divine presence. And, hence, without apparent inconsistency, he could turn from common and secular affairs to direct acts of worship. This habitually devotional spirit was far from being connected with gloom and melancholy. He was a most cheerful and pleasant companion, abounding in rich and appropriate anecdote, yet without descending to any thing unbecoming a Christian and minister of the gospel.

For several years, the professors of the Theological Seminary, and the officers of the College, were in the habit of meeting at each other's houses, once in two weeks, for the purpose of spending the evening in easy and familiar conversation, on subjects chiefly connected with the interests of Education and Religion. Dr. Miller took a deep interest in these meetings, and contributed greatly to making them profitable and plea-

sant, not only by drawing largely upon his own rich stores of anecdote and remark, but also by eliciting from others whatever each one might know on the subject under consideration. I remember with what skill he would touch the key note, which would open the lips of his distinguished and venerable colleague, [Dr. Alexander], or of the gifted and lamented Professor Dod; not forgetting those whose conversational powers were of an inferior order.

‘The natural temperament of Dr. Miller was social; he delighted to receive and impart instruction by oral communication; yet it is remarkable, that his fondness for society, and the solicitude of those who knew him to enjoy his company did not draw him away from his studies. Human nature is prone to fall into extremes: the pleasant companion neglects his books: the scholar becomes a recluse: Dr. Miller united these two characters, not usually compatible. Whoever has read, or even looked at the volumes, and essays, and sermons which he published, must be convinced that he was a laborious and successful student. And, when we take into view his preparation for the weekly services of the pulpit, and for the daily instruction of his class in the lecture-room, we are surprised that any man could perform so much intellectual labor; especially when we remember, that Dr. Miller did not enter upon the performance of any public duty without accurate and full preparation. The secret and magical power which enabled him to do so much, and to do it so well, was that he was a man of system—of order. He had a time for every duty—a time to be in his study, and a time to take relaxation; a time for sleep and a time for his meals. With him the time allotted to one duty was not encroached on by another. In his study, he did not lounge and permit his thoughts to wander from the subject before him. For the purpose of preserving his health, and perhaps as an excitement to mental exertion, he always wrote standing at a high desk. In early life, and indeed to life’s close, he had a tendency to pulmonary disease. To counteract this tendency, he was “temperate in all things.” In eating, and drinking, and sleeping, and in whatever else over-indulgence tended to debilitate the body and enfeeble the mind, he prescribed to himself limits. Before he came to Princeton, and for some time after, he was in the habit of taking a single glass of wine at dinner, believing it assisted digestion and promoted his health. At that period of life, when many think artificial stimulants are necessary to sustain declining nature, he denied himself his former moderate indulgence, and abstained entirely from the use of all kinds of intoxicating drinks. He often re-

marked, that he had experienced no kind of injury in appetite or health from the change. He practised total abstinence, not because he thought the moderate use of alcoholic drinks in all cases criminal; but because an opposite example might be injurious to others. In this respect, he was governed by the same principle which led the Apostle to say, "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."

'Believing that daily exercise in the open air was necessary for his health, he permitted no weather or engagement to prevent his walking or riding out at least once in twenty-four hours. I have seen him in the most inclement weather, in summer and winter, wending his way to the post-office, or to make a necessary call. While he carefully avoided a current of air coming upon him from a door or window, he dreaded neither cold nor heat, snow nor rain, with the air freely circulating on all sides.

'In his personal habits and dress he was neat and tasteful, without anything foppish, or calculated to excite attention. He abstained from the use of tobacco in all its forms, and always spoke of it as a filthy habit, injurious to health, and tending to create an appetite for intoxicating drinks. In his manner he was polished and graceful, attentive to those customs and forms which render social intercourse agreeable. He was himself a good example of the clerical manners which he has recommended in a work published on that subject. We must beware of confounding his habit in this respect with that empty, unmeaning, and studied form of words and actions, intended to conceal indifference, or, it may be, real enmity and contempt. The politeness of Dr. Miller arose from two sources. First, it was his lot, in early life, to associate with persons of polished and agreeable manners, and he retained to the end the habits formed in his early days. But still more did the deference and respect which he showed to others, arise from the kind feelings of the heart. His words and external actions were the true and unstudied expressions of that good will and kindness which he truly felt, and was ready to manifest whenever occasion offered. The writer had many opportunities of witnessing the readiness of Dr. Miller to forego his own ease and convenience to accommodate others. Some distinguished men, whose general aim is to perform the duties of their station with fidelity, are wanting in that courtesy which renders social life agreeable. Absorbed, perhaps, in important studies, or having some weighty engagement in view, they become impatient and repulsive, if interrupted and called on to assist others who need their aid.

It was not so with Dr. Miller. I have known him, again and again, with manifest inconvenience to himself, to give his assistance to accommodate others; and he did so with a readiness and cheerfulness which rendered the kindness doubly valuable.

‘In the management of his secular and domestic concerns, Dr. Miller was a model worthy of imitation. Economy in all his personal and family expenses was conspicuous, and he permitted no debt, great or small, to remain unsatisfied a week, or, if he could help it, a day. His private means, independent of his salary as a professor in the Theological Seminary, were probably equal to the frugal expenses of his family. Yet he did not permit his property to accumulate. He acted on the principle which he frequently inculcated—that a large inheritance was generally a curse to children. It is impossible to estimate how much this good man every year distributed to charitable purposes, because he made no display of his charities by giving to particular objects large sums worthy of being published as examples of munificence. But it could not be concealed that he refused his aid to no cause worthy of private or public support. With him, when asked to give to a good object, it was a common saying, that he loved to have a nail in every building intended for the glory of God and the benefit of man. To supply the temporal and spiritual wants of the destitute seemed to afford him real pleasure. What he gave to the poor; what to promote education; what to build school-houses and churches; what to publish Bibles, and tracts, and other good books; what to support missions, domestic and foreign, cannot be known until the books are opened on the final day. His freedom from the love of money, and his liberal spirit were seen in his proposing to resign, or to relinquish his full salary, when unable to perform all the duties of his professorship; and, when these propositions were declined by the Directors and Trustees, who thought it would be illiberal and unjust to accede to them, in his drawing his full salary, but contributing largely therefrom to the support of the institution, without consulting the Directors or Trustees.

‘At the time of his decease, Dr. Miller had been forty-three years a trustee of the College of New Jersey; and he took a deep interest in its concerns, was rarely if ever absent from the meetings of the Board, and was always an active and influential member. A short time prior to his decease, he attended a meeting, and before the business was finished, he rose and asked leave of absence the remainder of the sessions, on account of the feeble state of his health, remarking that his work was done, that he did not expect to meet again with the Board.

Then, lifting his feeble hands, he said, "May the blessing of God rest on this beloved college, on this board, on the faculty and students, and on all connected with the institution!" These were the last words and final benediction of one who had been for many years the senior trustee.

'But the chief characteristic and crowning excellence of Dr. Miller were his devoted piety, his attachment to the pure and simple doctrines of the Gospel, his earnest desire to honour his Lord and Saviour, and to extend to his fellow-sinners that precious, saving truth, by which he was himself so wonderfully sustained and comforted in the evening of his days.'

## 2. DR. COX'S REMINISCENCES.

The following hearty, idiocratic, and subjectively fresh retrospections would, by many readers, be instantly imputed to their reverend and genial author, even if the name of Dr. Samuel Hanson Cox were not mentioned.

New York, December 27, 1865.

'Reverend and dear Brother,

'Your filial piety and purpose, in preparing "The Life" of your excellent sire, for contemporaries and posterity, especially those of the christian ministry, to ponder, and use, and improve to their own benefit, will be commended, I believe, by all competent judges. The quality of filial piety is, as some think, in our own times, if not peculiarly in our own beloved, yet guilty country, growing deplorably scarce; though, in reference to the SECOND table of the law of God, as says our great apostle, it never loses its value in the estimation of the law-giver: *Honor thy father and mother; which is the FIRST commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long on the earth.* Eph. 6: 2. 3. May this blessing rest, in all its temporal and celestial opulence, on your person and your house!

"The Life" of the late Reverend Samuel Miller, D.D., ought to be furnished to the public; and if, in any proper way, I can at all contribute to it, it will be a pleasant, wholly an ungrudged performance—in answer to your written request. You say, "Any thing you can tell me about my father, or his family, in Delaware, would be particularly interesting." This I will recollect.

'When, as a student of the law, in Newark, New Jersey, hearing such venerable men as the Reverend James Richards, D.D., Dr. John McDowell, of Elizabeth, Dr. Barnabas King

of Rockaway, Dr. E. D. Griffin and others, the word was blessed, as I humbly trust, to my soul's benefit; (1811-12;) there was something in the fact extraordinary; exciting observation and remark. Educated in the City of Philadelphia, born and nurtured among "Friends, called Quakers," the change in myself, as in all my social relations, was emphatically great; so to my own gratitude and praise to its Eternal Author, not ceasing to seem wonderful. A message, I think, from your father, that I should visit him, then in this city, Pastor of the Wall street Presbyterian Church, commanded my obedience; resulting in my first introduction to Dr. Miller. It was *very grateful*, I may say, edifying, and singularly appreciated, as well as memorable on several accounts.

'I then and afterwards learned from himself, several items that affected my own filial thoughts and sensations, with something like permanent delight. My father and he were natives of the same State;—in Dover, Kent county, Delaware, as I think;—acquainted, and even intimate, in boyhood and youth; nearly of the same age; and often agreeably associated in the vicinal relations of life. From seven and a third years, I had been fatherless; yet my recollections of my honored and beloved father were vivid, definite, delightful; such mainly they ever endure. Hence the response of special gratitude to my father's friend—a feeling I yet cherish and enjoy.

'In that interview, he related many things of pleasant memory, though less adapted to public rehearsal, especially in this paper. One anecdote, I will mention. Before our present substitute was known, for inoculation, in reference to the dire disease to which all men seemed exposed, and so many, especially in youth, were victimized, it was the system everywhere to take preventive measures, often costly and severe, yet indispensable, where they could be commanded, against the formidable scourge. My own memories here are quite experimental and very impressive. In many places, at the South especially, the different neighborhoods made common interest of the matter; establishing, with the best nursing and medical care, what were called "Pest Houses," where patients, and especially children, were received, inoculated with the *virus*; and after six or more weeks they were returned to their homes, ordinarily invulnerable, for the future, to its attack and its ravage; from all which, *laus Deo!* our better antidote, in these days, is—vaccination.

'Now it so happened that our two fathers, then little other than lads—scarce in their teens, met in one of these establishments, and were proximate fellow-sufferers, eventually with

complete success. Here they became acquainted, and even intimate. Here was begun much of that *quasi* instinct of special kindness, for which I yet, as instinctively, love Dr. Miller. But for this, he probably had known or shown comparatively little interest in me. So wonderfully concatenated are events, small and great, trivial and momentous, in the arbitrations of eternal providence! *Whoso is wise, and will OBSERVE these things, even they shall UNDERSTAND THE LOVING-KINDNESS OF JEHOVAH.* Ps. 107: 43. *What hast thou that thou didst not receive?* 1 Cor. 5: 7.

'In our subsequent intercourse, he often would advert to it, and never with other than realized delight, to myself at least. The last message received from him, a short time previous to his decease, was oral, and of the same familiar and agreeable sort: "Tell my friend and brother, Dr. Cox, that Dr. Miller sends his love and kindest salutations to him. Tell him, I loved his father; hence I have and claim a hereditary right to love him also." This was characteristic; I may say, patriarchal even; and if on no nobler ground, as sinners love those that love them, how could I other than feel and reciprocate such a missive of love: familiar, benign, well-bred, christian? It was like him. It was nature, as well as grace; so working; incidental and grateful and beautiful, as well as fraternal; must I write it?—quite too rare or equivocal, in its fruits, as identical, genuine, recognized, in our days!

'In the higher relations of his character, little research is requisite to supply materials for my pen—though I have already told you why I cannot, at present, command his valued letters to me; all packed, and stored, and inaccessible, with many other papers and books, for which my library, or its owner, has to suffer! Really I much regret it——!

'In my first interview, I have purposely reserved it here to say, he impressed me deeply and well, especially on one topic—that of my then recent spiritual change. He interrogated me, as to my views, feelings, knowledge of the truth; especially as to my faith in the blessed Redeemer of sinners; my hope in him; my manner and purpose of life; and motives in seeking the Christian Ministry. In all these, the impression left on my own mind was only that of gratitude and approval. So in all our subsequent interviews—but I desire not improperly to enlarge on personalities and particularities of any sort.

'He seemed to think, as often the impression has been obtruded on others and myself, that the motive of too many candidates, among us as well as others, was—to speak guardedly—faulty and incomplete—as earthly more than heavenly;



seeking a place of ease, honor, emolument; with very little conviction, the result of thorough investigation, scriptural research, prayer, and the genuine influence of the Holy Ghost, that God had called him—respecting each instance of a professed call, to preach the Gospel; in the way of genuine piety, view of duty paramount, love of the Saviour and the souls He died to save! Hence, to say the least, we have so many soft and superficial Presbyterians; oscillating from one denomination to another—instead of *studying* our BOOK, its system of doctrine, *credenda, agenda*, Government, Discipline, History, Administration, and relations. The Bible is the religion, objective and normal, of Presbyterians. If a candidate cares little or nothing for the difference between us, and my Lord in lawn of Episcopacy, or the democracy in a kingdom of Independency, or other deviations towards Rome—if not to the tumultuations of the populace, let him honor the royal counsel; *tarry at Jericho until his beard be grown*, (2 Sam. 10: 5,) or—at all events, let us be in no hurry to commit office, and place, and power, and influence, for evil, to men plainly immature; dubitable as well as dubitant; and as such plainly incompetent. I am constrained here to record the conviction, not the mere opinion, of an old co-presbyter, against all such methods and measures of im-“policy”; as all wrong; and sure to entail no good, to say the least, on all parties concerned in them. We want learned, decided, principled men in the ministry; as well as devout, holy, active, beneficent, exemplars of Christianity; these, or such as these, alone. So, I am sure, he thought. Numbers may be weakness, instead of strength: *the same COMMIT THOU TO FAITHFUL MEN, who shall be ABLE TO TEACH others also.* 2 Tim. 2: 2.

‘When I was first in the pastorate, the Synod of New York and New Jersey, including the Presbytery of New Brunswick, comprehended, of course, all Princeton; the Patriarchs there, the Rev. Drs. Ashbel Green, Miller, Alexander, and others—now, we trust, waiting for us in the world of the new creation! Our synodical meetings, only annual, were ever highly valued reunions; and your dear father, my dear Sir, was always thrice welcome, in his presence and his influence. Many recollections in detail are more interesting to myself, probably, than proper to be recited here. Your father, as a man of manners and symmetry, as a devout and consistent Presbyterian, as a scholar well read in all lore professional, as a safe and ready counsellor, as an example, as a friend, as a devout brother in the kingdom, may well engage your love, and duty, and service to his memory—as also mine!

'But I pause. Use this, if it suit your plan and purpose. Otherwise, please return it. Claiming my own "hereditary right", I salute you in fraternal love. The LORD JESUS CHRIST be with your spirit forever!

'In HIM, your affectionate brother and friend,  
 'Rev. Samuel Miller, D.D., } Samuel Hanson Cox.  
 Mount Holly, New Jersey.' }

### 3. JUDGE FIELD'S REMINISCENCES.

The very interesting recollections which follow are from the pen, as it will be perceived, of the Honorable Richard Stockton Field, Judge of the United States District Court for the District of New Jersey.

'Princeton, September 29, 1868.

'My dear Sir,

'In a conversation I recently had with you in reference to your Father, the late Rev. Dr. Samuel Miller, you begged me to put in writing some of my recollections of him. I comply with your request the more willingly, because it affords me an opportunity of testifying my great veneration and respect for the memory of one, whom living, I so much loved and honored.

'My earliest recollection of your Father goes back to the time when I was a student of Princeton College. I frequently heard him preach, and his sermons were always impressive and instructive. Their style was polished and graceful, and his appearance, voice, and manner, added much to their effect. I remember particularly a sermon which he preached in the Presbyterian Church of Princeton, on the subject of the "Resurrection of the body."<sup>1</sup> The text was taken from the 15th chapter of St. Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians, and the discourse was a beautiful expansion of the thought contained in the verses, beginning with: "But some man will say, how are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, *that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die.*" I have always thought it the best discourse upon the subject that I have ever heard or read. It made such an impression upon my mind, that when I went home, I attempted to write it out. Such were the lucid order and method of his sermons, that to one with a tolerably good memory, this was not so difficult a task. I think I succeeded in reproducing most of the thoughts, and a good deal of the language of the discourse. It was not

<sup>1</sup> See a prior mention of this sermon, probably, I Vol., pp. 343-4. II Vol., pp. 33-4.

long since, that in looking over some of my old papers, this one met my eye; but I cannot now lay my hands upon it. The only other distinct recollection of your Father at that time, which I now have, is that of seeing him every day, and at the same hour, taking his customary walk with his wife and children. Such unvarying regularity in his daily exercises, struck me, I remember, very forcibly. They seemed to be measured, both as to distance and time, by the most exact rule.

‘In 1825, I left Princeton, and was absent for seven years, and it was not until my return in 1832, that my acquaintance with your Father can be said to have really commenced. From that period, until the time of his death, I was his near neighbour, and saw him very frequently. I remember very well, and I am sure you have not forgotten the day, when he called upon me to request that I would conduct your legal studies, and allow you to enter your name as a student in my office. That he should have selected me to be your legal preceptor, I felt to be a very great compliment. I remember, too, the valuable suggestions he made, as to the books which you should read, and to the course of study you should pursue, in connexion with, and subsidiary to your legal training. He wanted you to build upon a broad foundation, and to combine liberal culture with professional learning. Had you pursued the practice of the law, I am sure you would have felt the great benefit of following out the plan he recommended, and thus knowing something outside of your profession.

‘The impression which your Father always made upon me was, that of being the most perfect model of a christian gentleman I had ever met with. His personal appearance was most prepossessing. His manners were in the highest degree polished, not to say courtly, combining ease and grace with much dignity of deportment. His conversational powers were of the highest order. He was rich in anecdote, and told a story remarkably well. He had a tenacious memory—had read much—seen a good deal of the world—and his knowledge was always at command and ready for use. He was universally loved and admired, and the charm of every social circle in which he moved. He was not, I suppose, what is usually called a man of genius. No one of his faculties was developed at the expense of the others. His imagination was always under the control of his judgment. His mind was complete, full-orbed, and round.

‘He was a good citizen, and with great fidelity discharged all the duties which that relation imposed upon him. He took a lively interest in the political events and discussions of the day—was familiar with the character of all our distinguished

public men—and made it a matter of conscience to vote at every election. He was fond of horticultural pursuits—had a taste for planting—and loved to talk of his garden, his fruits, and his trees.

‘Although devoted to that branch of the Church, of which he was so conspicuous an ornament, and ever ready to defend it against all assailants, he was not illiberal towards other religious denominations. When it was, for the first time, proposed to build an Episcopal church at Princeton, instead of discouraging, or throwing obstacles in the way of it, he contributed towards the fund for its erection; and I remember the great gratification, which this act of liberality upon his part gave to those who were engaged in the enterprize.

‘He was eminently a public-spirited man. He was always ready to co-operate in every undertaking, having for its object the promotion of the good of his fellow-men. He was, during his life, connected with many literary and scientific associations; and he was always an active *working* member. Before his removal to New Jersey, he was among the first founders of the New York Historical Society. My latest recollections of him are in connection with the New Jersey Historical Society. Some months before the formation of this Society, he had, in a conversation with me, expressed his decided opinion, and his earnest desire, that something of the kind should be attempted. The Society was organized at Trenton, on the 27th of February, 1845. Your Father was then far advanced in age, being in his 76th year, and yet he was present at most of its meetings, and took a deep interest in all its proceedings. One of the earliest addresses before the Society was delivered by him at Princeton, on the 4th of September, 1845; an address, containing many striking observations, and many valuable suggestions as to the means by which the objects of the association might be best promoted. Every one who was present upon that occasion, and heard the concluding sentence of his address, must have felt, that the venerable speaker had unconsciously drawn a portrait of himself. “One of the most honorable characteristics,” he said, “of a genuine Patriot, and especially of a Christian Patriot, is, that he is a *working man*—ever planning and laboring for the enlargement of the field of knowledge, and ever willing to exert himself and make sacrifices for promoting the improvement and happiness of his fellow-men.”

‘I have thus, in compliance with your request, given you some of my recollections of your Father. I have spoken of him, as I presumed you wished me to do, not so much as a Scholar, or a Writer, or a Preacher, or a Theological Professor,

—for in these respects, there are others far more competent to do him justice,—but as a Man, a Citizen, and a Patriot. And I have taken more pleasure in dwelling upon these traits of his character, because it is so rare to find them combined with those other claims to distinction which he possessed in so eminent a degree.

‘I remain, my dear Sir,

‘Very truly yours,

‘R. S. Field.’

#### 4. MISCELLANEOUS REMINISCENCES.

A collection of reminiscences of Dr. Miller, chiefly from persons unconnected with him by family ties, will here be thrown together. This method of exhibiting his character involves, of necessity, some repetition, and forbids an exactly methodical arrangement. Perhaps, however, the testimony of several witnesses, on the same points, may serve sometimes to deepen the impression, without wearying; and only the rather, it may be, if that testimony is not always brought rigorously under its logical head.

“Dr. Miller’s person, though not above the middle size, was uncommonly symmetrical and dignified. His countenance spoke in no equivocal language of the benignity and generosity of his spirit. His manners were the simple reflection of the fine qualities of his intellect and heart. He might pass you in the street as a stranger, and yet you could not fail to recognize in him the polished gentleman. Perhaps his rigid regard to all the forms of polite society, so far as they were justified to his conscience and sense of propriety, gave to his manners an air of more than common precision; but there was nothing that was designed to inspire awe, or fitted to produce embarrassment. Always self-possessed and perfectly at ease, and on all suitable occasions cheerful and abounding with anecdote, he was welcome to every circle; while yet he never forgot, or suffered others to forget, the decorum that was due to his character and office. Persons of every age and profession, the oldest and the youngest, the most intelligent and the least informed, were edified by his wisdom, entertained by his humour, and charmed by his bland and attractive address.”<sup>1</sup>

He was about five feet, eight or nine inches, in stature, and of a becoming fullness of flesh. He had a fair, fresh complexion, and a good, lively color. He was unusually

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Sprague’s Discourse Commemorative, 12, 13.

erect, continuing so almost to the last; and, by frequent admonitions to his children on the subject, proved that this was the result of persistent self-training, and that he considered it very important to the health, as well as to the appearance. Before the decay of extreme age, he was freely active, though rather measured in his movements, avoiding hurry as opposed to grace and dignity. He sometimes spoke of himself as having, in his earlier days, seriously impaired his health, and, for a number of years, suffered greatly, by confinement to sedentary labor, and by want of exercise; and he was very earnest in counselling his sons and others, not to make the same mistake; which he attributed, in his own case, to neglecting good advice, given him, probably, by his brother Edward.

‘His health had been seriously threatened early in life, and care and caution had become habitual to him. He may have gone to an excess in his forethoughts and preventives against exposure, his unfailing anticipations of all possible contingencies of weather, and his sensitiveness to draughts, and dampness, and changes of temperature. His long life, however, and even health, showed the value of his prudence. He was systematically abstemious in eating and drinking, and seemed never to be overcome by tempting viands, against his habit or resolution. On certain days of each week, he “starved,” as he called it; the meaning of the term, practically, being that on these days he reduced his food in character and amount, as he said, “to give nature a holiday.” Many disapprove of such experiments, but he always thought that he was benefited by this course.’

He was not easily flurried, or thrown off his centre. He seemed to have trained himself to readiness for sudden emergencies, and seldom revealed much embarrassment. When a couple once stood up unexpectedly before him to be married, he proceeded with the ceremony as promptly and coolly, as if quite prepared for it. If the Seminary students, to give a novel expression of respect for their professor, rose in a body at his entrance, he bowed his acknowledgments, as though it were an accustomed courtesy. A determination not to be hasty in taking offence, not to resent slights or insults, had helped to confirm a habit of self-restraint and deliberation, which influenced all his social intercourse, and his whole public life.

‘His system and exactness were remarkable. He was punctual to a minute, in doors and out, and was most emphatic in his inculcations on that subject, as well on the ground of advantage to those who regarded the appointed time sacredly, as with reference to the rights of others. I remember his almost instantaneous appearance at prayers and meals, when the bell was heard,—his exact closing of the house at a stated hour at night,—and his annoyance if the absence of any one interfered with this custom. His personal habits fell into undeviating routine—so his use of cold water ablution, his attention to the temperature of his study, his caution against cold and rain. He kept, for years, a record of the state of the thermometer at a certain hour, to which he constantly referred with pleasure to compare the seasons.’

Dr. Miller was indeed methodical and exact, but occasionally *bonus dormitat Homerus*. The following entry is extracted, omitting names and dates, from his Record of Marriages.

‘*July 6th, 18—*. I married a black man and woman, who lived at a place called — —, eight or ten miles from this place, and usually attended Dr. ———’s church. Forgot to ask their names. Both young and very black.’

‘His industry was unremitted. He seemed hardly to lose a moment. Laying down his pen, to obey his rule of punctuality, or to take his allotted time for exercise, he resumed it again, at once, on his return. I doubt whether many lives could show fewer moments wasted.’

Throughout his professional life, Dr. Miller acted upon the advice which he often gave to the students in the seminary, and to his younger brethren in the ministry—to have, as he expressed it, something always lying on the anvil—some definite, pre-arranged work for every leisure moment. He even recommended, after some old divine, but of course in a qualified sense, having constantly a great many irons in the fire—‘shovel, tongs, poker and all.’ It was in no small degree due to his own careful husbanding of moments, that he was enabled to accomplish so much, especially in the way of authorship. It should, however, be remembered, that it is not every stray minute which can be profitably applied to every species of intellectual labor. Brief intervals may serve well for many sorts of work, but not for earnest, connected thought, nor for that glowing activity of brain, which produces the most brilliant, and often the most

solid results. These require some length of time for working up to the point of most effective effort.

Dr. Miller not unfrequently repeated some quaint old divine's remark, that "sin, debt and dirt" were the three things to be chiefly avoided; and in regard to the payment of his debts, he was nervously prompt and punctilious.

While economical as to everything involving mere show, or parade, he was unboundedly liberal, according to his means, wherever family comfort or profit, the improvement of his children, or the claims of benevolence, public or private, were concerned.

'He was a man of great delicacy of honour in every sphere. I never knew one who had fewer littlenesses of character. He was incapable of doing or thinking any thing low or mean. In his pecuniary relations, he was prompt and generous, never making points about trifles, or taking pride in having the better of a bargain. He had no anxiety to be rich, nor any alarm or weak regret about his few pecuniary dangers or losses. He had no itching for speculations, or financial adventures, but was content to invest the little that he had to lay up, from time to time, in old-fashioned, respectable investments, which, having made, he forgot in the duties of his calling.

'The same high tone and severity of principle prevailed in the family. No one of his children could ever accuse him of detecting a fault by trap or trick, or in any doubtful or undignified manner. We had respect for our punishment when it fell, however much we might, while suffering, have feared it, or complained of it, or refused to see its justice.

'He was fond of quiet and refined humour. He enjoyed exceedingly wit and anecdote, and relaxed intercourse with genial and amusing companions. He was, himself, no mean relator of entertaining stories and events. I have seen more graceful and pure hilarity at his table, when he was entertaining clergymen as he often did, than I ever remember to have seen elsewhere. Hearty laughter, jest and repartee abounded, but always safely guarded from grossness and irreverence. No wine flowed on these occasions. I well remember the often repeated suggestion to his guests that while he drank no wine himself, and had scruples about having it on the table, it was on the side-board for the "weaker brethren."

'Dr. Miller had a fund of anecdotes and amusing stories, which he was very fond of telling. By those who heard them, they were often treasured up and repeated as "Dr. Miller's



Stories"; but unhappily some, of sufficient point indeed, but of questionable propriety, and which had never passed his lips, were retailed with this introduction and recommendation. His indulgence in anecdote-telling rarely transgressed the bounds of true dignity and taste.'

He often related an anecdote with great point and energy of expression and action. His voice was one day heard in his study, the tones rising in excitement and emphasis, until they attracted the attention of different members of the family throughout the house. At length he was heard fiercely to vociferate, "Keep your hands off of me, Sir! Keep your hands off of me!" With one accord, the whole body of listeners, thoroughly alarmed, and having called Mrs. Miller from her room as they passed, flew to the study door. Here there was a momentary pause, while Mrs. Miller was put forward, to take the responsibility of entering first. She opened the door with some hesitation, as the alarming sounds had died away; but the others all pressed close after her, and the whole excited company was revealed to President Carnahan of the College, who, quietly seated, was listening with great apparent delight to Dr. Miller, who was upon his feet, throwing all his energy into some amusing anecdote, which he had brought up for the occasion. Those who had rushed so gallantly to his defence, fell back, at once, and beat a retreat, not without considerable momentary confusion; but they recovered themselves enough, presently, to laugh heartily over the adventure.

"His mind was distinguished rather for that admirable harmonious blending of all the faculties, which generally secures the highest amount of usefulness, than for the striking predominance of some one quality, which often attracts more notice and admiration. You could not say that he was deficient in any faculty; you could not say that he exceeded all others in any; but you could say that he exceeded most others in the symmetry and completeness of the intellectual man. His perceptions, if not remarkably quick, were remarkably clear; he hated intellectual as well as moral darkness, and knew how to distinguish between profound investigation and the wild sallies of an ambitious and dreamy philosophy. He had a ready and retentive memory, in which were carefully treasured the results of his study and observation. He had a sound, discriminating judgment, which never leaped in the dark, and usually reached

its conclusions by a legitimate process. If his imagination was not strikingly prolific, his taste was uncommonly exact; and every effort of the former was subject to the rigid control of the latter. He possessed in a high degree that admirable quality, —common sense; which is so eminently a discerner of times and seasons, and which, even in the absence of what are usually considered the higher intellectual endowments, may be a security for an honorable and useful life. He had an unusually safe mind; a mind that moved luminously, effectively, yet cautiously;—a mind that you would trust amidst agitating and even convulsive scenes, and not be afraid to read the report of its opinions and decisions. I remember to have heard that the celebrated Dr. Joseph Priestley was much struck with the character of his mind, while Dr. Miller was yet a very young man; and, little as he sympathized in his views of Christian doctrine, predicted that, if his life were spared, he would attain to great eminence in his profession.

“But we must view the intellectual in connection with the moral, if we would do justice to the character of his mind; though it may be difficult here to draw the line between what was originally conferred by the Creator and what was superinduced by education or even by grace. But I think all who knew him will admit that he was constituted with a large share of benevolent feeling. It shone in his countenance; it breathed from his lips; it found expression in his bland and kindly manner. Still he had a strong natural sense of right and wrong; and when he was deeply impressed with the idea of evil doing, he could sometimes utter himself in solemn and indignant rebuke. Though he was prudent and conciliatory in his intercourse with men, I never heard him charged, even in a whisper, with any unworthy concealment; with aiming to reach his end by a designedly circuitous or equivocal course; with seeming to be intent on the accomplishment of one object, while his efforts were really directed towards another. Nor do I believe that he was justly chargeable with any lack of firmness,—however his christian courtesy and love of peace may have sometimes carried him to what some would regard an extreme of forbearance or lenity. His firmness certainly never degenerated into obstinacy, but existed as a twin sister to that charity which thinketh no evil, and which hopeth all things; nevertheless he felt his convictions strongly, and valued them highly, and adhered to them in all cases which he deemed important, with unwavering fidelity.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Sprague's Disc. Commem., 9-12.

To multitudes it will be a recommendation of Dr. Miller's example, that it brings to view attainments within the reach of men in general, rather than a mere object of admiration, far beyond the grasp of ordinary mortals. As already intimated, he was certainly not distinguished by great genius, in the common acceptance of that word; nor was he even pre-eminent as a scholar—least of all as an original investigator, in any department of human learning. If he had a just claim to superiority, it was for the symmetry, finish, and practical efficiency which assiduous labor, in the plain, beaten track of life, had wrought in a sound, vigorous, active, well-balanced mind. His personal appearance was undoubtedly a help to success; but that advantage alone, as it has been said of patronage, could, at most, only have sent him up like a rocket, to fall like the stick. Inwardly he was, by nature, by diligent cultivation, and by divine grace, something like what he was, by nature and providence, outwardly. Not trusting to natural advantages, he had striven to turn those that he possessed to good account, and make the most of them for the great ends of human being.

His methodical, systematic industry has been spoken of. With him, however, method, routine and diligence were not so rigid as to become ungraceful in himself, or an annoyance to others. He was gently persistent in his appointed toil, readily resuming it after interruption, putting a price upon each moment, and wisely redeeming the time. Yet he seldom worked under high pressure. Few men know, and fewer still can drive themselves to realize, what the mind may be compelled to accomplish; and the secret is far too dangerous to life to be ordinarily a desirable possession. Dr. Miller conscientiously guarded health and comfort, and was no more systematic in his toils, than in taking rest and recreation. One of his pupils remarks, that he was accustomed to say, that as for himself, however it might be with others, he needed, every night, eight hours of sleep, well rounded out at both ends.

The symmetry of his character, perhaps, won for him more general respect and esteem, among his contemporaries, than could possibly have been won by brilliant talents, or vast learning alone. If he never dazzled, he usually

attracted, seldom gave offence, was free from affectation, mannerism and eccentricity. Such as you knew him at one time, you might be sure to find him at another. You would say that correction and finish had been his aim, rather than great achievement. His kind feelings, his unwillingness to wound others, and his readiness to contribute to their gratification and to the accomplishment of their schemes, encouraged exactions upon his time and strength, to which he yielded, for the most part, so cheerfully, as to gain many friends, even if he lost many hours, and often sacrificed his own comfort and convenience. In declining a request which he could not fulfill, he was ever studious not to offend or alienate.

The influence which he could exert with others, in public bodies, and in social life, he often carefully employed for the accomplishment of purposes which he deemed desirable and important; but few men have been more free from a spirit of intrigue, from a narrow regard to the seeming policy of the moment, or from the ambition to be a leader. A large charity, a love of peace, and the painfulness of giving pain, sometimes exposed him, perhaps, to the charge of vacillation, or of being unduly tolerant of error in doctrine or practice. Yet he was resolute and unyielding in the maintenance of whatever he deemed important to the order and purity of the Church, or the welfare of society at large.

‘He had few, if any, personal enemies. I can hardly imagine that any one could have borne him malice. His impulses were those of a true and frank Christian gentleman, and any natural excitability or irascibility that he may have had was well in subjection. He was not only open and cordial in his address, free from any haughtiness or moroseness, but without the least natural or studied repulsiveness. He invited the intercourse of the most modest, and suffered, with unexceptionable deportment, that of the most offensive and intrusive, unless dignity required him to show feeling. But I remember no occasion when such a duty overcame his good manners.’

One of his grandchildren, Margaret E. Breckinridge, since deceased, said of her grandfather,

‘His sweetness of temper and patience under provocation were striking to me even as a child. He was always quick to find an excuse for a delinquent, and often, by some pleasant

remark, or laughing apology, for an offending party, softened the anger of those about him, when they felt themselves aggrieved.

'Humility was one of his most obvious traits. He seemed to think no kindness or attention was to be received as his due, to regard no ill treatment as wholly undeserved; and, as to such treatment, he always appeared disposed to overlook second causes, and to refer it, with every other event, directly to God.'

Dr. Miller "was greatly distinguished by his *Christian attainments*.

"The foundation of his religious character was laid in a deep, reverential and abiding sense of the importance of divine truth. What his views of the doctrines of the gospel were, is sufficiently indicated by the fact, that he was honestly and thoroughly a Presbyterian: he received the Confession of Faith in its legitimate and obvious import; while, at the same time, he regarded the Bible as the ultimate standard, and revered the former only because it conformed to the latter. Redemption by the Blood and Spirit of Christ he considered as the cardinal doctrine of Christianity,—the central point of its glory,—the leading element of its power. He studied the Bible earnestly, constantly, not merely as a source of theological knowledge, but especially as a means of spiritual culture; and no doubt it was under this influence chiefly, that his spiritual life became so vigorous and all his graces so mature.

"He possessed, in a high degree, the devotional spirit. No one could hear him pray without being struck with the humble, grateful, child-like temper that marked his supplications. There was a reverent freedom, an elevated fervor in his approaches to the throne of grace, which showed that he was engaged in his favorite employment; and we felt that the fire which was burning so brightly in the lecture-room or the sanctuary, had been kindled in the closet. It was not necessary that one should be personally acquainted with his private religious habits, to feel perfectly assured that he was eminently a man of prayer; for his public devotional services proved it, as truly as the shining of Moses' face proved that he had been on the Mount. And what he exemplified so well in his own character, he affectionately and impressively urged upon others, and especially upon his pupils. Many a student can testify that the last interview which his revered professor held with him, previous to his leaving the Seminary, was concluded by his offering up a fervent prayer that God's blessing might attend him in all coming time, and throughout a coming eternity.

“Dr. Miller was distinguished by a benevolent spirit, in connection with a well directed Christian activity. I have already said that he possessed a large share of *natural* benevolence; but I refer here to that higher quality which is one of the fruits of the Spirit, and is habitually controlled and directed by Christian principle; and of this, I may safely say, he was a bright example. He walked constantly in the footsteps of Him who went about doing good. He watched for opportunities to do good;—good to the bodies and souls of men;—good to those near at hand and to those afar off. Without very ample pecuniary means, he was still a liberal contributor to the various objects of Christian benevolence that solicited his aid; and, in some instances, I know that he volunteered the most unexpected and generous benefactions. His benevolence, however, did not reserve itself for signal occasions; but was manifested in his daily intercourse with society and in connection with all the little affairs of life. Indeed, he seemed always to be acting in obedience to the impulses of Christian good will; and if an opportunity presented to confer innocent pleasure, much more substantial benefit, upon any of his fellow-creatures, even the humblest,—provided no paramount interest required his attention, he deemed it an occasion not unworthy of his consideration and his efforts.

“It was one great advantage that he possessed above many other good men, that his Christian life was ordered with the strictest regard to system. His purposes of good were formed, and his means of accomplishing them arranged, so as to occasion no perplexing interference. You would often find him greatly pressed with engagements which, with his feeble health and advanced age, he scarcely felt adequate to meet; but you would never find him thrown into an inextricable maze and not knowing what to do next, for want of due forethought and calculation. It was surprising to many that he accomplished so much, in various ways, in his last years: the secret of it was that he worked to the full measure of his strength, and did every thing by rule.

“It was the natural result of his uncommon regard to system, in connection with his strict conscientiousness about even the smallest matters, that he was remarkably punctual in fulfilling his engagements. He made engagements cautiously, and generally subjoined the condition,—“if the Lord will;” but when once made, they were as sacred as an oath. I have myself recently had experience of this trait in his character in a way which has awakened at once my gratitude and admiration. Some time ago I had occasion to ask of him certain services

which I deemed important, and a part of which none but himself could render. He answered me with his usual kindness, expressing a wish to do what I had asked, and an intention to do it if his waning strength should permit; but would not absolutely promise, lest he should disappoint me. The result was that, from time to time, as he felt able, he tasked himself to comply with my request; and one of the latest efforts of his pen was to finish what he had not dared to promise that he would even undertake.

“He was remarkable for self-control,—for the subjection of his appetites and passions to the dictates of reason and religion. He was proverbially temperate in all things; \* \* The passion of anger no doubt belonged to his constitution; I think I have seen it once or twice flash in his countenance; but I never heard of its blazing forth in bitter or unseemly expressions. On the other hand, I have known of his sustaining himself in dignified tranquillity, when most other good men would have been wrought into a fever of excitement; and I have heard him utter kind and forgiving words, when he had been the object of marked personal indignity. An instance which I can never forget, occurred in one of my last interviews with him; in which he took special pains to give me a favorable opinion of a man who, I knew, had done him an injury; and when I adverted to the fact, he acknowledged it, but added,—“He was a good man, notwithstanding.” In short, he was a noble example of Christian magnanimity. You saw reflected in his whole life the true greatness of religion.”<sup>1</sup>

It has already been intimated, more than once, that Dr. Miller was naturally of a quick, rash temper; but its control he had early recognized as an imperative, christian duty, and had made a systematic study and practice. On this point he never trusted himself to the impulses of the moment: what course he should pursue when attacked, and even wantonly provoked, he was accustomed to consider beforehand; and such frequent consideration had fixed with him, in conviction and habit, the law of non-resistance of evil, himself only being concerned, as the ruling principle of his life. An instance just now comes to mind, in which a brother minister, at his side, in public, alluded roughly and cynically to a most innocent remark of a hortatory kind, which Dr. Miller had a little before made, and illustrated by reference to a distinguished old divine. He

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Sprague's Dis. Commem., 14-19.

sat so perfectly unmoved, not even by a look betraying any consciousness of the blow, and passed it by in such entire silence, that one of his sons, who had been present, was curious to know, afterwards, whether he had really heard the ill-natured words. Yes, he had heard them distinctly; but it was one of those cases in which, for Christ's sake, he had long settled it with himself, that he would never retaliate.

“There was nothing about the character of Dr. Miller more remarkable than its *completeness*. I know of no term which expresses so adequately as this, the assemblage of admirable qualities which made up the entire man, social, intellectual and moral, together with the harmonious and appropriate working of the same in every relation and situation of life. As a Christian gentleman, a scholar, a divine; as a pastor and a teacher of theology; as a counsellor and a controversialist; as a citizen and the head of a family; in his manners, in his secular transactions, in the structure of his sermons, in the cast of all his public devotional ministrations; there were to be seen a refined taste, a symmetry, an adaptation to circumstances, a conformity to what the station or the occasion called for, which could not fail to produce the impression that his character was one of wonderful completeness—a fit model to be kept before the eyes of the rising ministry of a Church.

“It were small praise to say of Dr. Miller that he was a pious man. He was a man of eminent piety. His own testimony respecting that patriarchal servant of God, the late Dr. Green, might be applied to himself. “In his conversation; in his correspondence; in his mode of counselling those who were addressing themselves to the study of theology; nay, in the most casual and unreserved intercourses of society, he appeared the deeply spiritual, devoted man of God.” If this became more and more the case as he advanced in years, it was but the gradual change which usually occurs with trees long “planted in the house of the Lord,” that bring forth their mellowest fruit in old age. His whole life was devoted to the service of God, and presented an example of Christian consistency, purity, activity, and benevolence, which it was refreshing to look upon. No one could know him without perceiving that his own peace and happiness were bound up with the prosperity of Zion; that he was tenderly alive to all that concerned her welfare, and ever ready to employ his powers in her enlargement or defence. Those who were brought into habits of close intimacy with him, have often referred to the unfeigned humility and meek-



ness which served in a striking manner to set off his extensive and varied attainments. Nor let it seem derogatory if mention is made of his inflexible integrity. For although piety necessarily supposes the presence of integrity, there are grades, even among honest men; and Dr. Miller belonged to the highest of these grades. Abhorring equivocation and deceit, he could act neither the parasite nor the partisan. Too polite to give needless offence, he abstained from the use of harsh epithets; but his opinions were uttered on all occasions with great explicitness, and those with whom he had to do, always knew where to find him. The law of truth was not only on his tongue, but in his heart. The controlling principle of his character was an earnest desire and habitual endeavour to DO RIGHT—to do the will of God. He strove to bring all his powers and all his passions into subjection to this principle. He carried it into every department of his official labours, into his controversial writings, into his intercourse with general society and with his most intimate friends. It kept guard upon his lips and upon his feelings; and gave so decided a cast to the whole tenor of his being, that the nearer the view one obtained of his character, the more certainly was the impression made upon his mind that the venerable divine was a singularly conscientious man—a man who was governed in all, even the most trivial matters, not by impulse or caprice, not by interest or convenience, not by a thirst for popularity or fame, but by elevated and inflexible Christian principle.

“His prompt and cheerful benevolence may be adverted to as supplying a single illustration as well of this attribute of his character, as of his great kindness of heart. No man could be more exempt from selfishness than Dr. Miller was. Benevolence was with him both a principle of piety and a sanctified affection. \* \* He had adopted the Apostle’s maxim—“As we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, especially to them who are of the household of faith.” And he was far from restricting the application of this maxim to pecuniary matters. If he was a “cheerful giver”, he was no less a true friend and a kind counsellor, ever ready to advise the perplexed, to reclaim the erring, to raise the fallen, to console the afflicted. No one who was in trouble or in danger could go to him without finding sympathy and such assistance as it might be in his power to bestow.”<sup>1</sup>

The following paragraph appeared, after Dr. Miller’s death, in *The Presbyterian*.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Boardman’s Tribute, etc, 13-16.

DR. MILLER AND DANIEL WEBSTER. One day, several years ago, while I was a student in the Seminary at Princeton, I was on my way to Philadelphia. The steamboat on which the last few miles of the journey were made, was somewhat crowded with passengers. Among these was Robert Horner, well known a few years ago to every Princetonian. As I was sitting in a corner, Mr. Horner came up and whispered to me that Daniel Webster was on board. Following the direction of his eye, sure enough there was Webster, enveloped in a sort of green overcoat, his hat slouched over his eyes. He was walking slowly up and down the promenade deck—and at each end of the walk stood a group of passengers, watching him with very much the eyes visitors are wont to have on visiting Barnum's Museum. Beside the statesman walked the venerable Dr. Miller. He seemed to be conversing most earnestly with Webster, as if having a great deal to say in a short time. There was that peculiar bend of the head to one side, and gesture of the right hand, which every acquaintance of the Doctor cannot but recollect. Webster walked silent, grave, respectful, listening with inclined head and deferential manner to the earnest but low-toned conversation of the man of God. I do not know, of course, yet at the time I could not help believing, that the conversation was upon the subject of religion. From the peculiar bearing of both, I was satisfied that the Doctor had seized the providence, and was using, to his best ability, the moment given him of speaking about his soul's salvation to a man occupied beyond most men in things of the world. Any one who knows these two men well, can, by closing his eyes, have this whole scene over again, as I then saw it—Daniel Webster and Dr. Miller thrown together by God for the last time in their lives—Webster buttoned up in his green overcoat, his hat drawn down over his deep eyes and dark face, listening silently, gravely—Dr. Miller, buttoned to the chin in his black surtout, his white hair, his ruddy, cordial face turned in earnest conversation to his companion, as they walked up and down the deck. It was a picture for a painter. I will remember the two men always thus together. I do believe in a special Providence—it was not accident, this. Who can say what effect the words there spoken may have not had toward the death-bed professions of the departed statesman?

Augustin.'

## CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHTH.

### PROFESSIONAL CHARACTERISTICS.

1839.

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#### 1. THE MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL.

WE have seen that Dr. Miller, on coming to Princeton, resolved not to merge his "office as a *minister of the Gospel*, in that of *professor*;"<sup>1</sup> and it was a resolution earnestly and to the last fulfilled. He certainly did not underrate the importance of the chair which he occupied in the Seminary; he rather magnified it, by judging that a professor's example as a devoted, laborious, faithful minister, was, above all things else, a requisite for his successful training of ministers. His senior colleague said of him, after his death,

"Besides labouring in his appropriate vocation, he has very frequently preached in this and the neighbouring churches; and I think I may say, that I never knew a minister, who delighted more in preaching the Gospel. As he advanced in life, it appeared to his friends that his preaching became more spiritual and evangelical. Even to the day when the decay of physical strength confined him to the house, he sought opportunities of delivering the Gospel message to the congregations in the vicinity."<sup>2</sup>

"Being always careful in his preparations, and possessing a neat and perspicuous style and a graceful elocution, he continually grew in popularity; and as his preaching was truly evangelical, it was highly acceptable to serious Christians. At an age much earlier than usual, he was honoured with the degree of Doctor of Divinity \* \* a distinction which he afterwards received from other sources; as well as recently that of Doctor of Laws."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> II Vol., 10.

<sup>2</sup> Life of Dr. Alexander, 581.

<sup>3</sup> Life of Dr. Alexander, 580.

Dr. Miller certainly took great delight in preaching, and this being well known, he was very frequently invited, by neighboring pastors, to occupy their pulpits. His regular appointments, therefore,—for a time in the College chapel and village church, afterwards in the Seminary chapel,—which have been already mentioned, furnished by no means his only opportunities of directly fulfilling his office as an ambassador of Christ. It may be said that he was always ready to preach, especially in those churches, of which there were almost a score around him, to which he could ride, or drive, on Sabbath morning, and return home, as he generally did, from the church door, immediately after service. Occasionally, he would take some pastor, within ten miles, by surprise, and preach for him if “the way were clear.” The truth is, that a number of them had given him expressly to understand, that he would be always welcome; so that he was not merely experimenting on their courtesy, or eagerness for help. The Rev. James W. Blythe, one of his highly esteemed pupils, who was pastor, for a number of years, of the Second Church in Cranberry, says,

‘Towards the close of your father’s active ministerial life, it was frequently my privilege to welcome him, on the Sabbath day, to my house and to my pulpit. Often, without any previous notice, he was seen to drive into my gate; and his usual salutation was, “Have you any thing for an old man to do?” I think I can hear that cheerful tone, and see the polished manner of its utterance, now; and it is one of the pleasantest memories of my ministry. He was always a welcome occupant of my pulpit. The whole congregation loved him, because they had tried him, and always found him equal to their just expectations.

‘Several of my children were baptized by your father. In the service at the church, his manner was all that it ought to have been—solemn, serious, and most impressive. But it did not end with the church service. When we got back to the house, he always asked for the child; and he would take it, when brought, into his arms and bless it. His manner then was solemn beyond any thing I have ever witnessed. When this scene first occurred, it took me by surprise, and was almost too much for my calmness. The child thus first blessed has passed away from earth; but he was not taken, until, from his almost infantile lips, were heard words of faith and prayer.

And now, in my fondest recollections of that child, I mingle the scene in which your honored father blessed him.'

In Dr. Miller's later years, his formal pulpit discourses were almost uniformly read from the full manuscript. As a rare thing, he returned to his old method of memoriter preaching, or preached extemporaneously, though not without careful preparation. His extemporaneous speaking, whether in the pulpit, at the professor's desk, or elsewhere, was easy, natural, and sometimes more animated and forcible than his usual reading; but the habit of trusting to his manuscript had made him distrustful of himself without it. He always encouraged, however, in ministers and candidates for the ministry, the effort to become good extemporizers; though not without cautioning them against the dangers of success. To one of his sons he wrote,

'The most serious objection, in my view, to the habit of preaching without papers, is, that when a man finds he *can* preach passably and acceptably thus, his indolence will be apt to tempt him not to write at all, or, at most, very seldom. And he who abandons writing will soon, inevitably, become commonplace and superficial. I have never known this to fail: it did not even in Dr. Mason. Three-fourths of his sermons were of but a medium character, and many of them quite drivelling, as they would have been in popular estimate, had he not had the knack of making, in most of his discourses, at least one explosion, in which blast of voice, an overbearing tone of authority, and a power of giving emphasis and plausibility to mere truisms, if not nonsense, imparted to them an air of something extraordinary.'

Dr. Hall, of Trenton, having spoken of Dr. Miller's preaching, occasionally, by invitation, in his church, remarks,

'These references to his visits recall one occasion, on which I said to him, that if the day on which he had consented to come should be unpleasant, or his own health should not be comfortable, he need not run any risk on my account, as I should hold myself in readiness for such a disappointment. He lifted up his hands and said, "Brother Hall, you astonish me!"—and went on to say, that he had never been able to prepare a sermon except under the stress of necessity.'

Dr. Miller once said to the writer, during a horseback ride, that he had reason to be thankful that he had never

been a *popular* preacher—had never been much run after!

He was a punctual attendant upon church judicatories, and took an active, influential, but not obtrusive part in their deliberations. From an early period in his ministry down to old age, much of the business of these bodies, in the shape of reports, was laid upon him; and there was rarely a committee of ceremony appointed with which he was not connected. To illustrate his influence in these judicatories, the Rev. H. Whitefield Hunt, of Schooley's Mountain, mentions the case of an appeal to the Synod of New Jersey, from a decision of the Presbytery of Raritan, to organize a church at Lower German Valley. Dr. Miller urged that the appeal should be sustained, because the church was not needed, and its proposed location was surrounded by mountains so precipitous as to be uninhabited and uninhabitable. He carried the Synod with him, and the General Assembly affirmed their judgment. The following summer he visited the Springs, and examined, for himself, the "debated ground." 'At the next meeting of the Synod, which was at Princeton,' writes Mr. Hunt, Dr. Miller 'rose in his place and remarked, "Mr. Moderator, there has been a great deal said about the organization of a church at Lower German Valley. At the last meeting of Synod I opposed the organization; but I have since visited that ground. Mr. Moderator, we have been misled; and I move you, Sir, that the Presbytery of Raritan be permitted to organize the church forthwith." The motion was carried almost by acclamation.'

Dr. Miller felt deeply his obligation to admonish others of their faults; and painful as the duty was, particularly to one of his kindly, courteous disposition, it was not always neglected: both personally and by letter he administered many a christian reproof. His brethren in the ministry received their share of his faithful services in this way. And, for the most part, he was enabled to fulfill his duty, without serious or lasting offence.

A few stray opinions of Dr. Miller's in regard to church matters may here be thrown together.

He was of opinion that it was not advisable, in ordinary cases, to examine before the session church mem-

bers bringing certificates from Scotch, Irish, and other foreign churches; but that the pastor ought to converse with them, and, in this way, assure himself of their qualifications for admission.

He was very strenuous in advising, that the pastor himself, with such help as he could obtain, should catechize the children of his charge every week; recommending Saturday afternoon as the most suitable time, because week-day schools were not then in session; because an hour spent in this way would not often be regarded as inconsistent with holiday enjoyment, yet might often prevent holiday dissipation; and because it would be a preparation for the Sabbath.

Both Dr. and Mrs. Miller were opposed to the modern device of fairs for paying church debts, and raising money for other church purposes. The latter, in one of her letters, speaking of a refreshment table spread for the benefit of the church, says, 'I cannot go with the multitude to do evil, and I sit at home and fret, and try to pray, and sometimes am cheered with the hope of better times.' And when an unexpected claim swept away at once all the profits of such an adventure, she looked upon it as a providential reproof.<sup>1</sup>

When inquired of, whether, in judicial cases, the whole testimony must be spread upon the minutes, Dr. Miller replied, 'By no means; it may be very indelicate, and therefore wholly improper to go upon such a record; but it must all be carefully preserved upon file, if not put on the minutes.'

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Miller here hints at the evils of church-fairs, of every class, without mentioning them distinctly. Many doubtful, or even obviously sinful practices have been often connected with them; and fairs conducted unobjectionably have countenanced, before an indiscriminating public, those with which such practices have been connected; nay, have countenanced many fairs, so-called, which have been altogether of a demoralizing nature. But there is a deeper principle of condemnation, as regards all such expedients for raising money for the advancement of the Gospel. The very thing itself, apart from its abuses, is an evil. The Gospel expressly directs how means for its own propagation are to be obtained—by the free-will offerings of Christ's people, according to the prosperity which he has given them. Now, to employ mere human devices to accomplish the object is to draw away attention from the Gospel plan, to substitute something else for it, to teach something on this subject inconsistent with Christ's teachings. The people are to be trained to give with self-denial and simply for Jesus' sake; but, instead of this, by church lectures, and fairs, and refreshment tables, they are taught that they may advance religion, and get the full worth of their money in self-gratifica-

## 2. THE PROFESSOR.

Dr. Miller was, by title, from first to last, Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government; but to these departments was added permanently that of the Composition and Delivery of Sermons. In all, he united the two methods of a text-book and lectures; telling his pupils that confinement to the latter method would make them too dependent upon their professor, too ready to take his *ipse dixit* as conclusive; while no perfect text-book could be found; the best of them were full of faults; and yet their very faults might prove an advantage, if they kept the reader more awake to spy them out. Upon every subject of instruction he drew up question books or 'Catechisms', presenting the subject in a brief form for review and examination. These the students seem to have been encouraged, or, at least, permitted, to copy.

To Professor Cogswell, of East Windsor Theological Institute, Dr. Miller wrote on the 26th of September, 1834,

'I am in the habit of meeting the *First* (or Senior) class three times a week; viz., at eleven o'clock in the forenoons of Monday, Wednesday and Friday; the *Second* (or Middle) class, twice a week; viz., on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, at three o'clock; and the *Third* (or Junior) class, once a week; viz., on Saturday afternoons. I spend about an hour and a quarter with each class; sometimes more and sometimes less; but that may be considered as the average. Most of my lectures are in a degree extemporaneous. In many of them, I

tion, at the same time; and the result is selfishness, instead of Christian liberality. To be sure, it is urged, that persons outside, who otherwise would contribute nothing, are thus reached: that it is clearly lawful for Christians to make money to be given afterwards to Christ's cause; and that money may be made for this object by associated effort as properly as by an individual. But to pervert the Church for the money of those altogether outside of her pale is a wretched policy; and, moreover, those without are themselves to be influenced and drawn in; which is not likely to be effected without a consistent Christian example. As to the other plea, it is a misrepresentation of the simple obvious fact, that, by such expedients, the public, including church-members, are distinctly called upon to give to the Church, and for the Church's sake; so that the Church herself is regarded, always, as raising money by the means employed for her benefit: it is the Church which thus appears to teach, that giving to Christ is to find a present reward, in the gratification of appetite and carnal desire. Besides, God's people, though by no means so liberal as they ought to be, are really much more liberal than they often have the credit of being; and the same time and effort, spent in direct solicitation for Christ's sake, will ordinarily secure more money than when devoted to fairs, or any other like expedient.



have nothing before me but very small hints, or brief memoranda. In other cases, I have about one-half written, and extemporize the rest; and, in a very few cases, I have the whole written, where the language, as well as the matter, is important.

'A beginning with fifteen or twenty students will be very respectable and auspicious. We began, in 1812, with *three* only.

' \* \* I see more and more the importance of union and intercourse between those who think substantially alike with respect to the great fundamental principles of the gospel. \* \*

'N. B.—At the beginning of every session in our seminary there is an introductory lecture delivered by one of our professors on some general subject not ordinarily included in our stated course; such as, The Importance of Vital Piety in Candidates for the Ministry; The Importance of a Full Course of Study; The Means of gaining most Advantage from Social Study; etc., etc. Each of the professors performs this service in turn.'

Under the head of Ecclesiastical, embracing Biblical, History, Dr. Miller always included Chronology and Sacred Geography. To the end, he employed Mosheim's work as his chief text-book. Dr. Maclaine's was the only English translation of it, until, in 1832, Dr. James Murdock, of New Haven, published another, adding notes equal, perhaps, in extent to the original itself. Of this history and its translators Dr. Miller said,

"The serious defects of Dr. Mosheim's work were by no means overlooked; and the loose, paraphrastical character of Dr. Maclaine's translation was distinctly recognized, and has been explicitly stated to all the successive classes which have passed through the institution. \* \* As far as my examination has extended, Dr. Murdoch's translation is far more close and faithful than Dr. Maclaine's; his additional notes, (though not, in all cases, such as I should have chosen, or such as I can entirely concur in,) are rich and instructive, forming a very valuable addition to the original work; and his ample references to able writers on the several parts of the narrative are of great value to students. \* \* Dr. Murdoch's Mosheim will be far more desirable for the classes in Theological Seminaries than Dr. Maclaine's, or any other form of the learned German's work that has met my eye."<sup>1</sup>

The following letter also was written to Professor Cogswell.

<sup>1</sup> The Presbyterian, 11th of April, 1832. P. 35.

‘Rev’d and dear Brother.                    Princeton, July 24, 1834.

‘Your letter of the 15th instant reached me five days after its date. I received and perused it with gratification, yet not without embarrassment. With gratification, because I was glad to find that I enjoyed any portion of your confidence;—with embarrassment, because I felt so little qualified to meet your expectations in returning an answer. It is true, I have been more than twenty years engaged in my present employment; but, after all, I must acknowledge, I feel very poorly fitted to say much to a Brother who is just entering on the same career of service. Since you request me, however, to say something, I cannot prevail on myself to remain silent.

‘I make the Bible my only text-book in the commencement of my course of Ecclesiastical History; and as far as the Old Testament narrative reaches. I consider the visible church as having been founded in the family of *Adam*, and as beginning as soon as man was placed under a dispensation of mercy. It is wholly incredible in my view, that there should be no visible church in the world until the call of Abraham. Can it be imagined that, during these two thousand years, there should be pious people;—a people to whom the will of God was imparted;—a people professing the true religion;—a people worshipping God by sacrifices, etc., in the way of his own appointment,—and yet no church? What is a church, but a body of people, professing the true religion, together with their children? Surely, there was such a body in the family of Adam. Dr. Mason’s doctrine, that the church commenced in the family of Abraham, I am constrained to reject.

‘My plan is to begin with a *Lecture* preliminary to my course of instruction, announcing my plan;—showing the importance of studying the Bible, and being familiar with its history as well as with its doctrines;—and labouring to impress the minds of the students with the necessity of their being at home in the Bible,—both as Christians and as Ministers. I then give out a certain number of chapters, on the history of which the class is to be examined at the next interview. When we come together the next time, I spend about twenty or thirty minutes in examining them on the portion specified, and having done so, deliver a lecture on the most prominent and interesting points embraced in the narrative. I have delivered Lectures on the following subjects. 1. The Creation, including the question whether the days of creation were natural, or demiurgic. I reject the New Haven doctrine that the days of creation were demiurgic, and cannot doubt that they were six natural days. 2. The Divine Origin and Purpose of Sacrifices.

3. The Origin of Language. 4. The Character of the Antediluvian Period. \* \* On all these subjects I recommend particular books, as they occur to me; such as I suppose contain the best views, either for or against the doctrine which appears to me to be right: such as Schuckford; Prideaux; Winder's "History of Knowledge"; Faber's "Three Dispensations"; Faber's "Horæ Mosaicæ"; "Farmer on Miracles;" Ancient Universal History; Warburton's "Divine Legation of Moses"; several works on Atonement and Sacrifice, such as Magee's, Outram's, etc.; Commentators; particular Essays, etc., etc.; Josephus; Stackhouse's History of the Bible; Bedford's Chronology; Buddæus' *Historia Ecclesiastica Veteris Testamenti*, etc., etc.; Jahn's Hebrew Commonwealth, etc.; Russell's work, intended to fill the place between Schuckford and Prideaux, etc. All, or as many as possible, of the foregoing works, I should wish to have in my study, when I entered on my duties, together with as good maps of the places and countries mentioned in Scripture, as can be procured. I consider Prideaux's work, though heavy and dull, as peculiarly rich and valuable for the ground which it covers in the Old Testament history. Stowe's edition of Jahn is also exceedingly valuable for the rich references to books which it contains at the close of each chapter.

'When I entered on the duties of my Professorship, I was very raw, and very poorly prepared for it. But I formed three resolutions: First, to throw myself humbly on the grace and strength of God; secondly, to keep my unfitness for the work, as much as possible, to myself; saying little about it, either in public or private; and, thirdly, to bring out of my little treasure, as much as I could, from day to day, without allowing myself to be either too much mortified, or too anxious about the result. My health, at the time, was feeble. I could not study much. And yet I was enabled to be tranquil, and to commit my way and its results, to the Lord. I very slowly got the better of my painful sense of unfitness: I am not now, and never shall be, qualified for my work, in the manner that a man would be who should begin earlier (I was 44 years of age) to engage in that course of reading which is adapted to his office.

'You may rest assured, my dear Brother, that my colleagues and myself take a deep interest in your general enterprise and in your individual success. It will give us cordial pleasure to learn that your students multiply, and that the Lord visibly smiles on your important undertaking. We were glad of the opportunity of seeing you here; and shall all feel unfeigned gratification in being able to promote, in any way, your views.

‘With regard to myself personally, I have only to say, that I feel grateful for the confidence which your letter expresses in me; and, although I am conscious of not meriting it, yet I am still thankful and gratified, and hope I shall be enabled always to act a part, in some degree worthy of that confidential intercourse which ought to subsist between those who are situated as we are.

‘It gives me peculiar pleasure, my dear Brother, that you received, in the kind manner which you did, my suggestions on the importance of making deep, vital piety a leading object in a Theological Seminary. My impressions on this subject are far more deep and solemn than they were when I entered on the duties of my office. Let it be sacredly confidential, when I say, that my observations on the New Haven students in this respect have been painful. They seem to me to have very little of the meek, humble, devout spirit of the Gospel. Their semi-pelagianism is leading them, in this respect, already, unless I am deceived, just whither it has led others. May your students go as much beyond them, in this important, vital matter, as in orthodoxy.

‘The Lord be with you, my dear Sir:

‘so prays your brother in Christ,

‘Sam’l Miller.

‘P.S.—I dare not keep back one suggestion, dictated by a sincere regard to your success and comfort. Knowing the discomfort, as well as the other mischiefs of the want of entire harmony and cordiality among colleagues in the same Institution, one of the “Resolutions” I formed in coming to Princeton was,—that nothing should tempt me to quarrel with my colleagues: that, however they might treat me, I would merge my own feelings and honour in my Master’s glory. By the favour of God, I think no three men were ever more united, in affection and confidence, than we are.’

To the same highly esteemed correspondent, Dr. Miller gave, at a later date, the following account of his course of Church Government.

‘Rev’d and dear Brother,                      Princeton, August 4, 1836.

‘Yours of July 27th was received three days after its date. I consider myself as honored by the application which it contains; and wish it were in my power to give a more satisfactory answer. But what I can say, I will lay before you with much pleasure.

‘I always make the study of Church Government a separate

matter from that of Ecclesiastical History. In pursuing the former study, I have ever most painfully felt the want of a suitable text-book. I know of none, and consider the formation of one as a great desideratum for our theological seminaries. I have sometimes thought of attempting myself to supply this deficiency; and have not yet wholly abandoned the thought; but am almost too old for such an undertaking, even if I were otherwise qualified. It is possible, if my life and health be spared for a few years, that I may be able to execute something at least on the important subject in question.

‘My method of proceeding is to deliver a course of lectures on the subject of Church Government, referring as I go along to the best books that I can find, on the following points:— I. The Nature and Design of the Church. II. The Head of the Church. III. The Members of the Church. IV. The general Necessity of the Ministry, as an Ordinance of Christ. V. Lay Preaching, etc. VI. The different simple Forms of Church Government. (1) Popery. (2) Prelacy. (3) Independency. (4) Presbyterianism—considering Congregationalism as not a simple form, but as something between the two last. VII. Ruling Elders. VIII. Deacons. IX. Licentiates. X. Discipline: its Nature, Design and essential Principles, etc. In the latter part of the course, I just take our Form of Government and Discipline, and go over its chapters in order, explaining and commenting on each at some length. \* \*

‘I was greatly gratified, my dear Sir, to find that you approved of Dr. Hodge’s commentary on the Romans. I communicated to him your fraternal message; and I need not say that it gave him much pleasure. It rejoices my heart to find that the real friends of truth are coming nearer together. May they be more and more united! I really think, my dear Brother, that nothing more is necessary to make us entirely one, as to all important points, but more intercourse.

‘Please to give my affectionate, fraternal regards to the Rev. Professor Nettleton. I rejoice to hear that he has gotten to work at East Windsor. That his labors there will be greatly blessed, as well as approved, I cannot entertain a doubt.

‘I hope, some day, to see East Windsor, and its venerated and beloved Professors; but when that will be I know not.’

In addition to what the foregoing letter discloses of Dr. Miller’s course of instruction in Church Government, it ought to be said, that he believed in the “divine right” of Presbyterianism, though only in the “low-church” or “evangelical” sense. He did not believe that Presbyterian

government was essential to the existence of a church. That belief, as held by the Romanists and Romanizing Episcopalians, in regard to their respective forms of government, he, of course, utterly condemned. But he also condemned, as loose and unwarranted, the notion that Christ had left no plan or model of church order, and that a mere human and variable prudence, as to this point, should be our guide. The middle ground, therefore, he occupied, maintaining that Presbyterianism, in its great principles, was clearly set forth in the New Testament, and was essential, not indeed to the being, but to the highest well-being of a church. His arguments for this opinion were, in brief, *first*, that Christ, being the Head and Lord of the Church, and having established it as a separate community, we might safely conclude that he had not left it without a form of government; *secondly*, that the forms of government and discipline used in the Jewish synagogue were evidently transferred by the Apostles to all the churches which they organized, and were thus clearly designated as the proper abiding forms for the whole Church of Christ; and, *thirdly*, that various passages in the New Testament—such, for example, as Matthew xviii. 15–20; 1 Corinthians xii. 28; 2 Corinthians x. 8—indicated a divine authority, as distinguished from mere human prudence, for the form of government adopted by the Apostles, the form which they most significantly established everywhere, as suited to all circumstances.

On the Composition and Delivery of Sermons, Dr. Miller delivered a course of lectures, and he also superintended the experimental “preaching” of the First, or highest Class, once a week; besides taking his turn to preside, on Friday evening, weekly, in the Theological Society, an association among the students for theological debate. In regard to the preaching exercises, particularly, the Rev. Dr. Leroy J. Halsey, before quoted under another head, says,

“There was one department of instruction in which Dr. Miller greatly excelled as a Professor. For many years, he had exclusive charge, in the Seminary, of the exercises belonging to the composition and delivery of sermons. He was himself a masterly homilist: no man understood better the true art of sermonizing. As a critic, he was acute, skillful, and faith-

ful to the last degree in detecting everything like an error or a blemish; and yet his keenest criticisms were given with all the gentle kindness of a father. Full of interesting and appropriate illustrations and anecdotes, drawn from his extended reading, and his wide range of observation and experience, he was accustomed to enrich and enliven his critical remarks, on these occasions, from this fund, in a manner which rendered the service to the students one of the most attractive and profitable in the whole seminary curriculum. In presiding on these occasions, with consummate skill drawing the balance between the merits and the defects of each performance, tempering to each speaker the word of condemnation with the word of encouragement, repressing the forward, bringing forward the timid, polishing the rough edges of self-confident ignorance, and eliciting the latent excellencies of the modest and retiring; interspersing his remark with apt incidents recited in his vivacious and inimitable manner, he was the perfection of dignity, benignity, and grace. He blended in equal proportions the wisdom and authority of the instructor, with the wit and genial freedom of the friend. In nothing perhaps did he more surely and deeply impress his own genial spirit, and his fine scholarly taste, upon the successive classes of students under his care, and through them upon the whole ministry of the church, than in these informal and delightful homiletical critiques of the Oratory. Had he seen fit to preserve and collect into a volume the substance of these off-hand lectures, with his illustrative incidents and anecdotes of distinguished ministers, he might have produced a practical work on Homiletics, as unique in its character, and as interesting and instructive as his well-known work on "Clerical Manners."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Miller often took one or more of his sons with him to the Seminary "Conference," held every Sabbath afternoon. To the interesting nature of this exercise, as conducted in those days, the graduates of the institution have often borne witness; and that mere children should attend, Sabbath after Sabbath, of their own accord—for it was never required of them—upon such a service, was perhaps a strong testimony to the same effect. The exercise consisted in a familiar discussion, first by the students, then by the professors, of some practical religious subject, which commonly had been announced upon the previous Sabbath, and had been selected, often, from among a number suggested by the students themselves.

<sup>1</sup> Great Preachers and Pastors—N. West Presb. of 22 Aug., 1838.

## 3. REMINISCENCES OF PUPILS.

Dr. Sprague's recollections of Dr. Miller have been given in previous pages; the latter never had a more kindly appreciative pupil; but many, who had received instruction from his lips, have been prompt to record, casually, or in compliance with a special request, the impressions which he made upon their minds and hearts. In other connections, some of these testimonies of respect and affection have already found, or will hereafter find, their appropriate places in this work. Some of them we will here throw together, as fitted to the present design. Dr. S. Irenæus Prime kindly furnished the first of these.

'The first time that I read an essay in the hearing of Dr. Miller, in the recitation room, and it was but a few days only after the opening of my first term in the Seminary, he said to me when his own criticisms and those of the class were finished. "Please to remain a moment after the class retires." I supposed that he had some remarks to make of so severe a character that he preferred to save my feelings by making them in private. I remained with some fear and trembling, and when we were alone he said with the blandness of a gentleman and the tenderness of a father, "Will you be so good as to come and take tea with me this evening? I wish you to become acquainted with my family."

'The evening was delightfully spent. His affability to me a boy, not yet of age, his great kindness of manner, his dignity and grace, his wonderful knowledge of men and of the Church impressed me deeply. Before I left his house, he led me into his study, where was the largest theological library I had ever seen in a private study, and he said; "This is my library: while you are in the Seminary it is entirely at your service; take books to your room and use them as long as you please."

'And this kindness, so considerate and unexpected, he continued to show me, while I remained in the Seminary. And while others will speak of his great learning in the department over which he presided, and the splendid ability with which he discharged the duties of his professorship, and yet others will dwell upon those personal accomplishments which made him the Chesterfield of the clergy, and more than this the model of a Christian gentleman, I love to remember him as the father and friend of the students, each one of whom he regarded as a son.

'Would to God that in each of our Theological Seminaries



there were one Dr. Samuel Miller!—a living example of what a Christian minister should be, in the pulpit and out of it, at home and among the people.'

The Rev'd Joseph W. Blythe, before mentioned, thus writes:—

'My recollections of your honored father are very distinct—from the first day on which I called at his study, as I was about to enter the Seminary, to the last time I saw him, a few weeks before his death. His manner to the students of the Seminary, and his deep, abiding interest in their welfare—especially his earnest desire for their spiritual welfare—have so often been described, that I need only bear my testimony with that of others. But I cannot refrain from saying, that my conviction has always been, that from no other one source did I receive so many impressions for good, which were of an abiding character, as I did from your revered father. I felt for him a mingled awe and affection which I never felt for any other person no more nearly connected with me. And this feeling never left me, although I was associated with him as a co-presbyter for fifteen years.'

The Rev. William Huntting writes of Dr. Miller,

'Calling at his study one morning on business, when it was dispatched, it proved to be near the hour for his lecture, and he invited me to wait and walk with him to the Seminary. After he had arranged his dress and taken his well known cane, we started. In the southwestern part of the front yard, he had a man clearing up and putting in order a portion of the grounds. We went that way, and Dr. Miller, after inspecting and directing a little, brought the workman into an attitude of attention, and said to him, "Old Mr.— used to say, there were three things he wished always to avoid, *debt*, and *dirt* and *sin*;" and immediately led off to other topics. This epigram I understood to be more intended for the theologian, than for the man of the spade. Its point was, "In your ministry, young man, be on the alert to say something valuable on the most transient occasions;" and, practically, it has served me a better purpose than some entire lectures in the Oratory.'

The Rev. A. W. Loomis, at first a missionary in China, and since of the Chinese Mission, San Francisco, thus gives his reminiscences of Dr. Miller:—

'The reference which you make to our seminary life brings up those pleasant scenes to memory: they are years in my short history which I love to recall.' Your memoir will revive 'in

us the influence of that life which was so lovely, and so well worthy for all to take as a pattern.

‘I know not how to express my appreciation of the privileges of that honored school while your father was yet living. \* \* not only because of the marvellous fund of knowledge which during a long life he had been industriously gathering, and of which he imparted something useful and appropriate “with every opening of the mouth;” but his character, his manners, his whole life, were of themselves instructors, the influence of which cannot be estimated.

‘We knew that our teacher felt a deep and tender interest in us, for how cordial always was his greeting, and how affectionately did he inquire after those who had been students in the Seminary, and whom he supposed we might have seen.

‘But his heart was not all bound up in the Seminary; he had kind words for every one whom he met. In our long strolls, it was not uncommon to see your father stopping in his walk for exercise and recreation, and holding a conversation over a garden fence with one or another of the citizens of the town. Occasionally we enjoyed a few minutes in his company in the walk from the Seminary to his gate; and always, at such times, we learned from him something new, something of use to one preparing for the ministry. How often, in those days, did I say to myself, “If these brief opportunities are so profitable, how must those be favored who daily sit with him at his table, and may enjoy his conversation, and ask him all the questions they desire, during the seasons of his rest from study. \* \* I used to say, (and without extravagance I still believe,) like the Queen of Sheba, “Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom.”

‘Oh, how I wish it were possible for a memoir to present to the world our beloved preceptor as he was, so that others might learn from him, and be influenced by his life and manners! But that is a task beyond the power of pen or pencil: only those that knew him can carry the impression formed by those words, that voice, that countenance beaming with intelligence, benevolence and devotion; and that daily life which to us seemed so pure and lovely: these we hold embalmed in our memory. Well do we remember, but no one can describe, that uniform cheerfulness, with a becoming seriousness; that perfect propriety in every act; the awe which came over each heart, when he said, “Let us look to God!,” and led us in prayer.

‘It would be impossible for any student to be long under his

instructions, or to witness his deportment in the lecture-room, the Sabbath afternoon Conference, or in the place of public worship, and not learn from him, how "to do everything decently and in order."

'It was not often that I called at your father's study, knowing how precious were the hours to him; but, whenever I did visit him, so honest and earnest was his welcome, that all apprehension of being an intruder was dissipated, and I felt like a son with his father. Almost always these little interviews were closed with prayer.

'My last visit was one peculiarly precious. The lively interest expressed in our mission, the counsels, the prayer, the affectionate wishes, and the *blessing*, followed me to China, have accompanied me wherever I have gone, dwell in my heart still, and can never leave me. Amongst my precious things I cherish a book which he then gave me. It was the Life of Brainerd, a large and ancient copy, which he took from its shelf, wrote in it his name and mine, and presented it with his benediction. That was our last interview; but if, by and by, I may be admitted to that company in which are such as Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the prophets and apostles, I shall see him again.

'May your mind, your heart, and your pen be directed in this work, that you may be enabled to delineate well a character which was so perfect and so worthy of being embalmed—a life so useful and honored. May future generations know him, that they may imitate his virtues.'

The following is from a letter from the Rev. F. de W. Ward, D.D.

'Thirty years and more have fled away, yet my first visit to his study is as if of yesterday for the place it has in my memory. That cordial grasp of the hand; that warm welcome to the "School of the Prophets;" that kind offer of assistance in my studies; that invitation to call when I needed his aid or advice; and then the prayer; for he would scarcely ever let me leave him without a few words of blessing;—my memory retains the whole in lines not to be erased by time. \* \* I was about to depart far hence to the Gentiles. It was my last call and equally memorable with the first. How judicious his advice; how encouraging his utterance; how loving his spirit; how fervent his piety! Upon my rising to depart—"I must pray with you once more," he said. Yes, and such a prayer—so full of unction, appropriateness, and feeling! He blessed me, and I withdrew in tears, thanking him for all he had been to me, and

in my heart thanking God for allowing me to sit at the feet of such a teacher. Such was Dr. Miller to me, and such to hundreds, who can bear the like testimony.'

At the first interview mentioned by Dr. Ward, he received from Dr. Miller two practical counsels in regard to one part of his preparation as a preacher of the gospel. 'First,' said the latter in substance, '*always have a sermon upon the anvil.* The first you write will seem to yourself very meagre and defective. Never mind that. Do not be discouraged. Practice makes perfect. Lay this one aside and try again. Thus go on. Keep all you write, for you will find a satisfaction in comparing the earlier ones with what you produce in after years. *Secondly,* Let your paper be of medium size, of strong texture and white. Use black ink, and write with a bold, large hand. You may not see the need of all this *now*, but you will by and by.'

Dr. Ward also mentioned Dr. Miller's having once said to him, that the first *cold word* had never passed between himself and one of his colleagues in the Seminary.

The Rev. Abraham DeWitt, writes,

'One interview with Dr. Miller I feel disposed to mention. It was in his own study, after I had finished the full course in the Seminary, and just previous to my starting for the first field of my ministerial labors. He inquired whether this was our last interview. I replied that it was. "Then," said he, "we must have a prayer together." We bowed our knees, and from the fulness of his heart he poured forth such petitions as I can never forget, that God would guard, guide and bless me personally, and make my ministry useful and successful in winning souls to Christ. It seemed to me like the blessing of a patriarch.'

Another pupil writes,

'Many of the best impressions and most blessed memories of my life are connected with Dr. Miller. Amid the bitterness and corruption of the world, I often thank God that my eyes have been permitted to see such a noble christian gentleman, and such an example of sanctified mortality. At the close of my course in Princeton Seminary, I went to bid him farewell. He received me very cordially, afterwards requested me to kneel by his side, and prayed for me with much earnestness. When we arose, he took me by the hand and said, "I have but two things now to say to you, my dear brother. The first is, keep near to the mercy seat: there all your strength lies.

The other is, take care of the children of your charge: they are the hope of the Church." These parting words made a deep impression upon my mind, and often as I look upon his likeness, which hangs above my study table, I seem to hear him repeating the solemn admonition.'

*Another* pupil writes, 'I cherish his memory with undying affection. He was eminently wise and indefatigable in his counsels and labors for the good of the young men who were under his care. I often think of him as a model christian gentleman.' *Another*, 'I remember him with the profoundest affection and veneration.' He 'was a scholar, a gentleman, and a christian, in the highest meaning of the terms.' *Another*, 'One of the best and most scholarly men of his generation, Dr. Miller was a model christian gentleman of the *old* and *best school*. Kind, considerate, polite and conscientious in all his works, and all his intercourse with men, he never wantonly and willfully wounded even an adversary. A voluminous writer, he had justly won the title of "the American Addison," for the purity and lucidness of his style; while he enriched his pages with lore gathered from vast reading, and a well stored and retentive memory. I venerated him as a father; I loved him as a preceptor; I admired him as a preacher, a presbyter, and a gentleman; and I mourn him as one beloved and lost to the Church on earth. His memory is lovely and fragrant.' *Another*, 'I consider it one of the great privileges of my life that I made his acquaintance. He is one of the few men I have known for whom my esteem and reverence increase with the lapse of time. The late Dr. A. Alexander, Dr. Chalmers, of Edinburgh, and your father are the three great names in my memory. The world has known few such men. I need not repeat what has been so often said, and is universally admitted by all that I have ever heard speak of him—that he was the most perfect model of a christian gentleman that I have ever known. For his learning, scholarship, devotion to the cause of literature and religion, and of the Presbyterian Church, as well as for his piety, he deserves to be held, as doubtless he will be, in the highest esteem.'

Dr. Miller, like most others, had some stereotyped forms of speech. As he rode or drove up to his gate, a passing acquaintance, often a Seminary student, would not unfrequently prevent his alighting, by kindly stepping forward to open it. 'Thank you, thank you, Mr.——: I wish you a better office!' was the ordinary recognition of the favour.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-NINTH.

OLD AGE.

1839-1844.

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### 1. CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.

THE General Assembly of 1838 established "The Board of Publication of Tracts and Sabbath School Books of the General Assembly in the United States of America," which received a transfer, from the Synod of Philadelphia, of the property and business of "The Presbyterian Tract and Sabbath School Book Society," and by the Assembly of 1839 had its name changed to "The Presbyterian Board of Publication." The latter Assembly, the fiftieth year now having been completed since this supreme judicatory of the Church, taking the place of the old Synod, had been first organized, recommended the second Sabbath of December for a semi-centenary celebration—a day of Jubilee thanksgiving for past mercies; and the offering upon that day, by all the members of the Church, of gifts for the endowment of the new Board of Publication. Dr. and Mrs. Miller took a lively and active interest in this celebration: it fell in exactly with their views of the great importance of Christian education in the Sabbath-school and elsewhere. The endowment fund reached the sum of forty thousand dollars.

To the Repertory for this year, Dr. Miller contributed a review of Dr. Griffin's Sermons. The latter, in 1832, he says,

"—— addressed a letter to the Rev. Dr. Taylor, of New Haven, begging him to explain more fully the peculiarities of the system commonly called by his name; at the same time apprising him that the information was sought for the purpose of making a public use of it, if such use should be called for or desirable.

“Dr. Sprague has given us, at large, Dr. Taylor’s reply; which, though the publication of it was interdicted at the time of its date, has now been committed to the press by the writer’s permission. It is just such a reply as we should expect to find from the pen of a man who was conscious of holding opinions which he was unwilling explicitly to avow, and who was constantly endeavoring to hoodwink or amuse, by suggesting that he was not understood; or that he could not *then* take the time, or enter into sufficient detail, to explain. This was not the manner in which the venerable men who compiled our public standards, or the excellent divines who, since their time, adorned and blessed the church in our own country, treated similar interrogatories. They were always able and ready to make themselves understood. Concealment or equivocation made no part of *their* policy. We have been more and more convinced, by every attempt which the divines of the school in question have made to defend their system, that, in its leading features, it is essentially Pelagian; that it is incapable of scriptural defence; and that the more carefully its practical influence is examined and marked, the more clearly it will be seen to subvert the gospel, and to destroy the interests of vital piety. The contest with this system is so far from being a mere verbal one, that we consider it as entering essentially into the fundamental principles of our holy religion; and are persuaded that, so far as it bears sway, the great doctrine of regeneration, in its genuine Bible character, must be abandoned.”<sup>1</sup>

The General Assembly of 1839 had appointed the Rev. Drs. S. Miller, A. Alexander, C. Hodge, J. A. Alexander, and J. Carnahan, all of Princeton, a Committee to recommend measures for securing a more thorough Christian training for the children and youth of the Church. Dr. Miller prepared the report of this Committee, and presented it to the Assembly at their sessions in 1840. By a unanimous resolution, it was referred to the Board of Publication, which issued it in a small volume.<sup>2</sup>

There was no subject in which Dr. Miller took a deeper interest than that of Christian education. His own associations, all through life, had constantly served to deepen this interest; and Mrs. Miller’s enthusiasm on the subject had been, especially, a potent means of stirring him up to

<sup>1</sup> 10 Biblical Repertory, 411, 412.

<sup>2</sup> “The Christian Education of the Children and Youth in the Presbyterian Church. By the Rev. Samuel Miller, D.D. Philadelphia: 1840.”—24mo. pp. 66.

labor, with his pen and otherwise, to promote the training of children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. She had assisted, as early as 1816, in forming "The Female Benevolent Society of Princeton," designed to relieve the poor generally, in particular the sick poor; but also to educate indigent children. These were sent, at first, to a private day-school in the village; but, in 1825, the Society opened a school of its own, in which free instruction might be given to the poor; and, in 1828, set about the erection of a building for its accommodation. This school is still continued: for more than forty years it has been steadily accomplishing a most important work of Christian charity. Mrs. Miller, while she lived, was its chief manager, visiting it herself very frequently, and sometimes sending her children, by turns, to assist the teacher in her labors. Of the Benevolent Society she was long the President. She was greatly interested, also, in the establishment of The Mount Lucas Orphan and Guardian Institute, near Princeton, and was instrumental in securing for it a considerable endowment, which was so managed, that when the Institute was at length of necessity abandoned, she was able to transfer a large fund, with the consent of all concerned, to the Ashmun Institute, since Lincoln University, in Pennsylvania, for the Christian training of young coloured men. Before the establishment of the Society's School, she had received a number of coloured children into her own house for daily instruction; and, in after years, she took a very lively interest and active part in a coloured Sabbath-school, held in the village. For a long time, too, she maintained a small white Sabbath-school at home, formed from a few neighbours' families.

Mrs. Miller was particularly sanguine in hoping for good results from a thoroughly Christian training commenced with children of a very early age. Her convictions on this subject were exceedingly deep and most firmly settled: of older children, hardened by neglect and contact with the world, she had comparatively little—perhaps too little—hope. She very frequently urged upon her acquaintances, some of them missionaries in foreign lands, and particularly upon those interested in public educational efforts, that they should bestow their first efforts upon the very young—those just rising above mere infancy.



In October, 1840, the Synod of New Jersey met in Wilkesbarre, Pennsylvania. Railroad facilities were not then so generally distributed as they are at present. Nearly thirty years, since elapsed, have produced an astonishing change in this respect. The distant members of Synod reached the place of meeting by long drives, in private conveyances, over mountain and valley; and survivors, to this day, talk with special interest, of the adventures of their journey—particularly some of Dr. Miller's companions of the Presbytery of New Brunswick. He and his party, of which Mrs. Miller was one, at a point in their route, were turned back and delayed by a tree which had fallen across the road. Then they were compelled to stop at a smithy, to have two or more of the horses re-shod; and here a reverend doctor of divinity, to the great diversion of his brethren, doffed his black coat, donned a spare blacksmith's apron, and proved it to be no idle boast, that he could shoe a horse as well as any man. This meeting of Synod was long remembered with special interest by Dr. and Mrs. Miller, on account of a report which he had presented, and an animated discussion which had taken place, on the subject of Christian education. No doubt his previous report, on the same subject, to the General Assembly, had served to introduce the matter to the Synod's attention.

Mrs. Miller was, for a number of years, a leading member of a Maternal Association in Princeton, the members of which met frequently to unite in prayer for their children, and to stir each other up to greater parental fidelity.

To give a thorough christian education to their own children was Dr. and Mrs. Miller's constant and untiring endeavour. That their sons and daughters might be devoted followers of Christ, and the former devoted ministers, were their highest desire and prayer for them. Religion was to be the basis of the whole training, and the higher the superstructure on this foundation, the better. Dr. Miller recognized, constantly, the truth, that his family demanded a large share of his time and attention; and, in the greatest hurry of business and study, he always found opportunity to provide for their comfort, enjoyment and profit. The question of their pleasure and improvement entered

essentially into all his plans—was secondary to no other question, unless that of keeping his own heart. For any suggestion that concerned the advantage of his children he was always ready. Mrs. Miller once queried whether some of the lectures which he was delivering in the Seminary might not be useful to his own family; and this led, the following winter, to his assembling the family several times during the week, for a number of months, in his study, reading to them his Seminary prelections upon Biblical and Ecclesiastical History and Chronology, and examining the older children afterwards upon them, and requiring them often to write out from memory an outline of what they had heard.

Says one of his sons,

‘Though perhaps not demonstratively affectionate, in his intercourse with his children, and though inclined on principle, and after reflection, to severity of discipline, and a regard for the maxim “spare the rod and spoil the child,” there was sincere love mingled with our respect for him. We were proud of him, glad when he was with us, delighted when he laughed at our jokes and childish tricks. He gave us more confidence than we deserved, and the full rights and privileges of our years. He was particularly annoyed at any evidence of want of truth, or high tone, or manliness, and made us feel the weight he attached to these qualities in more ways than one.’

When Dr. Miller had committed the training of any of his children to any teacher, or institution, and so long as he thought it right to continue the relation thus established, he considered it a plain duty to require from the child implicit obedience to the instructor, with whose regulations or administration he was seldom at all disposed to interfere. It may safely be said, that he never shielded one of his children from just chastisement at school, and gave little countenance to complaints of the undue severity, or mismanagement in any way, of those to whom he had entrusted their education.

Dr. Miller made a college education a *sine qua non* with all his sons. Beyond that, he permitted each to choose freely his own pursuit in life. Nothing could have gratified him so much, as that all of them should have been called of God into the Gospel ministry; but whether any one had such a call, he did not pretend to decide. While all knew

well that he regarded the ministry as unspeakably the noblest of human professions, each was left, as to this point, entirely to his own will and views of duty. Their father recollected, that he himself had once thought of being a merchant, and had been turned, providentially, to a better purpose. One of his sons first tried mercantile business, but, after a brief apprenticeship to that, became a physician. Three chose the bar; but the eldest of these died when he had but just entered upon a course of legal study; and the next, after a few years' practice, exchanged the Bar for the Pulpit. The Ministry was the first choice of the youngest alone.

Dr. Miller did not share at all in the narrow prejudices which many entertained against the legal profession. Two of his own brothers, doubtless with their father's concurrence, had chosen that profession; and, not improbably, it would have been, next to the sacred office, his own more mature preference. At any rate, he regarded it as a noble and, properly, an ennobling pursuit. Many a parent, under a sense of christian responsibility, has said, "I cannot permit my son to be a lawyer. There are, at the Bar, too many temptations to knavery, and too many examples of it. He shall go into a counting house, instead of an attorney's office." But the simple truth is, that in mercantile life there are ten temptations to dishonesty, for one found in legal practice. And the consequences of this difference may readily be discerned. Let any one form an intimate acquaintance with a dozen young merchants, and the same number of young practitioners at the bar, both of about the average standing; and he will soon discover that, whatever honorable exceptions there may be among the former, the higher standard of professional integrity certainly belongs to the latter. Young merchants will, often, in their social gatherings, boast of their clever bargains—their success in the "tricks of trade;" but very rarely will young lawyers, be found thus amusing each other. It was formerly a common saying in the city of Philadelphia, that a man who had studied for the Bar rarely made a successful merchant: his knowledge of law only cramped him in the emergencies of a counting-room. Let it be remembered, that men who have passed with unimpeached integrity, and sterling honor,

through all the temptations of mercantile life, deserve special respect, for having gone unscathed through a fiery ordeal.

## 2. CORRESPONDENCE AND DIARY.

John T. Gilchrist, Esquire, of New Rochelle, New York, had written to Dr. Miller, informing 'him of the removal of the presbyterial relations of the church' at that place, 'by the session, or a member of it, and the minister who was then supplying the pulpit, from its connexion with the Bedford Presbytery, (Old School,) to the New York Second, (New School,) without any consultation with the church, and against the declared wishes of some of the members, and that they quoted his work on the eldership as authority;' on the 27th of April, 1840, Dr. Miller replied,

'The construction put upon what I say, in the pages referred to in my treatise on the Ruling Elder, is as unjust as it well could be. Such a mode of proceeding as this construction points out, would fill the Church with disorder and violence throughout all its borders.

'I say, then, that, according to my views of church order, no elder sitting in Synod, as the sole representative of a church, can, by his vote, or in any other way, alter the presbyterial relations of that church. Nay, if the whole session were present, they could not do it. The presbyterial relations of a church cannot possibly be altered, but by a vote of the members of the church, at a meeting called for that purpose, and in virtue of a public and explicit notice. I had occasion to be present, eight days ago, when a transfer of presbyterial relation was actually made on the principle and in the manner which I have stated. There is no point, I apprehend, better established.'

To Mrs. Susan F. Ledyard, widow of Benjamin Ledyard, Esquire, and daughter of the Honorable Brockholst Livingston, Judge of the Supreme Court of the United States, Dr. Miller wrote on the 22d of May, 1840, after mentioning his having failed to find her in New York,

'Mrs. Miller and myself had heard of your purpose to visit France, five or six weeks before your letter arrived; and had conversed repeatedly with one another on the subject. If I could tell you all that passed in those conversations, I am sure it would afford you new testimony of our kind and respectful

feelings, and our sincere interest in your temporal and eternal welfare. I had intended, in the course of the call above referred to, to offer you the affectionate counsels and the united benediction of my dear companion and myself. But this was rendered impossible by circumstances.

‘And, now, my dear Madam, what shall I say? Our sincere prayer is, that your voyage may be a safe and happy one; that you may find your son and his consort in health and comfort; and that you may spend a few months in the great capital, in which he resides, with much gratification, and with rich profit to your spiritual interests. All this I trust I need not assure you; or, also, that we shall often bear you on our hearts before the throne of grace, as long as you remain absent from your native country, that a blessing may rest upon this whole expedition.

‘You are going to France—beautiful, alluring, splendid, irreligious France. My dear wife and I have lived longer than you; but we should almost tremble for ourselves, if we were going into that country, and especially into that luxurious, seductive city to which you are destined. May you be preserved from every snare, and every unhallowed influence, during your residence there; and even find your heart drawn more closely to the Saviour and His service, by witnessing the splendid vanity and corruption of that country. I have known a few instances of persons not only remaining unharmed in such places, but being driven, so to speak, to more cordial devotedness to God, by seeing the fatal mischiefs of irreligion and worldly dissipation. May this, my dear Madam, be your experience; and then you will have reason forever to rejoice in your visit to France.

‘But do not feel confident that this will be the natural effect of the scenes presented by the French capital. The very reverse is the only *natural* effect. Remember your own weakness. Pray, without ceasing, that you may be endued with strength from on high for resisting temptation, and for walking unhurt through the fire. Remember that much, converse with God, in your Bible and your closet, can alone afford any promise, that you will not, by your contemplated visit, lay a foundation for much regret and many tears, in those serious hours which are yet to come.

‘When you reach Paris—which God grant you may do without any adverse occurrence—remember me respectfully to your son, and give him my benediction. And if, amidst the whirl of that city, you find time to recollect that you have two sincere friends in Princeton, who pray for you; and to drop them a line, telling them how you and yours are, and how

Parisian scenes appear in your eyes, you will gratify us. My dear wife unites with me in good wishes and benedictions.

‘I am, my dear Madam,

‘Your sincere friend,  
Samuel Miller.’

‘Mrs. Susan F. Ledyard.

We have already seen that as early as the year 1804, Dr. Miller undertook to prepare a sketch of his deeply venerated preceptor, Dr. Nisbet, to be prefixed to an edition of his lectures. The latter, for some reason, were never published, and the materials for the sketch remained unused, until in 1840, Dr. Miller committed to the press a memoir<sup>1</sup> of that learned but eccentric clergyman.

His brother-in-law, Thomas Sergeant, one of the Judges of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, wrote to him, on the 17th of November, 1840, upon receiving a copy of the work,

‘On my return from Pittsburgh, I found on my table your Memoir of Dr. Nisbet, which I have since read with much pleasure and satisfaction, as it gave me a very distinct idea of a man, whom I had frequently heard referred to without being able to know exactly why. The style is easy and perspicuous, and the subject treated in a very agreeable manner. It made me recollect, that the best biographies we have—Plutarch and Johnson—were the works of a late period of life, when, perhaps, judgment, imagination, and facility of composition, the result of practice, combine to cast a mellow hue over the composition. \* \* How could [Dr. Rush] \* \* beguile the old scholar into obscurity, poverty, and misery? \* \* Permit me now to say, that I think you stop the current of the story, by putting those discourses of his in the beginning of the book: they seem a sort of barrier to one’s progress; and perhaps ought to be in the appendix. However the work is too agreeable to find fault with, and it is the one of your works which will live in the *literary world*.’

The following extracts are from Dr. Miller’s diary.

‘Lord’s day, September 20, 1840. This day, though in nearly my usual health, I do not preach, and spend a part of the day in special prayer, with reference to my peculiar circumstances.

‘Since February last, my health has been unusually delicate

<sup>1</sup> ‘Memoir of the Rev. Charles Nisbet, D.D., late President of Dickinson College, Carlisle. By Samuel Miller, D.D., Professor in the Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey. New York: 1840.’—12mo. pp. 357.

and feeble. I was, in that month, confined nearly four weeks to my room. Toward the latter part of the following May, I was attacked again with the same complaint—a slow, obstinate fever, which, though at no time very severe, was obscure and protracted. From that attack I was mercifully raised up, so as to enter again on the duties of my office, after a confinement of five weeks; not, however, until a few days after the term in the Seminary had begun. But I had been scarcely four weeks attending to my duties, before I sustained a third attack of a similar kind, which confined me again for more than three weeks. At the end of this time, by the advice of my physician, I went to Saratoga Springs, accompanied by my beloved wife, my eldest son, my daughter —, and a young niece out of health. I remained at the Springs just a week, and reached home again on Saturday, the 22d of August. Since that time I have been gradually gathering strength, but very slowly; and perhaps may never regain my wonted firmness. But, surely, it is no wonder that a man, and a sedentary man too, who has nearly completed the seventy-first year of his age, should experience much infirmity, and never know again the feelings of comfort and vigor, which he once knew. Blessed be the Lord for the comfort I have enjoyed hitherto. And, if it should please him never to restore me to my former strength, may he enable me, as long as I do live, to live to his glory, and to sustain my decline, however painful it may be, with patience, humility and entire resignation to his will.’

‘Lord’s day, October 11, 1840. This day I do not preach; and, being at home, surrounded by my dear domestic circle, and enjoying more quiet retirement than usual on the holy Sabbath, I give it to peculiar exercises of devotion.

‘I have been led to-day to reflect on the multiplied and great mercies of God to me in my pilgrimage. They are more numerous than I can reckon up, and richer than I am able to estimate. The Lord has provided for my temporal wants in a more ample manner than in early life I ventured to anticipate. He has cast my lot in situations which could hardly have been more comfortable than they were and are. He has given me one of the most precious wives that ever man was blest with; one whose ardent piety has been to me a constant stimulus and pattern; whose strong mind and practical wisdom have enabled her to be a counsellor and guide of inestimable value; and whose exemplary tenderness and affection render her one of the most delightful of companions. Oh, that I could adequately prize this precious gift of God, and duly honor her, and make a suitable improvement of her example! The Lord has also

given me children dutiful and promising. May he give me grace to walk before them in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless!

‘I have often thought that my lot in life has been peculiarly adapted to promote my comfort and usefulness. Had I been made the possessor of great wealth, I have reason to fear that its influence upon my mind would have been highly unfavorable to my best interests. And, on the other hand, had I passed my life in abject poverty, I should have been cut off from many of those advantages and opportunities of doing good, which the dispensations of God’s providence have presented. \*  
\* “I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.”

‘But when I contrast these mercies, these precious advantages, which I have enjoyed, with the poor improvement which I have made of them, how much reason have I to be humbled in the dust! \* \*’

‘October 24, 1840. The return of this day reminds me of my happy *marriage* thirty nine years ago. I am now at Wilkesbarre, in Pennsylvania, attending the annual meeting of the Synod of New Jersey, which has assembled this year in a remote corner of its bounds; and, although surrounded with company, and occupied daily and hourly with the business of the Synod, I cannot forbear to recur, with grateful recollection, to that precious event which, thirty-nine years ago, put me in possession of the richest earthly gift that a gracious God has ever bestowed upon his unworthy servant. \* \* As she has been to me the best of *wives*, so, I trust, my children will ever remember, that she has been to them the best of *mothers*.’

‘October 31, 1840. My birthday has again returned. \* \* My health has been repeatedly interrupted. In February, May and August last, I suffered three several attacks of disease, which indicated a decline of physical vigor, and threatened a speedy termination of my earthly course. But my health and strength seem to be reviving, and, by the goodness of God, I have now a prospect of some further continuance of life: how long I know not, nor do I desire to know. May the Lord prepare me to live or to die, as shall be most for his own glory, and for my eternal benefit.

‘But whatever may be the amount of the little remnant hereafter allotted to me,—and, according to the course of nature, it can be but little,—one thing is certain, and is brought to my mind with great force and solemnity to-day—that my past life has been deplorably unfruitful and polluted; and that I have unspeakable reason, on this occasion, to humble myself before God, and to “repent in dust and ashes.”



‘The nearer I draw to the close of my course, the more precious does time appear; the more lamentable my delinquencies heretofore; and the more important my quickened diligence in future. May the Lord, by his blessed Spirit, enable me, from this hour, to live more like one who is not his own, who is bought with a price, and who is bound to glorify God in his body, and in his spirit, which are God’s.

‘O thou Former of my body and Father of my spirit! who hast an absolute right to my heart, my time, and my entire service, grant that, by thy Holy Spirit, I may be roused from my spiritual torpor and indolence; that a new unction from on high may be shed upon me; and that whatever remnant of life may yet be afforded me may be more diligently and faithfully devoted to my Creator and Redeemer than it has ever yet been. Blessed Saviour! I find thine own declaration more and more verified—that without thee I can do nothing.’

Even the wedding-anniversary records, which have been already given, can hardly have impressed any one too favorably as to Dr. Miller’s fidelity, affection and tenderness as a husband, or as to the happiness of his married life. On this subject members of the family are best qualified to speak. The confidence which dictated his immediately paying over to his wife the whole of his salary, to be disbursed without the rendering of any account, or kept, so far as anything remained from the expenses of the household, was a constantly recurring testimony of regard, and, in its issue, proof complete, that his heart safely trusted in her. The explanation which he gave of this practice was, that, in his Delaware home, where the circumstances of the family, as we have seen, were often painfully straightened, he had witnessed, frequently, his dear mother’s pecuniary difficulties and embarrassments with distress, and had resolved that his own wife should never suffer in the same way, if his utmost efforts could prevent. And this considerate and respectful compliment was only a small part of that consideration and respect which she received from him at all times; and which, moreover, he constantly manifested towards all her sex; about which none ever heard him, so far back, at least, as the memory of his surviving children extends, make a slighting, much less a disparaging remark. How often gentlemen of real refinement, courtesy, and good feeling, permit themselves to be betrayed into the

indulgence of their wit, and of perhaps an unworthy sense of rivalry, at the expense of woman; but from everything of this kind Dr. Miller was remarkably exempt. The best offices of a brother's thoughtful affection were never wanting to either of his sisters, while they lived. Mrs. McLane, particularly, who longest survived, was nearest to him, and passed several of her latest years in widowhood, received from him all the attention which a brother could bestow. To the inspiring influence of his own mother, whose memory he cherished with singular steadfastness, seemed to be due the esteem and deference thus exhibited toward the female sex in general. And no doubt the annual religious celebration of his wedding-day served to deepen such feelings, to make him a better husband, and to strengthen and consecrate every family tie.

Writing on the 6th of October, 1840, to the Rev. Nicholas Murray,<sup>1</sup> of Elizabethtown, by Jonathan P. Alward, the missionary to Africa, who was about to apply for license, Dr. Miller said,

'I have suggested to him that \* \* he ought not to return to Africa without being ordained. As he contemplates remaining there a considerable time, perhaps permanently, is it not highly desirable; nay, in reference to the great objects of his mission, very important, that he should go clothed with the character and powers of a minister of the Gospel? I know of no rule which fixes the time that ought to elapse between licensure and ordination. The latter may follow the former in ten days, in a week, or even in twenty-four hours, if the judicatory is satisfied. I venture, with diffidence, to suggest my opinion in the case. If I had a vote to give, \* \* I should certainly give it in favor of his ordination.'

### 3. LATER EPISCOPAL CONTROVERSIES.

In the fall of 1840, the Presbyterian Board of Publication issued a new work, from Dr. Miller's pen, defending Presbyterian orders.<sup>2</sup> It was substantially an abridgment of his *Letters on the Christian Ministry*, before mentioned.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards, D. D.

<sup>2</sup> "The Primitive and Apostolical Order of the Church of Christ Vindicated. By Samuel Miller, D. D., Professor in the Theological Seminary at Princeton. Philadelphia: 1840."—12mo. Pp. 388.

<sup>3</sup> See I Vol., 218. II Vol., 161.

The Preface, after giving the history of those Letters, refers to "recent and repeated attempts to circulate with new zeal, in different parts of our country, those manuals which denounce and virtually excommunicate Presbyterians," and to the lately published Oxford "Tracts for the Times," as having occasioned the work. This was the last of the author's volumes upon the prelatival controversy, and perhaps presents his view of it in the best, certainly in the most compact form.

From the year 1807, when the Letters on the Christian Ministry were first issued, until Dr. Miller's death, he was constantly under fire from prelatival opponents. Those Letters in the original edition, and as republished in 1830, his successive works on the Ruling Eldership, his Memoirs of Dr. Rodgers, his tract of 1835 on Presbyterianism, the volume just now mentioned on the Primitive and Apostolical Order of the Church, and his subsequent Introduction to Scott's Force of Truth, with some minor publications, furnished an excuse for ceaseless attacks, which were successful chiefly in exhibiting the importance which their authors attached to discrediting, if possible, first the New York pastor, then the Princeton professor, and their own manners and spirit. To give the details of this guerilla warfare would weary the reader: a few specimens only, with some general statements will be presented—thrown together here without primary regard to dates or minute circumstances. The opponents in question were, for the most part, entirely agreed in the opinion that Dr. Miller had been previously, and finally vanquished—slain; but none of them could forbear pounding his dead body, to make sure that the life was out of it.

The "Southern Churchman,"<sup>1</sup> a fledgeling Episcopal newspaper of Richmond, signalized the twelfth week of its existence, by publishing an article entitled "Pious Frauds," charging Dr. Alexander and Dr. Miller plumply with whatever that title meant. A few weeks later,<sup>2</sup> appeared, in the same issue of this paper, answers from both, repelling with some warmth, as well they might, the unchristian attack. Dr. Alexander under no pledge whatever, had consented to prepare for the American Sunday School Union,

<sup>1</sup> Of 20th March, 1835.

<sup>2</sup> 17th April.

an amended edition of Gurney's "Diamond Pocket Dictionary of the Bible." The reputed author, Mr. Gurney, was a clergyman of the Church of England, and the Union's Publishing Committee, in which the Episcopal Church was fully represented, had, with entire liberty of rejecting the whole or any part, revised the work as it came from Dr. Alexander. The latter had refused to alter any of the theological opinions of the book, but had pointed out some things which he feared might offend Episcopalians; and the committee had made changes rendering it, as the Episcopal members believed, wholly unexceptionable on this score. After a large part of the revised edition had been stereotyped, Dr. Alexander had discovered, that Mr. Gurney's Dictionary was an unblushing plagiarism from the work of that staunch Presbyterian, John Brown of Haddington! Of this he had immediately informed the committee; but its Episcopal members being satisfied with the book, it was published, with neither Gurney's nor Brown's name upon the title page, but with a simple reference in the preface to both these authors—to the former as having abridged the latter.

In his answer, Dr. Alexander, wrote,

"I cannot refrain from observing, that this method of attacking ministers of the gospel, in the public prints, is one of the most injurious kinds of calumny of which a man can be guilty. No man will ever persuade me, that any one who had the fear of God, at the time, before his eyes, would dare to write such a paper, as the one referred to above; and in this case, I can see but little difference between the author and the publisher. To charge a minister in good standing, with the commission of a "fraud," would, I believe, subject the writer, or publisher, to an action for damages, in this part of the country. I may be more sensitive than is necessary, because in a life of more than three score years, I have never before deemed it expedient to appear in the public prints, in defence of any part of my conduct. \* \*

"And in the conclusion, you will permit me to say, that if the Episcopal Church in Virginia, or the "Southern Churchman," its advocate, can derive any advantage from the publication of such pieces as that referred to above, the inhabitants of my native State must have strangely altered, since I left them."

Dr. Miller's "frauds" consisted in the "misrepresentations and false quotations," of which Dr. Bowden, and, copying from the latter, Dr. Cooke, had "convicted" him; of the statement, that an Episcopal minister had been "dismissed" by his diocesan, for conscientiously changing a few words in the office for baptism, when he administered that ordinance, to avoid teaching baptismal regeneration; the fact being that he had resigned, upon an intimation from his diocesan, that he must be disciplined if he repeated the offence; but Dr. Miller having been informed, credibly as he supposed, that the Bishop had told this clergyman, that his services in the church were no longer needed, and that his immediate retirement from it was wished; of the inadvertent substitution, by himself or the printer, of the word "may" for "shall" in the rubric, "Parents shall be admitted as Sponsors, if it be desired;" and of having, in Presbyterian simplicity, and in wicked ignorance of the jargon of Ritualism, called "god parents," "sponsors."

After referring to the conclusive answers, as he supposed, which had been given to Dr. Bowden and Dr. Cooke, Dr. Miller said,

"The truth is, Mr. Editor, amidst the numerous publications which I have made on the Episcopal controversy, within the last twenty-five years, I do not claim to have been infallible, either in quoting ancient authors, or in commenting on my extracts from them. Amidst many hundred quotations, in various languages, it would indeed be marvellous if I had in no instance fallen into some mistakes which might expose me to the animadversion of captious critics. But, after the calm reflection of a quarter of a century, and after cherishing, as I hope, some measure of that serious and conscientious feeling which certainly becomes an old man, drawing near to his last account—I can sincerely declare, that I am not conscious of having made, in the whole of my writings on the controversy in question, a single quotation or representation justly chargeable with unfairness; and that if I were now called upon to review and modify, upon the strictest principles of verity, all that I have ever written on this subject, my sincere convictions would constrain me to advance with increased confidence, to urge with new zeal, and to fortify with additional testimony, the substance of all that I have ever written, without a single exception, which any candid and intelligent reader could pronounce material. \* \*

“\* \* I am not only conscious of having used no unfairness in quoting the testimony of the Fathers and other witnesses; in my representations of the import of that testimony; or in any other branch of my argument against prelacy; but, if I am not utterly deceived, it may be asserted that every main plea which I have urged in favor of my cause, with scarcely an exception, has been, at one time or another, adopted and urged by learned Episcopal divines. Those who are acquainted with the writings of bishop *Stillingfleet*, bishop *Croft*, bishop *Jewell*, bishop *Manton*, professor *Whitaker*, the very learned *Willet*, etc. etc., will know what I mean. Yes, hundreds of Episcopal writers themselves are witnesses to the fairness of my quotations, and to the relevancy and legitimacy of all my principal arguments.”

When the tract on Presbyterianism was published, it was issued, entire, in *The American Presbyterian of Nashville*. This brought out a pamphlet, entitled, “A Letter to the Editor of the *American Presbyterian*, etc.,” of which the Rev'd George Weller, D.D., seems to have been the author, charging Dr. Miller, after the old fashion, with having made an unprovoked assault, and with having cherished a long continued and vehement animosity against the Episcopal Church. Dr. Miller replied, in a letter,<sup>1</sup> from which the following extract is taken:—

“No sooner had I made the publication above referred to, in pure self-defence, than I was vehemently attacked, and, in some instances, with gross indecorum, by three or four assailants, who really seemed to resent a word's being said in defence of Presbyterianism! Their works abounded with what may not improperly be called personal abuse. The same system of controversy has been kept up by our Episcopal neighbors, ever since, with scarcely any intermission. Books and pamphlets of the same exclusive and offensive character with those before mentioned, have been multiplied and incessantly circulated for the last twenty years. North, South, East, and West, every periodical press under Episcopal guidance has been teeming with claims and attacks characterized by the most sectarian exclusiveness. For a page of this character, which has appeared from a Presbyterian pen, I may safely say, five hundred have emanated from our Episcopal neighbors. Not only so; but the second edition of my “*Letters on the Constitution and Order of the Christian Ministry*,” in 1830, was prompted by violent, indecent, and un-

<sup>1</sup> Am. Presb., 3d Sept., 1835.

candid attacks on that particular work, and personal challenges to defend what I had written. And, finally, when the Tract Society of the Synod of Philadelphia requested me to prepare a little manual in defence of Presbyterianism, their request was founded on the known fact, that pamphlet after pamphlet was sent forth almost every week from the Episcopal camp, intended to show the invalidity of Presbyterian ordination and ordinances, and to recommend all the peculiarities of the Episcopal church, as alone supported by scripture. Tracts and pamphlets of this kind were at that very time in active circulation, and obtrusively put into the hands of Presbyterians for proselyting purposes: and with regard to one of these tracts in particular, special pains were taken to circulate it among members of our church, with more than an intimation, again and again, that an answer from some Presbyterian pen was expected; that discussion was desired; and that if none appeared, it would be considered as an acknowledgment that the Episcopal cause was triumphant.

“What will the candid reader now think of the charge of my having been guilty of “an unprovoked assault” on the Episcopal church, and of having waged against her a causeless and bitter warfare? The truth is I have never published a sentence in any wise respecting that denomination, but what was drawn from me by repeated previous assaults on her part, and in the purest self-defence.”

The latter part of 1841 and the beginning of 1842 were disquieted, or enlivened, whichever it may have been, by a newspaper controversy between Bishop Ives of North Carolina, aided by the Banner of the Cross, of Philadelphia, and Dr. Miller. The latter said,

“ \* \* a correspondent in North Carolina informed me that bishop Ives, in a public discourse delivered a short time before, alleged that the celebrated Reformer, *Calvin*, had avowed a belief in the divine institution of Episcopacy, and had requested to receive Episcopal ordination from the Bishops of England. My correspondent requested me to inform him whether there was any foundation for this statement. I ventured, without hesitation, to assure him that there was not, and that no well informed person could possibly make it.”<sup>1</sup>

This letter was written hastily, in the confidence of private intercourse, and without a thought of its publication; but Dr. Miller’s correspondent, unhappily, had it at once

<sup>1</sup> The Presbyterian, 5th February, 1842. P. 21.

inserted in the *Lincolnton Republican*; and more unhappily still, its tone, as he himself afterwards felt, was really indefensible. In a subsequent part of the controversy he said,

“My letter was a private one, published without my knowledge or consent. If it had been intended for the public eye, some of its language would, undoubtedly, have been modified. I certainly never intended to convey the idea that Bishop Ives advanced anything which he did not fully believe to be a fact; but that he hastily accredited and repeated statements, which more careful inquiry would have led him to omit. If any expression of mine is considered as going beyond this, (and I fear some of it is liable to be so construed,) I shall very much regret having used it.”<sup>1</sup>

Bishop Ives replied in the *Lincolnton Republican* of the 10th of August. Dr. Miller forwarded a rejoinder to the same paper, which, however, the editor declined publishing, and it subsequently appeared in the *Presbyterian*.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile *The Banner of the Cross*<sup>3</sup> republished Dr. Miller's original letter and Bishop Ives's reply, with additions and comments of its own; and Dr. Miller defended himself and the character of Calvin, against this additional assault, in three further articles in the *Presbyterian*.<sup>4</sup> *The Banner of the Cross* took this occasion to repeat very offensively, the stale “charges of misquotation from the Fathers, brought against” Dr. Miller “by Drs. Bowden, Cooke and others, and which he” had “never yet cleared up;” and strangely enough, the editor signalized this reckless renewal of an oft refuted calumny, by himself making, no doubt through ignorance and invincible prejudice, though most rashly, within the space of a few sentences, in the course of his own comments, three or four of the grossest misquotations from Calvin and Dr. Miller which could well be imagined.

The assertion that Calvin was a prelatist at heart, an assertion sustained by the mere say so of enemies, and by totally misconceived extracts from his writings, contrary to his most express and repeated declarations, and the whole tenor of his course as a reformer, was certainly fitted to

<sup>1</sup> The *Presbyterian*, 18th December, 1841, 202.

<sup>3</sup> 11th December, 1841, 395, etc.

<sup>2</sup> 5th and 12th of February, 1842, 21, 25.

<sup>4</sup> 18 and 25th December, 1841, 202,

206. 1st January, 1842, 2.



throw even a mild polemic off of his balance. To illustrate the sort of evidence on which this charge was made, and Dr. Miller accused of disputing history and the express words of Calvin himself, it may be mentioned, that *The Banner of the Cross* quotes from the latter as follows:—“As we have stated that there are *three kinds of ministers recommended to us in the Scriptures*, so the ancient Church divided all the ministers it had into three orders.”—“To guard against dissension, *the general consequence of equality*, the presbyters in each city chose one of their own number, whom they distinguished by the title of *bishop*.” On examination, however, of the whole context from which these extracts are taken, it appears (1) that Calvin’s “three kinds of ministers recommended to us in the Scriptures,” were the pastor, ruling elders and deacons of a Presbyterian congregation; (2) that the “ancient Church,” of which he speaks, was the Church *after* the time of the Apostles, in the regulations of which “there might be something to be regretted;” (3) that the presbyter chosen from among the rest, and styled bishop, was a mere president, or moderator, “introduced by human agreement,” and having none of the distinguishing functions of a modern bishop.<sup>1</sup>

Subsequently, *The Banner of the Cross* said,

“We have received from a valued correspondent in Baltimore, an able article in reply to the late strange effusions of the Rev. Dr. Miller, in which that gentleman is handled without gloves, and a mass of historical testimony added to support the assertions of Bishop Ives in relation to Calvin’s views of Episcopacy. We hope our friend will be disposed to exercise the same forbearance towards the Princeton Professor which we are practising, and in this belief we shall take the liberty of withholding his communication for the present.”

The “forbearance” of a polemic, proclaiming to all the world his opponent’s weakness, but withholding the proof, would hardly have been discerned, if the charity by which it was exercised had not sounded its own trumpet. The ordinary tactics of the prelatival guerrillas who, for so many years, strove to disturb Dr. Miller’s peace, were to

<sup>1</sup> Institutes, Bk. iv. Ch. iii. S. 9. iv. 1. 2.

charge upon a point vainly imagined to be pregnable, and, recoiling from unexpected defences, make up for it by boasting of what they had done, or could have done; or of what others had done many a time before; though, indeed, to tell of their opponent's frequent previous defeats was often deemed sufficient, without any fresh tilt. And, perhaps, The Banner of the Cross alone is to be complimented for the invention of this new strategy of "forbearance."

In June or July, 1841, Bishop Polk, in the course of a sermon preached at Halifax, North Carolina, on the rite of Confirmation, declared that a respectable committee of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church had recommended the use of that rite. This assertion had been before, and was afterwards, repeatedly made; and as Dr. Miller had been chairman of the committee, its report was alleged to be utterly inconsistent with what he had said about Confirmation in his tract on Presbyterianism. This assertion he noticed more than once in private letters and in the newspapers. The substantial facts of the case were these:—(1) Although, on the Minutes of the Assembly, Dr. Miller's name stands before those of Dr. John B. Romeyn and Dr. James Richards, the other members of the committee, Dr. Romeyn really acted as chairman, drawing up and presenting the report:—(2) Dr. Miller agreed to let the report go to the Assembly, signing it *pro forma*, but expressly dissenting from it, both in the committee and before the judicatory, on the ground that, while its mention of the rite in question, and of Calvin's and Dr. Owen's views on the subject, was not strictly incorrect, it was unguarded and ambiguous, and likely to be used as Prelatists were even now using, or rather abusing it:—(3) Neither Calvin, Dr. Owen, nor Dr. Romeyn's report ever commended Confirmation, in any proper sense, much less in the Prelatical sense, as either scriptural or apostolical; and the report simply mentioned it as an evidence and example of the interest taken by the Church of other ages in her baptized children, and her tender care of them:—(4) The General Assembly recommitted the report to the same committee for revision and publication, "without expressing any opinion on" it—simply recommending it "to the

serious consideration of all the Presbyteries and ministers."<sup>1</sup>

In 1841, the Presbyterian Board of Publication issued an edition of Dr. Thomas Scott's "Force of Truth," "with a Recommendatory Letter by the Rev. Samuel Miller, D.D." In the Episcopal Recorder of the 8th of January, 1842, appeared a communication from Dr. Miller, commencing thus:—

"*Messrs. Editors*—I never read with more unmingled amazement any newspaper assault, than that which was directed against me in the Recorder of Friday last, under the signature of "A Layman." The writer tells the public, that, in my Recommendatory Letter prefixed to an edition of the Rev. Dr. Scott's "Force of Truth," lately sent forth by the Presbyterian Board of Publication, I caution my readers against the possible influence of the life of a holy man, who "*happened to be connected with an unholy church.*" The last clause in this sentence is marked by the "Layman" with inverted commas, as if it were my language; and there can be little doubt that he intended that his readers should so regard it. I can only say, Messrs. Editors, that such an imputation is a most unjust one. I never penned or uttered such language, and should abhor the thought of doing it.

"I forbear to apply what appears to me the appropriate epithets to the language which this writer thinks fit to employ. The best answer, as I suppose, that can be given to his harsh and acrimonious representation, is to transcribe the *whole* of what I say concerning Dr. Scott as an Episcopal clergyman."

It is not necessary to copy the passage here. The Episcopal Recorder said, "We ourselves had not read the preface referred to:" "our correspondent must answer for himself as to the correctness of his quotations:" "most happy are we to learn, from the following communication, that our correspondent quite mistook Dr. Miller's meaning." The latter closed his letter as follows:—

"In regard to the "Layman's" tone of exultation and triumph at the rapid increase of his sect, by means of proselytes from Presbyterianism, and his confidence that there will be much more of this increase in time to come, I have little to say. There has often been such a thing as unhallowed and premature triumph. There is an excellent book in which it is written,

<sup>1</sup> Minutes 1811, 480. 1812, 509.

“Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall:” “When pride cometh, then cometh shame; but with the lowly is wisdom.””

A charge constantly made and industriously circulated against Dr. Miller, in spite of the fullest repeated explanations and refutation, was that, to serve controversial purposes, he had made, at different times, entirely irreconcilable statements in regard to the Epistles of Ignatius—so called. The statements thus characterized were found in his “Letters on the Christian Ministry,” and his “Letters on Unitarianism,” from which the following collated extracts are taken.

“The fourth place, in the list of Apostolic Fathers, belongs to *Ignatius*. The *Epistles* which go under the name of this venerable Christian Bishop, have been the subject of much controversy. That some copies of them were interpolated, and exceedingly corrupted, in the dark ages, all learned men now agree. And that even the “Shorter Epistles,” as published by *Usher* and *Vossius*, are unworthy of confidence, as the genuine works of the Father whose name they bear, is the opinion of many of the ablest and best judges in the Protestant world.”<sup>1</sup>

“The author is aware, that the authenticity of the Epistles of *Ignatius* has been called in question, as well as that of *Barnabas*, before quoted. It is impossible in a work written on the plan, and with the design, of these letters, to enter into the merits of controversies of this sort. It is sufficient for his purpose to say, that the great body of learned men consider the Epistle of *Barnabas*, and the smaller *Epistles* of *Ignatius* (and from these alone he offers quotations) as, in the main, the real works of the writers whose names they bear. Of this opinion was the eminently learned Unitarian, Dr. *Lardner*.<sup>2</sup>

The opponents of Dr. Miller quoted thus:—

“That even the ‘Shorter Epistles’ of Ignatius are unworthy of confidence, as the genuine works of the Father whose name they bear, is the opinion of many of the ablest and best judges in the Protestant world.”

“The great body of learned men consider the *smaller* Epistles of Ignatius as, in the main, the real works of the writer whose name they bear.”

The theological world has been of late years tending

<sup>1</sup> Letters on the Ministry, (1807) I. Vol., 140. (1830,) 90.

<sup>2</sup> Letters on Unitarianism, 122.

more and more to the conviction, that the sagacious Calvin was right, when he said, upwards of three hundred years ago, "There is nothing more abominable than that trash which is in circulation under the name of Ignatius."<sup>1</sup> But, when Dr. Miller wrote, it was strictly true, (1) that the great body of learned theologians considered the smaller Epistles as, in the main, the real works of Ignatius; but, (2) that many of the best judges believed they had been interpolated to favour Prelacy. In these opinions he concurred, and, with the celebrated Professor Neander, regarded the testimony of the smaller Epistles as worthless to support the Hierarchy, but as reliable on other subjects. Hence in arguing against Episcopalians, he objected to them, but quoted them with confidence against Unitarians. Was there the slightest inconsistency here? But was not his *language* in the earlier work inconsistent with that in the later? His opponents were fond of charging him with "garbling" his quotations—a charge which shall not here be retorted; but their omissions alone gave the least colour to the accusation that he had contradicted himself. To deny that writings are genuine may mean either that they are not at all the work of the author whose name they bear, or that they have been merely adulterated—interpolated. Such interpolation is, of course, not inconsistent with their being "in the main the real works" of that author. Now, Dr. Miller was fairly entitled to the interpretation of the word *genuine*, in the earlier statement, which should bring it into harmony with the later one, even though his language did not of necessity demand it. But, in truth, that interpretation is absolutely required by the foregoing sentence, which his accusers omitted. He says, that some copies were generally agreed to have been interpolated, and that in the opinion of many of the best judges, *even* the "Shorter Epistles" were not genuine—that is had been interpolated also.

This illustration of the spirit of Dr. Miller's Episcopal accusers fitly introduces us to another charge which they persistently urged against him in spite of the clearest proof of its gross injustice. This charge, which has been already

<sup>1</sup> Institutes I. xiii. 29. Or as Allen translates, "Nothing can be more absurd than the impertinences which have been published under the name of Ignatius."

referred to more than once, was, that he had quoted the Fathers, particularly Ignatius, unfairly and disingenuously—that his quotations were “garbled.” Polemics must be expected to differ from their opponents as to the proper extent of extracts from works quoted: all will agree that it is impossible to give the whole of a work; but, naturally enough, few will concur in an opponent’s idea of the reasonable limits of a citation. And if, as to a matter so simple, comparatively, as this, there must be endless differences of opinion, how much more, when the real meaning of an author, or the true force of a passage quoted, comes into question. To make diversities of judgment, on such points, the ground of loose charges of willful misrepresentation and dishonesty indicates little humility and less moral discernment, not to speak at all of christian charity. Charges of this kind may “have their reward,” in convincing those who are unable to comprehend an argument, and count, always, the more abusive polemic the triumphant one; but, with thoughtful readers, can only prejudice the cause on behalf of which they are exhibited. To say thus much only, under the present head, in Dr. Miller’s defence, would be saying, however, far less than his assailants, whose name was “Legion,” deserved. That what they alleged they really believed may be freely admitted, without paying them, either, any great compliment. For that theirs was a very rash judgment a few examples may, perhaps, sufficiently demonstrate.

Dr. Miller had asserted that Ignatius represented presbyters as standing in the place of the Apostles; and among the passages which he had quoted to prove this, was that portion of the following one which is in italics:—“I exhort you that you study to do all things in a divine concord; your Bishop presiding in the place of God; *your Presbytery in the place of the council of Apostles*; and your Deacons most dear to me, being entrusted with the ministry of Jesus Christ.”<sup>1</sup> Now, said Dr. Cooke, “take the whole together and the meaning is precisely the reverse of that which Dr. Miller represents it to be.”<sup>2</sup> Could any statement be more palpably absurd than this? The only explanation of it that can be given

<sup>1</sup> Epist. to the Magnesians, 6.

<sup>2</sup> Essay, 19.

is that Dr. Cooke's head was so full of the idea that "the whole together" favoured Prelacy in general, that he forgot that the simple assertion of Dr. Miller was, that Ignatius represented Presbyters as in the place of the Apostles.

Other passages quoted by Dr. Miller, to prove the same thing, were the italic portions of the following:—"In like manner let all reverence the Deacons as Jesus Christ; and the Bishop as the Father; and the Presbyters as the Sanhedrin of God, and college of the Apostles. Without these there is no Church."<sup>1</sup>—"See that ye all follow your Bishop, as Jesus Christ, the Father; and and the Presbytery as the Apostles."<sup>2</sup> In regard to the former of these passages Dr. Cooke says, "It must be remembered, that Dr. Miller is contending for the Presbyterian doctrine, that there is *but one order of ministers*, and that this order, viz. the Presbyters, are the successors of the apostles, etc." Was there ever a more lamentable confusion of ideas? Dr. Miller was contending simply, that Ignatius represented presbyters as standing in the place of the apostles. Yet Dr. Cooke goes on to declare, "It is evident that Dr. Miller represents Ignatius as meaning what he never intended to say—what he has not said—and the very opposite of what he obviously had repeatedly said." In regard to the other quotation, this admirable logician remarks, "Read the words in italics without the rest, and the passage runs precisely as Dr. Miller has quoted it; and it has to the ear, the appearance of supporting his doctrine. Read the whole as Ignatius wrote it, and the conviction is irresistible that his meaning was not what Dr. Miller represented it to be."<sup>3</sup>

These charges were the more remarkable, because, so far had he been from withholding any substantial part of the testimony of Ignatius, that two of the three passages above quoted, with a number of others of the same purport, to the extent of between three and four pages, and even more fully than Dr. Cooke asserted that they should have been copied, Dr. Miller had given,<sup>4</sup> under another head, to which they appropriately belonged. Surely it is passing strange, that, on such grounds, and under such a leader, with others

<sup>1</sup> Epist. to the Trallians, 3.

<sup>3</sup> Essay, 20, 21.

<sup>2</sup> Epist. to the Smyrneans, 8.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Letters on the Ministry, 141-144.

like him, he should have been proclaimed, all over the land, with a pertinacity that knew no relenting, a garbler of quotations, guilty of willfully perverting the Fathers and other authors. And no less strange is it, that the Essays of Dr. Cooke should have been republished by the "New York Protestant Episcopal Press," as a standing refutation and condemnation of Dr. Miller.

But how could the latter, it was asked, after maintaining that the Epistles of Ignatius had been interpolated to favour Prelacy, insist that they actually gave support to Presbyterian parity? The sufficient though brief reply is, that the interpolations were so awkwardly made, and especially were, in their prelatial sense, so inconsistent with other parts of the Epistles—the genuine parts, if any were genuine—that, interpreted by the latter, they describe but a parochial Episcopacy—that is Presbyterianism.

#### 4. CORRESPONDENCE AND DIARY.

Mrs. Miller wrote to one of her sons, on the 17th of March, 1841,

'Your father married a couple, in the poorer walks of life, the other evening, and he could not evade taking a small fee, which, however, he has determined to make useful to the groom and his family. I should be glad, therefore, as he has requested me to set my wits to work for this purpose, if you would obtain for me a Bible, neatly bound, of the size which your father generally reads in the family, for about two dollars, and a Psalm and Hymn book, of an extra size, and the last edition, for about one, or one and a half, and either send or bring them as soon as possible, as the money has lain in an unproductive state too long already.'

In a letter to the Rev. Nicholas Murray<sup>1</sup> of the 10th of May, 1841, Dr. Miller wrote,

'I wish it were in my power to aid you on the occasion referred to; but it is impossible. I have been all winter very infirm, every few days (I had almost said every few hours) sustaining attacks which convince me that I ought, as far as possible, to keep close to my own dwelling, and to that careful counsellor and nurse, who feels as if she had some interest, in keeping her old husband as long as she can.'

The following is from his diary.

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards D.D.



‘June 5, 1841. This is the anniversary of my *ordination*. I can never call to mind that event, without mingled emotions of gratitude and humiliation. \* \*

‘I have been led to-day, by certain circumstances, to review some parts of my “Letters to Presbyterians,” published in 1833. I do not regret the publication of that volume, on the whole. A large part of it I still cordially approve. But I cannot now review, without regret, some portion of what is there said respecting “Voluntary Associations.” I am still of the opinion, as I then was, that some voluntary associations, such as the American Bible Society, the American Tract Society, the American Temperance Society, etc., may be safely and very profitably encouraged. I can by no means join in that crusade against all such associations, which good men have endeavoured, within a few years past, zealously to organize. I feel quite willing, nay, solemnly bound, to countenance every voluntary association, which promises to do good, without involving any compromise of principle, and forming any engine, outside of the Church, for controlling and governing it.

‘But I am now more fully convinced than I was, at the date of those “Letters,” that voluntary associations for conducting *domestic missions* and for *educating young men for the holy ministry*, ought never to be encouraged by those who prize the purity and peace of the Church. They constitute a machinery, by which men out of the Church, and not responsible to her, may enter her pale, govern her affairs, and corrupt and control her ministry. I am now satisfied that the partial concessions which I made, in my letters on that subject, in favor of voluntary associations for such purposes, were neither wise nor safe. I am perfectly persuaded, that it may be laid down as an unqualified rule, that no voluntary association ought ever to be countenanced, which enables men who have no responsibility to the Church, to interfere with or govern her affairs.’

The next extract is from a letter, dated the 15th of June, to Mrs. Susan F. Ledyard, at the time in Paris.

‘I think it my duty to say, that the address of General Cass, at the meeting occasioned by the death of President Harrison, greatly delighted me. It does equal honor to its author, to the memory of his illustrious deceased friend, and to our country. That address, more than anything else I ever saw from his pen, has excited in me a desire to know him personally. This gratification, however, it is not now likely I shall ever enjoy. I know not how he regards that Saviour who is my only confidence, and with whom I hope to dwell forever; nor what his

views may be of that great futurity which is soon to open upon us all. I will cherish the hope, that he will be found, in the great day of trial, resting on "the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone;" and that we may meet, if not here, in a more holy and happy world.'

In a letter to the Board of Publication, on the 24th of June, 1841, Dr. Miller says,

'My health is now tolerably good; but the infirmities of age are making a degree of progress which renders the labor of writing more oppressive than formerly. Still, I am not without some new works in hand and in purpose, which I wish to finish, if it shall please God to spare my life a little longer. My creed is, that every servant of Christ ought to be found laboring in his vocation to his last breath. I wish for no vacations in this labor.'

On the 4th of August, Dr. John Breckinridge died at Lexington, Kentucky. In 1840, he had married Mary Ann, daughter of Colonel Babcock, of Stonington, who, with one child of her own, and three of Dr. Miller's grandchildren, survived him. "One of the last sentences that he uttered was—"I am a poor sinner who have worked hard, and had constantly before my mind one great object—the conversion of the world."<sup>1</sup>

Another extract from the diary is as follows:—

'August 24, 1841. This day I have set apart as a season of special prayer and fasting, on account of the low state of religion in our church in this place, and most of our neighbouring churches; and to implore the effusion of the Holy Spirit upon us in our low and perishing condition. \* \*

'O my God! when I reflect upon the moral desolation which surrounds me, and mourn over the awful delinquency and corruption of the church with which I am connected, these solemn questions occur to my mind:—'What influence has my coldness and want of zeal and fidelity had in leading to this dark and distressing state of things? How far have I contributed to the evil? How far have I stood in the way of a blessing?' O thou heart-searching God! help me to answer these questions honestly, candidly, impartially; and, so far as I have been hitherto criminal, to be so no more. And help me, under a consciousness of all my sins and shortcomings, to fly to that fountain which is open for sin and uncleanness. Oh, that my

<sup>1</sup> 4 Sprague's Annals, 646.



the ground of christian *expediency*; if he will say and practice, with the Apostle Paul, (Romans 14, 21,) "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby my brother stumbleth, or is offended or is made weak;" and, again, (1 Corinthians 8, 13,) "If meat [wine] make my brother to offend, (or, stumble,) I will eat no meat [drink no wine.] while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend;" I will hail him as a friend and brother, and cooperate with him with all my heart.

'I am aware, my dear Sir, that my view of this subject will be utterly repudiated by you, and, perhaps, loaded with censure. We cannot both be right. May God forgive him who is in error! With great respect, I am,

'Sincerely, your friend,  
'Sam'l Miller.'

The following is from the diary.

'October 31, 1841. This day I have completed the *seventy-second* year of my age. \* \* By the favour of a kind Providence, my health has been considerably better than it was last year. I have enjoyed animal life more; and have sometimes ventured to hope, that my spiritual prosperity has been, on the whole, greater. Glory be to God for this inestimable benefit! If I have experienced some spiritual growth in the course of the year, I have also had a new testimony of the deceitfulness and pollution of my own heart, and, of course, increasing reason to lie in the dust before God, and to give to him all the praise of every attainment.'

The following letter was addressed to the Rev. Nicholas Murray, of Elizabeth.

'My dear Brother, Princeton, December 16, 1841.

'Mrs. Miller and myself, with our whole hearts, sympathize with you and your excellent companion in your late bereavement. We had heard of the illness and death of your beloved boy before the arrival of your letter. We know how to feel for you. Our first-born son, nearly of the same age, was taken from us almost thirty years ago. We found it hard to say from the heart, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Yet, I hope, we were enabled, in some degree to say it sincerely. And, now, when we think that that dear boy has gone before us to glory; that he escaped the toils and sorrows of this corrupt and ensnaring world; and that he is now far above us in knowledge, and in conformity to him who loved us, and gave himself for

us: I trust we can more than acquiesce in the divine will; that we can cordially rejoice that our beloved Edward is infinitely better off, than if he had been permitted to live, as we then wished.

‘I do not expect, dear Brother, to stop your flowing tears. Nature will feel—ought to feel; and we, as well as other friends, feel with you. But is not your dear son with his and your Father? Can you long weep, when you recollect what he has escaped, and what he has gained? May the Lord pour into your heart, and that of your companion, those rich consolations which I know you recognize and love; but which, alas! the pleadings of nature often prevent our receiving at once, in all their unsearchable riches.

‘Dr. Alexander sent your letter to me, being himself under an engagement; and his son James not being well, and also under an engagement. I should be glad to spend the next Sabbath with you at once to weep with you, and to rejoice in hope of glory. But my growing infirmities, my exceedingly delicate health, and the perils which now attend my undertaking any such expedition at this season of the year, all conspire to forbid my venturing on the journey.

‘I am, my dear, afflicted Brother, with sincere regard to you, and Mrs. Murray,

‘Your affectionate brother,

‘Sam’l Miller.’

A correspondent, asking whether a licentiate may be a ruling elder, says, in 1842, ‘For my own satisfaction, as well as for that of my friends, I refer to you as the highest authority on the subject with which we are acquainted.’

On the 27th of September, the Hon. John Sergeant wrote,

‘The so called Presbyterian cause was finally ended to-day, being called for trial and discontinued by the relators. This was a very quiet termination of what had made so much noise in its commencement and progress. Looking back now, one has reason to rejoice that they took the violent step of separation. If they had remained, there would have been no peace.’

The following is from the diary.

‘October 31, 1842. This is my *birth-day*. On this day I complete my seventy-third year. Surely self-recollection and special prayer become the day.

‘During the last year I have had many mercies to record.

My health has been, by the goodness of God, considerably better than for several preceding years. The health of my family, too, blessed be his name, has been without serious interruption. \* \* Some precious spiritual blessings have been imparted to me and my beloved partner. For all these favors I would this day record my gratitude.

‘But I would notice, with peculiar acknowledgment, one favor, since my last birth-day, for which I feel as if I could never be sufficiently thankful. My son \* \* was, as we hope, in the course of the last winter, visited with the awakening and renewing grace of God. He, soon after cherishing a hope in Christ, united with the Church, and resolved to devote himself to the gospel ministry. Accordingly, in the month of March last, he entered our Theological Seminary, and has been, ever since, one of its students.

‘For this joyful event I desire to call upon my soul, and all that is within me, to praise and magnify the name of the Lord. Nothing could gratify me more concerning my sons, than to see them all pious, devoted, faithful ministers. For this I have always had an ardent desire. \* \*

‘May the event, which I here gratefully commemorate, result in rich blessings to my dear son himself, and also in extensive and permanent benefits to the Church of God. If I know my own heart, my supreme desire is, not to see him a popular orator in the pulpit, but an eminently devoted and useful ambassador of Christ. Oh, if I could see realized in him the character given of a faithful minister of old,—“He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith; and much people were added unto the Lord,”—my joy, as to this point, would be full. The Lord grant it for Christ’s sake! Amen!’

Dr. Miller always spoke humbly of his own performances, if he spoke of them at all; which he did rarely, and alone when necessity seemed to be laid upon him. To take any title of honour to himself, in either writing or speaking, unless upon the title-page of a book, was contrary to his taste and his every instinct. If he put a notice on the posting-board at the Seminary for his class, it would generally run, “S. Miller gives notice, etc.” Fashion and custom certainly justify a man’s using his own titles to designate himself—a fashion no doubt founded in the convenience of knowing just who and what a person self-announced is. But probably the purest taste, and the most refined Christian simplicity are opposed, in this respect, to custom

and fashion. At least Dr. Miller seems so to have concluded.

He was very scrupulous in not claiming as his own the thoughts or learning of others. In public speaking, or in what he committed to the press, he was unusually careful to disclaim whatever he had borrowed. He seldom propounded a critical judgment without adding, "as the learned tell us," or the like. Plagiarism he heartily despised, and sometimes felt called upon pointedly to condemn. His every habit of thought and feeling was so obviously opposed to it, that all who knew him well felt that it was impossible for him to descend to such dishonesty. On this subject he wrote as follows to the Rev. Nathan Hoyt, D.D., of Athens, Georgia, on the 29th of December, 1842:—

‘It has always been my aim, in my Lectures on sermonizing, to express the strongest disapprobation of plagiarism in every form, as basely deceptive and mean, as really immoral in its character, and as calculated to injure both the man who practises it, and, ultimately, if he be a minister, those who attend upon his ministrations.

‘When I have been asked what plagiarism *is*, I have uniformly answered that it is not easy, in all cases, to draw the line. On all the great leading subjects of pulpit instruction, there is a large mass of common-place ideas, which have been repeated by successive writers for hundreds of years past. He who in preaching on Faith and Repentance; on Justification and Sanctification; on Christian hope, and Eternal blessedness, should resolve to say nothing, but what was strictly *original* with himself; nothing that had ever been expressed, even in substance, by any one before, would certainly never be able to preach at all.—In this sense, no man, however great his talents or his learning, can hope to be regarded as an original at the present day.

‘If a preacher were about to prepare a sermon on the doctrine of *Original sin*, or on the doctrine of *Atonement*, and as a preparation for the work were carefully to read over President Edwards’ treatise on the former subject, and Mr. Symington’s on the latter, and were then to compose his sermons on those subjects respectively in strict conformity with the treatises just mentioned, but in his own language throughout, I should not charge him with plagiarism. The substance would in this case be borrowed, but the style, the form, would be all his own. I do not know that there is in either of those books a single truth which

had not been substantially set forth by preceding writers; but there is in each of them a clearness, a force, and an amplitude of illustration which render their works respectively of great value.

‘But I have always denounced as plagiarism in the true and proper sense of that word any of the following practices, viz. :—

‘I. When a writer or speaker delivers, as his own, the whole, or the greater part of the work of another, in the language of the original writer. This is the most gross and shameful form of the offence.

‘II. When a writer or speaker copies the *whole plan* of another, adopting his divisions, his subdivisions, and in the main, his whole arrangement, making only some trivial alteration here and there in the style and minuter details, for the sake of avoiding the charge of being a *servile copyist*. Such a person deserves to be called a plagiarist. He is nothing but an humble retailer of the thoughts and language of others.

‘III. He who allows himself to copy *verbatim* even a *single paragraph*, without acknowledgment, exposes himself to the charge of plagiarism. One who means to be strictly delicate and accurate on this subject, will never copy the very words of another without advertising his hearers or readers of the fact, by saying as he passes along, “to use the language of another,” or, “in the language of an elegant writer,” etc. I would certainly advise that this be done, even if the quotation extend only to a *single sentence*.

‘IV. If a thought be very striking and original, I would not allow myself to adopt it without acknowledgment, even if it were expressed in my own language. It were easy to select some remarkably beautiful thoughts from Bacon, from Milton, or other great Masters of sentiment and diction, which so exclusively belong to them, that it were great injustice to repeat any of them without tracing the property to its right owner, either by directly naming him, or acknowledging, in some way, that they do not belong to him who quotes them.

‘I have sometimes advised my pupils, whenever they hear sermons which exhibit a very *striking* or *happy* plan, to make a record of it, and have suggested to them that, although copying the plan or plans thus recorded, on the same texts, or even when treating the same subjects, would be plagiarism, yet that to a watchful, active mind, looking out for analogies and relations, a *happy plan* on *one subject* may suggest a still more happy one on an allied subject, or even on one very remote at first view.

‘I have never given any advice or counsel different from what I have above stated. If Mr.——— makes any different repre-



sentation, he misunderstood and misrepresents me. Yet I can easily imagine how he might have misapprehended my suggestion stated in the preceding paragraph respecting *striking plans* of sermons. By a little inadvertence, he might have supposed me to mean that such plans might with propriety be used, when preaching afterwards on the same texts. \* \*

‘P. S. You might perhaps expect me to enter more largely and minutely into the doctrine of *Plagiarism* in all its ramifications. But I have written as much as a man in the 74th year of his age, and with my pressing avocations, can well afford to write. You must excuse me for not going further.

‘Though this is written in haste, (as I am obliged to write everything,) you are at liberty to make what use of it you think proper.’

In a letter of March 28, 1843, to the Rev. Samuel J. Cassels, of Norfolk, Virginia, Dr. Miller offered the following familiar, but not on that account, less important suggestions for conducting domestic missions.

‘1. While our Board of Domestic Missions acts wisely in directing its principal efforts to the formation and aid of organized churches, it evidently will not do, by any means, to abandon the plan of employing itinerant evangelists. There are many destitute neighborhoods, in which churches cannot be immediately, or even speedily, formed, and which, of course, can be supplied with the gospel only by itinerant preachers. Our Methodist brethren set us a laudable example in this respect; and we can never do justice to either the great cause of Christ, or to the cause of Presbyterianism, until we, in some measure, imitate that example.

‘2. If the Synod, as such, should be the acting body in this case, it ought to employ as many missionaries as it can find and support. Yet, probably, it will be judged best, to let the several presbyteries of which the Synod is composed, have something to do in planning, supervising, and managing the movements of such as labour within their respective limits. Each presbytery will, of course, know its own destitutions most intimately, and be best qualified to advise and prescribe in regard to the labour of each. And the churches within the bounds of the several presbyteries may be expected to take a deeper interest in what is doing in their own borders, than in remote regions.

‘3. While a plan of constant itinerancy is pursued, it will probably be found best to make that itinerancy systematic; that is, like our Methodist brethren, to form regular circuits, in

which the preachers shall come round at appointed times. The more frequently particular localities are visited and the more regular the appointments, the more likely will the people be to become interested in the men employed, and in their labours; and, in the end, to become prepared for the building up of organized churches. In arranging circuits, it will, of course, occur to you, that most time should be spent, and most labour bestowed, in districts embracing the fullest population, and most likely to furnish results in the organization of churches. \* \*

'5. If I may be allowed respectfully to make the suggestion, our beloved Board of Domestic Missions of the General Assembly ought to be recognized and honored in the whole of this matter; that is, the missionaries employed ought to be commissioned, in the usual way, by that Board; the funds collected for their support ought to be reported, in some way, to the treasury in Philadelphia; and the whole business so done, as to come into the minutes of the Executive Committee, and make a part of their report to the General Assembly. This appears to me to be due to the parent Board, and adapted to make the best impression and do the most good throughout the whole Church.

'6. The missionaries sent out ought to be charged to preach, in a faithful and discriminating manner, in regard to doctrine as well as experience. Presbyterian preachers are never so likely to be blessed to the conversion of sinners, and the building up of believers, as when they dwell intelligently and affectionately on the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel; not in a polemical spirit, but in clearness and power. If I were to speak of any sermons as a model of what I should wish to have preached by every missionary whom you send forth, I should say that your own lamented *Davies* had furnished the best human pattern. I mention this, because our Methodist brethren, as you well know, are everywhere crying out, in all their pulpits, against our Confession of Faith, and against Calvinism, as a "doctrine of devils." I would never recriminate by reviling them, or by denouncing their doctrines, but by plainly, faithfully, and discriminatingly preaching my own.

'7. Could not some of your settled pastors, most robust in body and zealous in spirit, spare a Sabbath or two from their respective charges, and go forth to countenance the missionaries, and aid them in their work? More especially, could not this be done in regard to some of the more important points in the several circuits? I merely mention this as a matter not likely to be allowable to any great extent, but which may furnish one of the elements of the system.

'8. Every missionary ought to be, *ex officio*, a distributor of

the books of the Board of Publication ; or, at any rate, to take measures for bringing those books within the view and reach of the people. No one can estimate how much good might be done in this way by a faithful and enterprising evangelist.

'9. If, in addition to all this, you can contrive, by the grace of God, to persuade every pastor to take a deep interest in the subject ; to preach upon it as often as the nature of the case, and the claims of other subjects, will allow ; and to take it into the pulpit with him in humble, importunate prayer ; every breath manifesting that the conversion of the world to God fills and affects his own heart ; and that he cannot "hold his peace," or forbear to press the subject whenever he has an opportunity ; you will accomplish a crowning matter. Alas ! a defect here is one of the most crying delinquencies of our beloved brethren in the ministry.

\* \* ' I read your letter, my dear Brother, to my respected and beloved colleagues. You may consider the above as embodying their opinions as well as my own. I ought, however, in candor to say, that only the items first, third, and fifth were explicitly conversed upon and sanctioned by them.'

Here is another passage from the diary :—

' June 5, 1843. This day is the anniversary of my *ordination*, in the City of New York, *fifty years ago*. I deem it my privilege and my duty, on the return of the day, to devote a few hours to reflection, retirement, grateful acknowledgment of the goodness of God, and deep humiliation. That I should have lived to see this day, in the enjoyment of so much health and strength, is, indeed, matter of grateful wonder to myself. My bodily health and comfort have been greater during the past year, than for several years previous. I have been enabled to pursue all my official duties as constantly and punctually, and with nearly as much strength, as ever. I appear to myself to preach and lecture with quite as little fatigue as at almost any time past. And the last year has been crowned with so many mercies, personal, domestic, and official, that I feel bound here, with humble gratitude, to record my thanksgiving and praise ; and to say, under a sense of my deep obligation, "I will bless the Lord at all times : his praise shall continually be in my mouth."

' I did not expect, ten or twenty years ago, to see this day. It is only because I have obtained help of God, that I continue to the present time. Oh, that my spared life and health might be more faithfully than ever devoted to the God of all my mercies ! \* \*

' It has been suggested to me, that on this fiftieth anniversary of

my ordination to the work of the gospel ministry, it would be reasonable, and somewhat interesting to me, to my family, and, perhaps, to a few friends, to celebrate the day. Such a celebration might, indeed, minister to some of the feelings of my nature. But I cannot bear the thought of it. Instead of observing it as a festal day, I would much rather observe it as a day of humiliation and mourning. Instead of firing a noisy salute, as over some triumph, I would much rather be silent, and humble myself, in secret, before God, that during fifty years of evangelical ministry, I have done so little for the best of Masters; accomplished so little for the benefit of my generation; enjoyed so little communion with him whose servant I have professed to be. Let me retire and weep, in secret places, over what appears to me rather fifty years of deplorable moral waste, than a course of happy attainment or triumph, to be rejoiced at, or celebrated with festive memorials. Much rather would I fast before the Lord, because I have so few triumphs of grace, to rejoice over, in so long a tract of time. O Lord, pardon the weakness, the unfaithfulness and the unfruitfulness of thy servant; and give him grace, in time to come, to gird up the loins of his mind, to be sober and watch unto prayer. \* \*

'O Lord, I would, this morning, make a new and unreserved dedication of myself to thee. \* \*'

### 5. PUBLICATIONS.

During the year 1842, Dr. Miller contributed a series of six articles to 'The Presbyterian,'<sup>1</sup> upon the right of ruling-elders to lay on hands, with ministers, in the ordination of ministers. This practice, it was said, had been actually introduced into two presbyteries belonging to the Synod of Kentucky. The first of these articles was signed "Canonicus," the others "Calvin," and discountenanced the innovation. A writer in the same paper, signing himself "Presbyter," in five articles published in 1843,<sup>2</sup> reviewed "Calvin," taking the other side of the question. In the issue of the Presbyterian containing Dr. Miller's first article, is found also an article of his, signed "Clericus," upon "Licentiates," advising that license should not be given to candidates for the ministry, according to the present custom, for an indefinite time, but for a fixed period of, say, three years. He thought one year too short for a fair trial.

<sup>1</sup> 21st May, 26th November—24th December.

<sup>2</sup> 14th and 21st January. 4th—18th February.

The interest which Dr. Miller had taken in the Eldership of the Presbyterian Church, and his repeated publications respecting its claims and duties, led to a request that he would preach on this subject in Philadelphia, in 1843. He consented, and the sermon was published by those who had requested its delivery.<sup>1</sup> In his preface he says,

“In the month of March last, the Author of the following Discourse received a written request from *sixty-five* of the Ruling Elders connected with the churches of Philadelphia, that he would deliver in that city, in the course of the month of May ensuing, and during the Sessions of the General Assembly, a Sermon on the *Warrant, Nature, and Duties* of the office of the Ruling Elder in the Presbyterian Church. It was suggested, as an argument in favour of such a service, that a plain and abridged view of these topics might reach and impress some minds not accustomed or disposed to peruse larger works.”

“With such a request, coming from a body of brethren so eminently worthy of Christian respect and affection, it was impossible for the author to refuse compliance. Although he had, more than ten years before, published a larger work on the same subject; and although his advanced age and growing infirmities might, perhaps, have warranted an apology for declining any new service; yet he felt constrained not to shrink from any labour, by which any of his brethren supposed he might do some good, however small, to the Church of God.”<sup>2</sup>

During this year Dr. Miller also published his *Letters to his Sons in College*.<sup>3</sup>

This work touches, in as many chapters, upon the several subjects of “Obedience to the Laws;” “Manners;” “Morals;” “Religion;” “Rebellions;” “Health;” “Temperance;” “Formation and Value of Character;” “Patriotism;” “Particular Studies;” “General Reading;” “Attention, Diligence;” “Associations, Friendships;” “Literary Societies in College;” “Dress;” “Care of the Student’s Room;” “Expenses;” “Alma Mater;” “Parents;” and “Vacations;” a few “Miscellaneous

<sup>1</sup> “The Warrant, Nature, and Duties of the Office of the Ruling Elder in the Presbyterian Church: a Sermon preached in Philadelphia, May 22, 1843, with an Appendix. By Samuel Miller, D.D. Professor in the Theological Seminary at Princeton. Philadelphia: 1844.”—1 Timothy v. 17.—18mo. Pp. iv. and 166.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. iii. iv.

<sup>3</sup> “Letters from a Father to his Sons in College. By Samuel Miller, D.D. Professor in the Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey. 1843.”—12mo. Pp. 344.

Thoughts" being added. The volume is dedicated "To every PARENT who has a son in college; and to every SON who is placed in that interesting and responsible situation." An "Advertisement" says,

"The writer of this volume has had five sons trained and graduated in the College of New Jersey. The following Letters, not, indeed, precisely in their present form, but in substance, were actually addressed to them. There is, probably, not one idea contained in the manual, which was not, during their course in that Institution, distinctly communicated to them, either orally or in writing. The influence of these counsels on *their* minds, it is believed, was not wholly useless. May they prove still more useful when presented in this revised and more public form."

#### 6. CORRESPONDENCE AND DIARY.

To Dr. Plumer, on the 9th of January, 1843, Dr. Miller wrote,

'As to what it is expedient to do in regard to *High Churchism* at this time, I feel somewhat at a loss. That it ought to be resisted I have no doubt. But I do doubt the policy of pecking at it in little occasional paragraphs. I should be glad if any one would enter the lists, and deal a blow to this insolent spirit, which would not need to be repeated. I never was qualified to deal such blows; and now, in my seventy-fourth year, I cannot undertake even what I once might have thought of. Perhaps this matter may be the subject of some deliberation here. But I cannot assure you of this.'

To one of his sons, a licentiate, Dr. Miller wrote on the 19th of October,

'As the time so nearly approaches, when, with the permission of Providence, your ordination will take place, I need scarcely tell you that my solicitude, my anxiety and my prayers gather strength in your behalf. May the great Head of the Church, in mercy to you, and in mercy to his people, inspire you with wisdom, gird you with strength, and make you faithful, watchful and diligent in the discharge of all your arduous and most interesting duties! Remember too your own weakness. Call to mind your need of the grace of Christ at every step. Never pass a day, without humbly and solemnly looking to him for guidance and aid. "Thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus!" "Be strong in the Lord, and

in the power of his might!" If I could be sure that you did, in any good degree, feel your own weakness, and, under a deep sense of it, habitually and importunately cry for help from above, I should confidently look for precious results in your new charge. May all spiritual and heavenly blessings in Christ Jesus rest upon you and crown your labors!

'The more I reflect upon it, the more important does it appear to me, that you should adopt some decisive plan in regard to unreasonable interruptions from the calls of your parishioners and friends. Besides apprizing Dr. D—— and your landlady of your wishes, in regard to this matter, and thus putting them in the way of being extensively known, not only to your immediate friends, but to strangers, who make inquiry for your lodgings, I would advise that, when you are specially engaged, you should lock your room door, and be deaf to every knock, previously hanging on the outside a little label \* \* purporting that you can be seen and spoken with at such an hour. Dr. Green has more than once told me, that when he was a young man in Philadelphia, and was sent for to meet an intrusive, unwelcome call below, he was accustomed to come down stairs with a pen in his mouth, which, on beginning to speak to the intruder, he transferred to his hand, thus taking pains to let it be seen that he was busy.

'Let me exhort you, my dear ——, to begin at once with the children of the congregation—especially, so far as you can distinguish them, the baptized children. Try and find them all out. Procure a little blank book, strongly bound in leather, which you may carry in your pocket for months and years together. Here insert the names of all the children of the congregation, with anything peculiar in the case of each which may be worthy of recollection. When you are about to visit a family, refer to this manual for the names of the children, inquire for them, speak kindly to them, calling them by name. Have a tract in your pocket for one, a little anecdote for another, etc. This will conciliate the parents, and bind them to your person; and it will still more conciliate the children, and prepare them to attend on your ministry in a respectful and profitable manner. I am more and more persuaded, that that minister who neglects the children and young people of his flock, neglects one of the most—perhaps I may say *the* most important means of saving souls—of building up the church, and promoting at once the comfort and the success of his ministry.

'Let me also advise that you be very careful to attract, and to bind to your person and ministry all the young men who fall in your way; and especially those of promising talents and

character. I have somewhere met with the statement, that one of the great secrets of Julius Cæsar's popular influence was, that he took pains to gain the favor, and attach to his person, all the young men of talents whom he could find. Fix your eyes on all such young men. Try to gain them. You may thus be instrumental of doing more good, in a wholesale way, than you can well imagine. He who becomes the means of introducing a fine young man into the Redeemer's kingdom and ministry, may thereby do as much good as he who prepares and publishes a good book.

'P. S. The day of your ordination (November 1) will probably be observed by your dear mother and myself, as a day of special prayer. I need scarcely say, that I hope you will join us in that exercise.'

To the same he wrote on the 25th of December,

'As to your sermon, my dear Son, we shall be able to judge better when we see it. When a man has preached a sermon, which is requested for the press, he ought to feel at full liberty to make it as good as he can after it is preached. And, as to allowing anything that he prints to be executed in a cheap and mean style, it is always bad policy.'

In his diary Dr. Miller wrote, on his wedding-day,

'October 24th, 1843. \* \* That miserable worldling, who was the author of the work called "Lacon," has said, "Marriage is a feast, where the grace is sometimes better than the dinner." And there can be no doubt that multitudes, perhaps (though I trust not) a majority of the married, find their union an alliance to misery. If it be so, then surely, we, who have found it so much otherwise, have reason to praise the Lord that he has made our union so happy and so useful. \* \*'

On the 30th of the same month, Dr. James W. Alexander wrote to Dr. Hall,

"I am concerned at having to say that good old Dr. Miller is quite ill, with pleurisy. The loss of him would be a sad blow to us. I think him one of the most conscientious and pious men I ever knew. His behaviour in a parlour-controversy is an example to every one, and has often put me to shame."<sup>1</sup>

To his son in the ministry Dr. Miller wrote on the 19th of February, 1844,

'I have now so far recovered from my late protracted sickness, that I can no longer delay taking pen in hand to assure you

<sup>1</sup> 1 Familiar Letters, 386.



that my affection for you, and my interest in your affairs, have not in the least diminished. I was at no time, indeed, severely ill; but my debility was so great, and so obstinately continued, that I can truly say, that, what with the influenza, which afflicted me through the first three weeks of December, and a slow fever, the consequence of the influenza, which confined me chiefly to my bed from that time till the second week in February, I have not had a well or comfortable day for more than two months past. I am now, however, by the Lord's mercy, so well, that I go out freely, and attend to my duties in the Seminary nearly as usual. I say *nearly*, for I do not go out, as yet, at night. \* \*

'Though I am glad that you are in favor of preaching much without writing, yet I am perfectly sure, that if you lay aside the plan of writing sermons, only write on other subjects, and preach habitually without writing, you will repent of it. Your preaching, in this case, you may rely upon it, will become vapid and superficial. I hope you will, for the first two or three years of your ministry at least, write one sermon carefully per week, and no more. Anything less than this will not, I am persuaded, enable you to occupy a desirable place in the minds of your intelligent hearers.'

On the 24th of September, 1844, a convention of directors, trustees, and alumni of the Seminary was held at Princeton, and determined upon an earnest effort to raise a sum of money sufficient for the permanent endowment of the institution, and to meet the current expenses, until the endowment was effected. The Rev. Cortlandt Van Rensselaer, whose name is so well known and tenderly cherished throughout the Church which he nobly served, was requested to act as agent for carrying out this determination; a service which, of choice, he performed without salary, or even the payment of his travelling expenses. The permanent funds of the Seminary at this time were estimated at \$99,500; of which \$60,700 belonged to the professorships, and \$38,800 to the scholarships. The aim of the convention was to raise \$64,300 for the former, and \$28,200 for the latter, nearly doubling the whole endowment; much was accomplished; but the full measure of success hoped for was not realized. Dr. Van Rensselaer was soon called away from this enterprise, to fulfill the important functions of corresponding secretary of the Board of Education.

Dr. Miller was invited to attend the celebration of the

fortieth anniversary of the New York Historical Society, on the 20th of November, 1844; when a discourse was to be delivered by John Romeyn Brodhead, Esquire, and a dinner given for the Society and its guests. Dr. Miller, with something of his youthful ardour revived by the occasion, replied,

‘I feel myself much honored by the invitation \* \* \*

‘I have not forgotten the deep interest which I took in the formation and the labours of your society, as one of its original members; nor the earnest desire which I cherished, from a still more remote period, to contribute my mite toward the elucidation of the early history of our beloved country.

‘When Mr. Brodhead went to Europe, as the historical agent of the State of New York, I took the liveliest interest in his mission, and looked forward to his return, and to the results of his labours, with high anticipations. And, when I heard of his arrival, and of the ample stores of historical records which he had brought with him, I felt an ardent desire to see him, and listen to the report of his rich acquisitions.

‘You may well suppose, then, that few things would give me more pleasure, than to accept of your kind invitation, and to be present on an occasion so well adapted to instruct and gratify one whose partialities and pursuits have been such as mine.

‘It is, therefore, with unfeigned regret that I find myself unable to be present. But, being in the seventy-sixth year of my age; my health having been extremely delicate and repeatedly interrupted during the last twelve months; and the season of the year being one in which variable and trying weather is to be expected; I am afraid to leave home, and must deny myself the great pleasure which a compliance with your polite request would afford me.’

Dr. Miller wrote a letter, dated the 25th of November, to the Rev. Dr. Samuel Hanson Cox, recommending Bower’s History of the Popes, which was about to be re-published with an introduction and continuation from Dr. Cox’s pen. This letter appeared in connection with the work. On the 16th of December, he wrote to one of his sons,

‘I send you herewith a copy of the Life of McCheyne, which was published by our Board at my request. \* \* \* Read it carefully, seriously, solemnly. \* \* \* The subject of this memoir was, indeed, a sublime christian! The best wish I can

form for you is, that you may resemble him in spirit, and in all your habits.'

During the year 1844, Dr. Miller suffered from illness repeatedly and severely. He seems to have been confined to the house the whole month of January, and until about the 11th of February, when his 'Record of Preaching' says, 'Did not preach, but went to church: *laus Deo!*' Toward the last of June, he paid a visit to his son in Frederick, and preached for him; but the next entry in the 'Record' is, 'On Saturday, July 9th, I was again taken sick, was confined to my bed for nearly four weeks, and did not preach for two months.' Then, a large part of the month of December he was laid by, though not so seriously ill as before.

## CHAPTER FORTIETH.

### LETTER-WRITING.

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THE portions of Dr. Miller's correspondence already presented to the reader, have made it quite apparent, that he wrote much in this way, and that he regarded letter-writing as an important means of exerting an influence and doing good. To illustrate this more clearly, a few of his letters of various dates will be thrown together here, with reference rather to other principles of arrangement, than to the order of time.

In repeated instances, Dr. Miller wrote letters of warning and admonition to neighbors and acquaintances who seemed to be falling into vicious habits, or who, by notorious sins, were likely to exert a corrupting influence. To one whom he thus addressed, he said in conclusion,

'Perhaps you will ask, what right I have to volunteer in addressing, on such a subject, a public officer who is no way accountable to me. I answer, I am an inhabitant of this town; and, of course, have an interest in its welfare and honor. I am the father of a large family; and cannot be indifferent to anything which may have an influence injurious to any of its members. I am a minister of the Gospel; and, as such, bound to reprove sin, and to promote correct morals and piety by all the lawful means in my power. I am a trustee of the College; and have taken a solemn oath to endeavour to promote the true interests of the institution, and of all who belong to it, to the best of my knowledge and understanding. And, finally, I am an unfeigned friend and well-wisher of you and your family, and sincerely desire the happiness of both. Standing in all these relations, if what I have heard be true, or anything like it, can I, ought I, \* \* \* to be silent?'

In a postscript, Dr. Miller added,

'\* \* \* Allow me to remind you, that you, like others, need a Saviour. Oh, do not treat with scorn the message which proclaims and offers salvation! From long experience with respect

to death-bed scenes, I can venture with confidence to foretell, that such a course will give you no pleasure when you come to die. From this hour, I beseech you, turn about, and pursue a completely different course. My fervent prayer is, that I may see you not only a correct and regular public officer, but, also, what is infinitely more important, a real christian. It would give me more pleasure to be the means of promoting your everlasting welfare than I can express in words.'

Upon a copy of the letter from which the foregoing extracts have been taken, Dr. Miller, ten years after its date, endorsed the following :—

'It is worthy of grateful notice, that the individual, to whom the above letter was directed, not only, to a considerable extent, corrected the errors for which it reproved him ; but, several years afterwards, died in the hope of the Gospel, renouncing his infidel opinions with deep apparent humiliation, and expressing a confident trust in Christ. Whether this letter had the least connection with that change is not known to me.'

About a student in the Seminary, when inquiry was made, Dr. Miller wrote,

'I should augur very favorably of his success as a minister. I fully expect that he will make a popular and acceptable preacher ; and shall be much disappointed if the result should be different. He is somewhat self-confident and ardent, bordering on the impetuous. This circumstance, together with a desire to be settled in the domestic state, *may* tempt him to close his preliminary studies, and engage in the active duties of the ministry, too soon. If he should yield to this temptation, my opinion is, that the probability of his acceptableness and usefulness will be not a little impaired. If he were about to marry a relative of mine, over whom I had the least influence, I should exert the whole of that influence in persuading her to decline, most peremptorily, all proposals to consummate a matrimonial connection, before he had fully completed the course of three years.'

The following extracts from a letter to a pastor, formerly his pupil in the Seminary, and involved in controversy with a sect denying fundamental christian doctrines, gives, at once, a specimen of Dr. Miller's treatment of pupils who had gone forth to their labors, and some of his views of the proper manner of conducting religious controversy. His correspondent had left the Seminary about ten years previously.

‘ I received your letter of the 20th instant two days ago. It needed no apology. I have always been glad to hear from you ; and, although the contents of your letter were painful, yet I turn to you as to a beloved son, and shall be cordially glad if I can say a word that may be of use in your present interesting and trying circumstances. True, I am now in my seventy-eighth year, and am compassed about with many of the infirmities which commonly attend that age ; so that writing is more of a task than it once was ; yet, if I can suggest anything for your benefit, it will unfeignedly gratify me. \* \*

‘ Whether you ought to carry this controversy into your pulpit, I cannot decisively advise, without knowing more than I do of the state of matters in detail in your congregation and neighborhood. If the public mind seems to expect it and demand it ; and if many persons appear to be perplexed, and disposed to inquire on the subject, then you are bound, I must think, to take the matter up, and say something in behalf of the truth. And if you do discuss the subject, allow me to suggest the following considerations :—

‘ 1. Try to conduct all your discourses which treat of this subject in the spirit of Christian mildness, benevolence, and charity. Guard against harsh and denunciatory language ; and, while you represent the impious and mischievous character of error with fidelity, remember the old maxim in polemics—“ Soft words and hard arguments.” I have long thought the letters of John Newton to Thomas Scott—as given in the appendix to Scott’s *Force of Truth*, (printed by our Board of Publication,) a noble specimen of controversy conducted in a truly Christian spirit, and addressed chiefly to the heart.

‘ 2. If you know of any persons whose minds are exercised on this subject, try to procure and put into their hands some printed tracts, or larger volumes ;—according to their intelligence and disposition to read ;—and let all your intercourse with such persons be marked with the kindest spirit, and your addresses adapted quite as much to the heart as to the understanding. A tract, or a book, to be read and reflected on at leisure, is, to many, much more likely to be useful than preaching.

‘ 3. I would advise that you do not allow the \* \* controversy to occupy too large a share of your pulpit labours. Do not let your \* \* neighbours imagine, that you regard them as the great black Devil who is continually haunting you. Do not forget to preach the simple, pure, didactic Gospel, without special reference to controversy.

‘ 4. Let the present crisis, in which you deem it your duty to put on the armour of warfare, lead you to be more closely con-

versant than usual with the throne of grace. When "contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," you need to be doubly inspired with wisdom, and doubly girded with strength. Rely upon it, all your preaching, and all your conversation, will have a precious savour, just in proportion as they are consecrated by the word of God and prayer.'

Dr. Miller then added a list of books for his correspondent's own use and another of those suited to popular use and circulation.

To a pastor, against whom a party in his church were laboring to stir up opposition, Dr. Miller wrote,

'It would be doing justice to neither yourself, nor the cause of truth and order, to withdraw from your charge at the bidding of such a factious minority.

'That the elders should \* \* call a congregational meeting without consulting you, and that immediately on the back of a presbyterial censure for conduct of the same sort \* \* must, I should think, bring down reprobation on \* \* [them.]

'There can be no doubt that you have a right to attend the meeting, and, if you think proper, to take the chair and preside. It may be wise, however, to request some brother clergyman, belonging to your presbytery, to preside in your place. But one thing is clear. If you waive your right to preside, no one of your opponents ought to preside, at the contemplated meeting. A general piece of advice I would decidedly give; and that is, if you must err, let it be on the side of forbearance and gentleness. If I were in your place, I would make a point of being present at the meeting, and offering such statements as the occasion may warrant, and the language and conduct of your opponents may demand.'

The drafts sometimes made, or proposed upon Dr. Miller's time and strength, may be illustrated by the following extract from an unpaid letter from a country minister.

'Now, as, here, I have no access to books which can afford satisfactory proof of the truth or falsehood of the statement made by them, I have taken the liberty to request you to state if, and how far, Origen, and some others, [Clemens Alexandrinus, Gregory Thaumaturgus, Pamphilus, Eusebius, and Basil the Great, mentioned previously] were believers in—a certain doctrine which the writer designates.

'My dear Sir,

'It has given me much pain to learn, within a few days, that you have, recently, in addressing your class in College,

recommended to them the reading of *Bulwer's novels*. Aside, altogether, from the question, whether novel-reading, in general, is adapted to promote the benefit of young men pursuing a course of sound and sober education, the notorious fact is, that the greater part, if not all, of *Bulwer's novels* are corrupt in their moral character and influence; that is, calculated to recommend opinions and practices subversive of the best interests of youth for this world as well as that which is to come.

‘It has been my constant aim and endeavor to prevail upon my own sons, and upon all the college students with whom I have any influence, to abstain from reading novels, as a species of reading adapted in its best form, to do injury, by consuming, to little profit, time which might be employed in reading suited to fill the mind with facts, and principles, and solid furniture, such as their enlightened christian friends could wish them to acquire. These are the sentiments which I have labored to impress on the minds of several young relations now in college; and these the sentiments which I have taken pains to embody and recommend, at large, in a system of counsels which I am preparing for the press; and which I hope, in a few months, if it shall please God to spare my life and health, to present to the public. True, I do not hope to succeed in prevailing on most young men to practice total abstinence here; but it is my earnest desire to come as near to this as possible.

‘I need not say, therefore, my dear Sir, that the information which I have received has given me, as a parent, as a well-wisher to the rising generation, and as a trustee of the College, great pain, and no little anxiety as to your influence as an instructor. You may rest assured that your counsel in regard to the matter referred to, while it was very gratifying to some of the more idle and licentious of the literary circle to whom it was addressed, was deeply surprising to some others of juster sentiments and more sober habits. It is impossible, as it appears to me, that such counsel should be otherwise than mischievous to some members of a class training up to meet the great practical realities of the life for which they are preparing.

‘I was the more surprised to be told of the counsels you gave to your pupils, from having understood, a considerable time ago, that you had been heard to state, that, at an early period of your life, your whole attention had been absorbed by novels; and that you considered yourself as having incurred no small injury by excessive devotion to that species of reading. One would think, that, if my information was correct, your own painful experience would have led you to give very different counsel to youth committed to your guidance.



‘I hope, my dear Sir, you will receive this communication in the friendly manner in which it is intended. Do not imagine that I wish to interfere with the right of private judgment. Far from it. I am very far from insisting that you should adopt my opinions on the subject of novel reading. But would you not consider me as recreant to my oath and my obligations as a trustee of the College, if, with such opinions as *I* hold, and strongly hold, on this subject, I should be silent, when counsels so directly opposite to them are given from the instructor’s chair to the pupils of an institution committed, though remotely, to my guardianship and care? I think too favorably of your principles to doubt, for a moment, that your judgment and conscience would be against me.

‘I commit these paternal hints to your serious consideration, and am, my dear Sir,

‘Your friend,  
‘Sam’l Miller.’

The following lines from Dr. Miller’s diary refer to the letters from which the subsequent extracts are taken.

‘December 6, 18—, I wrote two letters, one to — — of — — and the other to — — of ——. These young men were both classmates of my son — — who graduated last September, in the College of New Jersey. I have, in many respects, a good opinion of their talents and general character; and feel exceedingly anxious that they may receive a happy direction. With the hope, that, by the divine blessing, they may be susceptible of good impressions, I have written each of them a long, friendly, and affectionate letter, giving them advice with respect to their future course of study and pursuits; and trying to make a suitable impresssion on their minds. \* \*

‘I scarcely ever feel the importance of every word I speak or write, more than when it is addressed to young men of liberal education, who are coming forward, in all probability, to take a leading part in society. Oh, with what seriousness, solemnity and prayer ought such persons to be approached and addressed!’

‘My dear Sir.

Princeton, December ——18—

‘Since I had the pleasure of seeing you in ———, and especially since I heard from your cousin, some days ago, that you had commenced the study of the law, I determined to seize the first leisure hour to write you a letter of respectful and affectionate counsel. That leisure hour has not occurred until now; and even now various duties so accumulate on my hands, that I must be more brief than I once intended.

'You will, perhaps, be somewhat surprised at receiving this communication, and be inclined to ask, what is my inducement to address you. My reply is—I never see a young man with good talents, of polished and pleasant manners, and having received a liberal education, without feeling an intense interest in him, and an earnest desire that he may receive such a bias and direction, as will render him an ornament and a blessing to society. Such an interest I feel in you. Your being a class-mate of my beloved ——; my acquaintance with your respected parents, and my long and intimate friendship with your excellent and revered grandmother—added to my opinion of your personal talents and character—cause me to feel a peculiar desire that you may prove all that your *Alma Mater* and your friends can wish.

'Allow me, then, to pour out the fullness of my heart in a few of those respectful and paternal counsels, which I know are important to your interests, and which I trust you will receive as they are intended—as expressions of unfeigned and disinterested regard to your temporal and eternal welfare. \* \*

'I. Do not allow yourself to lose any part of your *collegial attainments*. You can redeem a little time from your professional studies. Spend at least one hour, every day, in reading Latin and Greek. This will preserve and improve your acquaintance with those languages. If you can spend another hour, every day, for a year to come, in reviewing your Rhetoric, Natural Philosophy, Astronomy and Chemistry in their turns, it will be very important. I take for granted that you aspire to an elevated place in your profession—as near the head of it as possible. Now, continuing and extending the attainments of which I speak, will not only form elegant accomplishments; but they will enlarge your enjoyment, increase your respectability, extend your resources and powers in public speaking, chasten and elevate your eloquence, enable you to be more extensively and variously useful, and give you far more weight and authority in the community. That professional man is infatuated, who suffers himself to grow rusty in his college studies. If you should live, you may be elected, ten years hence, a trustee of your *Alma Mater*. If that should be the case, or if you should be a trustee of an academy in your neighborhood, how much more useful might you be in such an office, by continuing to be at home in college studies. I hope while you live you will be a patron of sound literature. To enable you to do this with effect, you must continue in your own person to cultivate literature.

'II. Determine to be, through life, a *public benefactor*. You

have it in your power, my young friend, humanly speaking, to be one of the most useful men in the United States. You have intellectual abilities, which, if properly improved and exerted, will give you a great and benign influence among your fellow-men. And God has been pleased to give you connections in life, which cannot fail of facilitating efforts to do good. Let it be your distinct aim, and the object of your unceasing pursuit, from the hour you read this page, to be one of the greatest benefactors of the state in which you live, and of the United States, by habitual efforts to be useful in every way; by setting a pure, spotless and elevated example to all the young and old around you; by encouraging and sedulously promoting all good institutions; by becoming a public, active patron of literature, science, moral associations and religion, wherever you may go; and by showing every day that you are willing to deny yourself and to labour for the sake of promoting the benefit of others. I can assure you, my young friend, that if you fairly make the experiment, you will find this not only the most truly honorable course that you can pursue; one best of all adapted to endear and elevate you in the view of your contemporaries; but decidedly also the happiest in the world. Let such be your steady aim, such your daily and hourly ambition, and you will never repent of it. Which, think you, will appear most noble, most worthy of a reasonable being, and most gratifying, on reflection, twenty years hence, if you should live so long—to have been a man of dissipated pleasure, and to be remembered only as one of the *fruges consumere nati*, or to have passed your time in cultivating your mind and your heart, and doing good to your fellow-men?

‘III. If you desire to be a great and good man, make the BIBLE your daily study and guide. When I think of the character of such men as *Newton*, and *Locke*, and *Boyle*, and *Boerhaave*, and *Hale*, and *Howard*, and *Wilberforce*, etc., etc., and remember how diligently they studied the Bible, and how much influence they all acknowledged that book had on their character and course, I feel as if I could not too strongly recommend it to you, and to every young man who wishes to be eminently useful in this world—placing a future life entirely out of the question. But when the eternal welfare of such an individual is considered, then the importance of this book, given to be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path, becomes unspeakable.

‘IV. To the study of the Bible let me entreat you to add *daily prayer*. You must acknowledge God in all your ways, if you expect him to direct your paths. You remember the case

of Solomon. When he was a young man, about your age, and was directed to ask for what he wished, he made it an object of fervent and unceasing petition, that the God of his fathers would give him *wisdom*—true heavenly wisdom. Go, my young friend, and do likewise, and you will have reason to rejoice all your days. “The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.”

‘V. As the great mass, even of our liberally educated young men, grow up with scarcely any digested knowledge on the most important of all subjects, I would advise that you begin, at once, to have before you a course of *systematic religious reading* for all the Sundays in the year. Allow me, in addition to the Bible, which I hope will form a part of your reading every day, to suggest the following works, partly doctrinal and partly practical, (for I think the perusal of both classes ought to go on together,) for your Sunday reading. If you sacredly set aside all your Sabbaths for this employment, you will be able to get through a number of volumes in the course of a year. Paley’s Evidences of Christianity, Paley’s *Horæ Paulinæ*, Campbell on Miracles, Leslie’s Short Method with the Deists, Chalmers’ Evidences, Butler’s Analogy, Dwight’s Theology, Edwards on the Will, Wilberforce’s Practical View, Sir Matthew Hale’s Contemplations, John Newton’s Works, Scott’s Commentary and all his other works, Payson’s Life and Sermons, Bellamy’s True Religion Delineated. I would begin with Butler’s Analogy, and read that in connection with some more practical work—e. g. Dwight’s Theology; and then proceed to Campbell on Miracles, and Chalmers’ Evidences, reading them in connection with Wilberforce and Payson; and so on until you have gotten through the whole list.

‘VI. *Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.* If you wish to prosper in your studies, and to enjoy health of body with health of mind, honor and sanctify the Sabbath, Mr. Wilberforce, not long before his death, ascribed the length, comfort, and the success of his life, under God, in part to his conscientious care in sanctifying this holy day, and withdrawing thereon from all worldly cares and labors. Rigidly set apart the whole of the day, wherever you may be, to religious duties and reading, and the end of each year will find you much the gainer.

‘My dear young friend, farewell; may God bless you, and make you a blessing to your family, to the Church of God, and to your generation!

‘Be pleased to give my kind and most respectful salutations

to your parents, and my most affectionate christian regards to your excellent grandmother.

‘Yours, my dear Sir, with great sincerity,  
‘Samuel Miller.’

To the other graduate of the College, mentioned in his diary, Dr. Miller wrote,

‘My reasons for addressing you in this manner are various. The interest I have taken in you as my son’s classmate; my impression that you have talents, which, if rightly directed, will render you capable of great usefulness in the world; my knowledge that your station in society, your family connections, your property, are such as will place you in a most responsible situation; \* \* and my long friendship and high respect for your \* \* father—all combine to constrain me to take this method of approaching you, and offering you a few thoughts in the way of affectionate and paternal counsel. I have no doubt that much wise counsel is given you from one much nearer your home than I am, and abundantly capable of giving it to the best advantage. But a blessing may attend a few suggestions coming from afar, and flowing from the heart of one who has no other purpose to serve in thus addressing you, but the promotion of your temporal and eternal happiness. If my heart does not deceive me, my supreme wish concerning you is, that you may be honored, useful and happy here, and that we may, by the grace of God, rejoice together in a better world.

\* \* To be *idle* will undoubtedly degrade and injure you in every respect. From bodily labour, to obtain a living, your property will exempt you. But to labour in the cultivation of your own mind will enrich, adorn and elevate you more than I could, by writing a volume, unfold. If you wish to be a happy man, and to attain the maximum of usefulness, I entreat you do not neglect this counsel. \* \*

‘I would advise you not only to choose a profession, but study it faithfully, and practise it diligently. I am aware that you can live without the emoluments of a profession. But no matter for that. The study and practice of a profession (the law, for instance, or medicine) will serve to exercise and invigorate your faculties, to call you into active life, and give you, at once, stimulants and opportunities to benefit all around you.’

## CHAPTER FORTY-FIRST.

### FAILING STRENGTH.

1845—1847.

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#### CORRESPONDENCE AND DIARY.

DR. MILLER writes in his diary, on the 1st of January, 1845,

‘ Since the commencement of the past year, I have been visited with two seasons of protracted sickness ; one in January, which confined me to my bed the whole of that month, and was followed with great debility and a very tedious convalescence ; the other in July, (the consequence of an ill-conducted and fatiguing journey to see our son John, in Frederick City, Maryland,) which again confined me to my bed for a month, and to my house the greater part of another. But, by the mercy of a gracious Providence, I was brought through both ; and, before the close of the twelvemonth, restored to a state of health as favorable as could be expected in my seventy-sixth year.

‘ I have been permitted, this day, to preach a New Year’s sermon in the church in this place, (in Dr. Rice’s absence,) with as much comfort and strength as I have been recently wont to enjoy. \* \* None of my family, of whom I have any knowledge, ever lived beyond the sixty-ninth year ; while I am advancing in my seventy-sixth, and am in the enjoyment of much bodily comfort.’

“ For many years the formation of a NEW JERSEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY had been urged in the public prints in various parts of the State, and at different periods had engaged the attention of gentlemen feeling a warm interest in the subject.

“ No definite measures, however, were taken to combine and carry into action these views of individuals until January, 1845.” The first meeting for the purpose was held in Trenton on the 13th of that month ; and at a subsequent

meeting in the same city, in the City Hall, it was regularly organized on the 27th of February following. The Rev. Dr. D. V. McLean of Freehold, very prominent among the promoters of the undertaking, had written to Dr. Miller, informing him of the project. From the reply of the latter, dated the 18th of February, the following extracts are taken:—

‘I have, for a long time, wished an association of this kind to be formed; and, indeed, several months ago, expressed to my respected neighbor and friend, Richard S. Field, Esquire, my decided opinion, and earnest desire that something of this kind should be attempted. \* \*’

‘If I were twenty-five years younger than I am, I would make a free offer of myself, not only as one of your associates, but as one of your *reliable workmen*, to tug at the oar of labor on your behalf. But being now far advanced in my seventy-sixth year, and having very many of the infirmities which usually attend that age gathering around me, I dare not promise anything but my good wishes, my fervent prayers for your success, and my disposition to cheer on those who are able and willing to work in your service. \* \*’ But my heart will be with you; and if the smallest opportunity of serving your Institution should ever occur, it will give me cordial pleasure to avail myself of it. I will thank you to subscribe my name to the Constitution which may be formed, and to consider me as one of your enrolled members, and responsible for the pecuniary dues attached to membership.<sup>1</sup>

On the 4th of September, 1845, the Society met in Princeton, when Dr. Miller delivered an address, which was requested for publication.<sup>2</sup> He afterwards, on the 27th of May, 1847, read a paper, “On the Rise and Progress of the Theological Seminary at Princeton,” which was deposited in the archives of the Society, to be given to the public at a subsequent day.<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Miller’s opinion, first and last, of the American Tract Society, is expressed in the following paragraphs from a letter addressed, on the 5th of May, to the Rev’d William A. Hallock, Corresponding Secretary. After mentioning an engagement which would prevent his attending the Anniversary of the Society, he says,

<sup>1</sup> Proceedings of the N. J. Hist. Soc., 5-7.

<sup>2</sup> “An Address delivered before the New Jersey Historical Society, in Princeton, September 4, 1845. By Samuel Miller, D.D.” (1 Proceedings of the New Jersey Historical Society, 81—96.)—8vo. Pp. 16.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Proceedings, 73.

‘I regret this the more, because the Society having been lately assailed on account of some of its proceedings, it gratifies me exceedingly to be able to testify, in every practicable way, that my confidence in it is unimpaired, and that I consider it as a privilege and duty to give public expression to my high estimate of its eminent usefulness, and its just claim to public patronage. When I contemplate the amount of good which the Society has accomplished, and is likely still more extensively to accomplish, by its volume circulation, and by its noble system of colportage, as well as by its more humble messengers of truth, I bless God, that I am permitted to be connected with so important an institution; and I deeply regret that I am not able to be more efficiently active in its service.’

In the January number of *The Missionary Chronicle*, organ of the Boards of Foreign and Domestic Missions of the Presbyterian Church, appeared the first of a series of four articles, by Dr. Miller, entitled “Remarks on the Mode of conducting the Monthly Concert in Prayer.” The others followed in February, March, and May; and the whole, “in a revised and somewhat different form,” was issued in the autumn of the same year, by the Presbyterian Board of Publication, as one of its permanent volumes.<sup>1</sup> In writing to the Rev’d John C. Lowrie,<sup>2</sup> on the 24th of February, in regard to these articles, Dr. Miller added, ‘Pray for me that my “leaf may not wither” in old age; and that if it be the Lord’s will, I may not live a day beyond my usefulness.’

To one of his sons, on the 21st of June, Dr. Miller wrote.

‘I was especially gratified with the evidence that you begin to feel yourself at home in Frederick. No man will be likely to be very useful to any people, to whom he does not feel bound by the ties, not only of pastoral relation, but also of pastoral affection; and no one will be likely to feel much of this toward a people, among whom he regards himself as only a temporary sojourner, and from whom he means to escape as soon as he can. If you wish to benefit, spiritually, your flock, and, at the

<sup>1</sup> “Letters on the Observance of the Monthly Concert in Prayer: addressed to the Members of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. By Samuel Miller, D.D., Professor in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey.” —18mo. Pp. 104.

<sup>2</sup> Since, D.D.



same time, to gain spiritual and theological strength yourself,  
 \* \* regard them as your beloved people; try more  
 and more to take an interest in them; and resolve, in the fear  
 of God, to stay as long with them as Providence shall make  
 it your duty to stay. Depend upon it, you will find work  
 enough to do in Frederick to employ all your strength; and  
 the more cordially and diligently you give yourself to do  
 it, the more you will be likely to grow in preparation for a  
 wider field, and more arduous labors. Let me beg you then to  
 sit down contented and cheerful to your work in Frederick, re-  
 solved if it be the will of God, to spend many years, or even  
 your life there. If you should remove a few years hence, to a  
 larger congregation, I predict that you will look back upon  
 your present settlement as the happiest portion of your life.  
 And you may rest assured that the less anxiety you manifest  
 to get into a wider sphere, the more likely you will be to reach it.

With the Rev. Dr. J. J. Janeway, who, during a long min-  
 istry, was very conspicuous, and greatly beloved and véné-  
 rated in both the Presbyterian and Reformed Dutch Church-  
 es, Dr. Miller had enjoyed the closest ministerial and social  
 intimacy. In 1845, Dr. Janeway published his work on  
 "The Internal Evidence of the Holy Bible," prefixed to  
 which is a recommendatory letter from Dr. Miller, dated  
 the 23d of June, 1845. He says,

"In addressing this letter to you, acknowledging my pleasure  
 in the perusal of your manuscript, and soliciting your consent  
 to its publication, I have two motives. One is disinterested;  
 having for its object to promote the giving to the public, through  
 the press, a work, which I trust will be the means of doing  
 good long after you and I shall have gone to our eternal rest.  
 The other is more personal, and what some would, perhaps, call  
 selfish. It is to place a record on this humble page, which may  
 inform my children that the beloved and véné-  
 rated author of this little volume was their father's friend; and that an unbro-  
 ken and confiding intercourse of nearly fifty years united us to  
 one another, and, as we humbly trust, in sanctified fellowship,  
 in the Church of God." <sup>1</sup>

To the Rev. Hugh S. Dickson<sup>2</sup> Dr. Miller wrote on the  
 28th of August,

'With respect to the points, on which I would examine a  
 candidate for admission to membership in the church of which  
 I was pastor, they are the following: 1. Knowledge: 2. Or-

<sup>1</sup> P. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Since, D. D.

thodoxy: 3. Experimental acquaintance with the truth: 4. Moral character. If you asked me, how much knowledge I would demand, I should say, my requisitions would be endlessly diversified, as to this point, according to the subjects I had to deal with. If I were examining a poor African slave, \* \* my demands on the score of distinct doctrinal knowledge, would be much smaller, than if I were examining an intelligent, educated young man of good mind. My demands would be still higher, if I were examining a man of elevated intellectual character in advanced life; and higher still, if the candidate were proposing himself for the ministry. Where there was good evidence of unaffected seriousness and deep sincerity, I should not insist on a clear, discriminating doctrinal statement; but where I had in hand a person of acute, strong intellect, I should very carefully inquire, whether he had read the Confession of Faith, and approved the system of doctrine there taught. In short, I would endeavor, as far as I could, to act the part of a skilful physician—to prescribe according to the character, situation, intellect and habits of the patient.

‘I have never been in the practice of requiring from candidates for private membership, a formal subscription to the Confession of Faith. Our book does not require it; and the most consistent Presbyterian practice has not, as I suppose, called for it. Yet I take every opportunity of recommending that Confession in the most formal and explicit manner, both in the pulpit and in private examinations.

‘\* \* I congratulate you, most cordially, in advance, on your anticipated marriage. May the Lord make it a rich and lasting blessing to you, both as a man and a minister. Tell the lady, that, when she goes among plain people, as a minister’s wife, she must be a pattern of plain and unostentatious habits, both in her person and house; and she may rest assured the richest and gayest of her parishioners will respect her the more for it. May God bless you!’

The following Extract is from a letter of the 1st of October, 1845, to the Rev. Henry A. Boardman, D. D.

‘I never, on any occasion, administered the Lord’s supper in private; yet I have always entertained the opinion, that, in such a case as you have described, I ought to do it. \* \* But if I had such a parishioner, I would, without hesitation, take the elders, and a few select members of the church—friends and neighbors of the sick man—and administer to him the communion. This would be carrying the church to the individual, and thus still making it a church ordinance.

‘The Lord’s Supper has been administered in a sick chamber more than once, in Princeton, since I came hither—not by me, but with my approbation. \* \* In every case, the elders and a few friends were assembled to partake in the ordinance.

‘You are right in your impression, that I was accustomed to give the same opinion in my lectures.’

‘October 31, 1845. \* \* I have this day completed my seventy-sixth year. Last year my health was feeble. \* \* This one, by the mercy of a kind Providence, it is greatly better; and, although the severe heats of the late summer were very distressing to me, and weakened me exceedingly, I have, within the last two or three months, been mercifully revived, and am now as well as I have been for several years. I am, indeed, a wonder to myself.

\* \* \* \* \*

‘I am still able, blessed be God! to discharge my duties as Professor, with nearly my usual ease and strength.’

The Cincinnati of New Jersey, with the co-operation of the First Presbyterian Church of Elizabeth, erected in the grave-yard of that church, a beautiful monument to the memory of the Rev. James Caldwell, a Presbyterian clergyman of Revolutionary renown, and a martyr to the cause of American liberty. This “monument was dedicated, by appropriate ceremonies, on the 24th of November, 1845,—the sixty-fourth anniversary of Mr. Caldwell’s death. An appropriate and impressive address was delivered on the occasion” by Dr. Miller, which was afterwards published.<sup>1</sup> Upon sending, on the 24th of December, the manuscript of this address, Dr. Miller wrote to Dr. Murray,

‘My dear Brother, I take for granted that you will look over the manuscript before it goes to press. I request you to do so carefully; and if there be a word, a sentence, or a paragraph that you think ought to be modified, let me know your opinion, and I will consider it. If I had been writing a piece on Church Government, or Ecclesiastical History, I should probably be willing to risk it on my own judgment.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Nicholas Murray, 3 in Sprague’s Annals, 227, 228. “An address delivered in the First Presbyterian Church in Elizabethtown, N. J., November 24th, 1845, on the Dedication of a Monument erected to the Mémoire of the Rev. James Caldwell, formerly Pastor of the said Church, who fell by the hand of an Assassin, November 24th, 1781. By Samuel Miller, D. D., Professor in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey. Elizabethtown: 1846.”—Svo. Pp. 17.

But I have some distrust of myself, when I go out of my usual track. I hope you and Brother Magie will not suffer your *old father* to say, in print, an unwise thing, without a kind effort to correct, or prevent it.'

To the Rev. Professor Joseph Alden,<sup>1</sup> of Williams College, inquiring for sources of information respecting Oliver Cromwell and the Puritans, he wrote, on the 5th of December,

'Your letter of November 28 reached me yesterday. It found me in a sick room, laboring under a severe catarrh \* \* You will not, of course, expect a long letter in reply. But the alternative, which you seem to admit, of not giving any reply at all, I have too much respect for you, and too much interest in the subject of your letter, to think of for a moment.

'Justice has never yet been done, in my opinion, to the character of the Puritans, nor to the character of Oliver Cromwell. That there was some *machinery* about his plans of action, which was not unobjectionable, I am afraid cannot be denied; but that he was a man of colossal talents, of wonderful energy, and of genuine patriotism, I hold to be undeniable. It will be a noble task to clear away, reconstruct and adorn his history.'

In his diary Dr. Miller wrote,

'January 1, 1846. \* \* It pleased God, yesterday, to remove Miss Elizabeth Sergeant, Mrs. Miller's sister, residing in Philadelphia, by death; and it becomes my duty to go to that city this morning, for the purpose of being present at the funeral early to-morrow. But such an occasion and such a duty are by no means out of keeping with the character and the import of this anniversary. On the first day of the by-gone year, our dear sister little thought that, before the commencement of another, she would take leave of this world and all its possessions and enjoyments. And, in fact, how prone are we all to pass from month to month, and from year to year, without recollecting, in the practical and solemn manner that we ought, that a few weeks or days may close our mortal lives, and place us before that dread tribunal, where we must give an account of our stewardship, and of all the deeds done in the body. \* \*

'O my covenant God in Christ! where shall I be at the close of the year, on which I have this day entered? Lord, thou knowest! I desire not to be solicitous about anything but being found serving thee and glorifying thy name. With re-

<sup>1</sup> Now, D.D.

gard to the time and circumstances of my departure, I would say, from the heart, Lord, *when* thou wilt, and *where* thou wilt, and *how* thou wilt. I desire to have no will about it. Father, not my will, but thine be done. Father, glorify thy name.'

The Rev. Oscar Harris wrote, requesting advice upon several points of Ecclesiastical proceeding. Dr. Miller said in reply, on the 4th of September,

'With regard to your second query—What ought to be done with delinquents who have been suspended only, and have remained many years in this situation, without reformation, and without being visited with any heavier sentence? —It is evident that much laxness and negligence have prevailed, in many of our churches, as to this point. And yet, if I were called upon to prescribe a remedy for long continued past neglect, I should be at a loss to lay down a definite and single rule applicable to all cases. I would rather prescribe a remedy for each case, adapted to its peculiar circumstances. If a member has been under suspension for a number of years, and is known to all the congregation to be suspended, and never comes to the communion; and, at the same time, though he is not reformed, there is no remarkable or conspicuous increase of immorality; and the matter has been left to sleep for twenty-five or thirty years; I should not think it, on the whole for edification, to call the matter up anew, and publicly excommunicate the offender. But if a member suspended, for example for tippling habits, should gradually pass from tippling to degrading, brutish sottishness; then I should think a proper time ought to be taken to proceed to a public excommunication, according to the prescription of our book. During all the twenty years that I was connected as a pastor with the United Presbyterian Churches in the city of New York, we had, so far as I remember, but one excommunication. Suspension, and that only, covered all the other cases of continued delinquency. I do not say that this was always right; but I merely state the fact. Negligence in such matters is not confined to your congregation.

'With regard to your third query, I should say, that if I were a pastor, and a pious Methodist, or Episcopalian, or Seceder, who stood aloof from my communion, should apply to me to baptize a child, I should most readily, and without hesitation, do it. And this I believe to be the common practice of our Pastors in similar cases. As a general rule, I feel myself at liberty to baptize the child of any parents, for whom I

should perform the service if they belonged to my own communion.'

The following is from the diary :—

'October 24, 1846. This is the anniversary of my marriage. Five-and-forty years ago, I became united to the best of wives, and have never ceased, from that hour to the present, to rejoice in the union. \* \* I am thankful for the following reasons.

'I. It was not my own wisdom that selected this precious companion. I was led to make the choice by what we are accustomed to call "pure accident." The circumstance of hearing her strongly recommended to another, in a confidential conversation, not intended to reach my ear, determined me to seek her hand. But for this circumstance, there is no probability that I should have dreamed of the connexion. \* \* The Lord chose for me far better than I could have chosen for myself.

'II. What a mercy that we have been permitted to live together so long. A large portion of our friends and acquaintances, who were married about the same time with ourselves, have been separated—most of them by death, some by crime. Numbers of them have been married two, three—a few, four—times; thus mixing families of children and laying a foundation for most uncomfortable contests about property. How can I be thankful enough that the providence of God has assigned to me only one wife, one set of children, and one interest in regard to the worldly possessions which he has bestowed upon us. \* \*'

'October 31, 1846. \* \* This day completes my *seventy-seventh* year. I spend a portion of it, as usual, in thanksgiving and special devotion. \* \* contrary to my own anticipations, the Lord has spared me, and, during the last year, favored me with an amount of comfortable health and strength, which I have not enjoyed for several preceding years. My prayer is, that a deep sense of these mercies may at once humble and animate me; and that, while I praise the Lord for sparing my life, I may repent in dust and ashes before him, that it has manifested so little gratitude and devotedness to my heavenly Benefactor. \* \*

'But, while I feel bound to praise the Lord for thus lengthening out my days, and following me with so many mercies, I cannot conceal from myself, that my life is drawing to a close; that the infirmities of age are sensibly gathering around me;

and that my last account is near. Blessed Saviour! let me never, for a moment, lose sight of this. Let the anticipation of appearing before thee habitually and deeply impress my mind. While I live, let me live to thee; and when I die, let me die to thee. And Oh, let the thoughts of meeting thee, while they are solemn, be pleasant to my soul. O my blessed Redeemer, let the idea of being absent from the body, and present with thee, be my joy and comfort in this pilgrimage. I do not ask to live one hour beyond my usefulness. Forsake me not in my old age: cast me not off when my strength faileth; but be the strength of my heart and my portion forever. \* \*

‘While returning thanks for my continued life and health, I here record it, for the benefit of my children, that I think much of this health is owing, under God, to my habits for many years past:—to my total abstinence, for more than twenty years, from all intoxicating drinks; to my never having used tobacco in any form; to my practice of passing two days, every week, without the use of animal food; to the habit of bathing my head and feet in cold water every morning of my life; to vigilance in keeping the skin clean by frequent spunging with tepid water; and to my persevering care to take several hours of gentle exercise, in the open air, every good day. These rules I have diligently and indefatigably observed for many years; and I have felt bound to do all this, that I might glorify God in body as well as in spirit. Blessed be his name, that he has enabled me to persevere.’

The Rev. Drury Lacy,<sup>1</sup> as moderator of the Synod of North Carolina, had been applied to by one presbytery, the session of the Church of Fayetteville in which the Synod was to meet, and eight or ten ministers and elders belonging to two other presbyteries. to postpone the meeting, on account of the sickliness of Fayetteville, and the absence, at their country residences, of the families which were expected to entertain the members. Mr. Lacy, doubtful of his authority, wrote to Dr. Miller, and three other ministers for advice. All gave substantially the same counsel. The following extracts are from Dr. Miller’s reply of the 18th of March.

‘I beg leave to say, with unwavering confidence, that, in my judgment, you have the power which the Presbytery of Fayetteville request you to exercise; and that, if I were in your situation, I should, without the least hesitation, comply with that request.

<sup>1</sup> Since, D.D.

About twelve or fourteen years ago, our General Assembly sent down an overture to the Presbyteries, to the effect of formally investing the moderator of a Synod with the power of calling a *pro re nata* meeting of his synod, when regularly requested so to do. I opposed the overture, fully believing that the nineteenth chapter of our Form of Government already gave that power to the moderator of every synod. My opinion, however, did not prevail. The overture was sent down. But, if I remember correctly, a majority of the Presbyteries never responded; and, of course, the plan of having such a formal, explicit rule in our Form of Government was defeated.

‘I remain, however, of the same opinion as before, that the moderator of a synod already possesses the power in question in as plenary a manner as a formal rule could give it to him. And as the request which has been made to you is connected with no party movements, and cannot possibly be made subservient to any sinister purpose, but is founded on considerations of humanity and benevolence, I think it ought to be complied with.’

‘About forty years ago, if I remember correctly, the yellow fever unexpectedly appeared in New York, in the month of September, a few weeks before the Synod of New York was appointed to meet by adjournment in that city. About five or six weeks before the day of meeting arrived, several ministers and elders requested the Moderator to convene the Synod, by his circular, on the same day to which it stood adjourned, at a different place. He did so, and I never heard a lisp of objection to the measure.

‘If, therefore, I were in your situation, I would comply with the request of the Presbytery of Fayetteville without hesitation or scruple.’

Dr. Lacy says,

‘On receiving these letters I had them published for the information of all concerned, but especially of those who had any scruple about my right, as Moderator, to postpone the meeting of Synod. I issued my circular letter. At the meeting of Synod, a few of the brethren of Concord Presbytery protested against my action, and the matter was carried up to the General Assembly that met at Baltimore, and what I had done \* \* was pronounced “irregular!” Not long after I received another very pleasant letter from Dr. Miller, reviewing the action of the Assembly, and comforting me about the “waywardness of turbulent spirits.”’

It must be confessed that none of the precedents pleaded exactly met the difficulty. Perhaps the better plan would



have been, to have apprized the members of the Synod, by circular letter, that there could be no meeting, except of two or more to adjourn to another time, under the third of the "General Rules for Judicatories." Then, unless a quorum of "wayward" and "turbulent spirits" had assembled, and, refusing postponement, insisted upon proceeding to business, the matter might have been easily arranged by adjournment to a proper day.

Dr. Miller, toward the close of life, was evidently afraid that he might not have, in a becoming degree, the "grace of resignation." By this fear, perhaps, as much as by his sense of waning strength, he was influenced in penning the following letter.

'To the Board of Directors of the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church, at Princeton, New Jersey.

'Reverend and respected Brethren,

'It is now more than three and thirty years since I commenced my labors in the Seminary over which you preside. During the greater part of this time, as is well known to the Board, I have been charged with three distinct branches of instruction—Ecclesiastical History, Church Government, and the Composition and Delivery of Sermons.

'Being now far advanced in my *seventy-eighth* year, I begin to feel that some relief from a portion of the duties of my office has become desirable, and indeed necessary to my health and comfort. For the attainment of this object, I beg leave to state, that a temporary arrangement is contemplated, which will maintain the full course of instruction, as heretofore, and at the same time, relieve me from the discharge of a portion of my present labors. This, if I mistake not, can be accomplished, not only without prejudice to the Seminary, but with manifest and great advantage.

'To facilitate this change, and to provide for the additional expense which may necessarily attend its adoption, I do hereby declare my resignation of one-third part of my salary, (\$600,) which, if I mistake not, will be sufficient to meet any additional expenditure which may grow out of the proposed arrangement.

'The design of the present communication is to obtain the sanction of the Board of Directors to the contemplated plan of relief.

'With a grateful sense of the uniform kindness and indulgence with which my services in the Seminary have been treated by the Board of Directors; and with fervent prayers

for the growing prosperity and usefulness of the institution committed to their care, I am, reverend Brethren, most respectfully, your friend and fellow laborer in the house of God,  
 ‘Princeton,                    }  
 ‘May 17, 1847.’            } Samuel Miller.

The Rev. Smith Sturges, on becoming pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Black Rock, New York, found in use in that church two formularies, quite different as to some important doctrines, each styled, “Articles of Faith and a Covenant, etc. ;” one of which was always read from the pulpit, and publicly assented to by candidates for admission to full communion; the congregation afterwards rising in token of their approval of the profession thus made. Mr. Sturges, finding it somewhat difficult to decide between the rival claims of these two formularies, and really liking neither, set them both aside, and adopted the proper Presbyterian plan of merely announcing in public the names of those who had been examined and admitted by the church-session. This departure from previous usage, however, caused a good deal of dissatisfaction; and the pastor wrote to Dr. Miller for his opinion, which was given, under date of the 21st of June, as follows:—

‘Nothing is more certain than that the whole practice, in many Presbyterian churches, of making the candidates for communion come forward before the congregation and publicly covenant with them, is not a child of Presbyterianism, but wholly inconsistent with it, and the real offspring of Congregationalism. \* \* The theory of Congregationalism is that the male communicants are, by a popular vote, to govern the church, to examine and admit candidates for membership, to try, to censure, or to suspend or excommunicate all offenders against the laws of Christ. In accordance with this theory members are admitted by vote, and are publicly and popularly received, by a solemn ceremony, in the presence of the congregation. In the Presbyterian system this is all out of place. The church with us is regulated and governed by the *Session*, made up of the *representatives* of the church members. *They* are to receive members into the church; when *they* have examined the candidates and voted to receive them their reception is complete; and everything beyond this is supererogation. Our fathers of the Church of Scotland know nothing of the public parade in the middle aisle now so common. Our *Directory* for the worship of God, while it provides for every other

part of the public service, says nothing of this; and when I first settled in the ministry, as one of the pastors of the "United Presbyterian Churches in the City of New York," fifty-five years ago, we had no usage of this kind, or anything like it. The members of the Session conversed with the applicants for admission, and, being satisfied, took a vote and received them, and no further ceremony followed, excepting that, at the preparatory lecture, on the Friday evening previous to the communion, the names of all who had been admitted were announced to the congregation.

'In process of time, after the death of Dr. Rodgers and after I had left the city, the usage now practiced in *many*, indeed *most* of the New York churches, came into use, and was evidently derived from the habits of the Congregationalists of New England. The ceremony, as commonly managed, is solemn, and is capable of being made very impressive; but it forms no part of our system; is not provided for in our books; has no sanction in the practice of our venerated fathers; and certainly is calculated to contradict and throw into the background the essential principle that with us the *Session* forms the governing body. \* \*

'When persons not born of pious parents, and not baptized in infancy, are baptized in adult age—of course in their own name—our Directory enjoins, that they be baptized in public, and prescribes a form for that purpose, or at least a general direction; but it prescribes no form for the public reception to the communion of those who have been baptized in their infancy, and whom the Session have admitted to full communion. \* \*

'With respect to abridged and diversified "Confessions of Faith," they are equally inconsistent with our system, and still more mischievous. They are adapted to reflect on our excellent Confession by putting something different, and not so good, in its place. We were never in the habit, in my early days, of calling upon candidates for communion formally to subscribe the Westminster Confession; but it was a part of the business of the Session, to examine them with that Confession in view, and to ascertain that they received and adopted all its leading doctrines. The fact is, that when every particular pastor feels at liberty to draw up a confession of faith for his own flock, and acts accordingly, we shall have as many confessions as pastors, and of course endless diversities of doctrinal belief. I feel all the force of the evil which you state as arising from this diversity. Nothing is more adapted to break up the harmony and *oneness* of the Presbyterian Church than the in-

dulgence of such a turn for diversity of Confessions. But how shall we remedy these two evils so extensively diffused, and so firmly rooted in the feelings and prejudices of so many good people? *Hic labor, hoc opus est.* I think the friends of a sound orthodox change ought to proceed with caution. It ought not to be made a *breaking point*. I should say, pastors ought to begin by satisfying the minds and gaining the confidence of some of the leading, influential individuals in their respective charges, and when *they* have gained this, the work will be half done. The truth is, several of our Old School churches in the city of New York have gotten into these practices, and scarcely know how to get out of them. It will probably be a gradual work. I agree with you that the business requires prudence and wise management; and that nothing will be gained by pressing matters prematurely. \* \* \*

'The foregoing letter,' says Mr. Sturges, 'was immediately read by all concerned, and had the effect of satisfying all minds, and restoring that church to Presbyterian order on such occasions. But the reformation did not stop with us. The communication was read by nearly all the members of the presbytery to which we belonged; [in many other churches] the same good results followed; and we think we are not too sanguine in our expectation, that this excellent letter will yet set in order our entire Synod, with reference to these things.'

The first Centennial Anniversary of the College of New Jersey was celebrated on the 29th of June, 1847. In the afternoon, the Rev. Dr. J. W. Alexander delivered the Centenary Discourse. "The exercises were opened," says the published account of the proceedings, "with a deeply moving and most appropriate prayer by the venerable Dr. Miller."<sup>1</sup>

At the dinner, an occasion of high academic festivity, after the regular toasts, Dr. Miller proposed

"The Reverend Ashbel Green, D.D., LL.D.—Our venerated eighth President: We honour him as the first Head of a College in the United States, who introduced the study of the BIBLE as a regular part of the Collegiate course. *Sero in calum ascendat!* And when he shall be taken up, we may well say with the be-reaved Prophet of old—*My Father, my Father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof!*"

He then offered

"The Reverend Dr. James W. Alexander—Our able and

<sup>1</sup> P. 6.

honoured Centenary Historian. We thank him that he has so instructively and eloquently told us what the College of New Jersey has done. We hope he will live to see her accomplish greater things than these.”<sup>1</sup>

To one of his sons Dr. Miller wrote on the 12th of July,

‘We are distressed at the account you give of your sick family, and of the burdens which must inevitably fall upon your dear and precious wife in her delicate state of health; and your beloved mother and I have instantly agreed, not to invite you, but to *lay our commands* upon you, immediately to bring our daughter Margaret and little Maggie to Princeton. This will, at once, take her away from the fatigues of house-keeping, and from all the danger of a questionable climate, neither of which she ought, at the present oppressive season, to attempt to encounter, and bring her to a place where she may enjoy perfect repose, and one of the finest climates in the solar system. Mother says, and I join in it, Come right off: do not stop an hour even in Philadelphia, which is oppressively warm, and probably not quite safe on the score of health. My dear Son, we are in good earnest in issuing this *command*, and hope you will obey it without the loss of an hour. Give our love to our dear daughter. Don’t listen to any objection or proposal of delay; but, while you have strength and opportunity, come to the *Old Mill*, where you have spent so many profitable, if not comfortable, days.’

One of his former pupils wrote to Dr. Miller, inquiring how the relations of an Episcopal minister were to be transferred to the Presbyterian Church. The following extracts are from his answer, of the 26th of July.

‘The case of the worthy and pious Episcopal brother to which you refer is a very plain one; for though high church Episcopalians do not acknowledge *our* ordination, yet we acknowledge *theirs*. In fact the method of ordaining to “Priest’s orders,” in that denomination, makes it, to all intents and purposes, Presbyterian ordination—being an act, strictly speaking, of a “Presbytery.” Of course, on the most rigid interpretation of our own principles, we must recognise such an ordination as valid and not to be repeated.

‘And then, as to the *manner* in which such a transfer of ecclesiastical relation is to be effected, there is no real difficulty. You are aware, that we should never receive a minister from any Presbyterian denomination, without a regular certificate of dismissal and of good standing from the body from which he

<sup>1</sup> P. 30.

came. But, in the present case, such a certificate is not to be expected. This gentleman's bishop would not acknowledge your Presbytery, sufficiently even to give a letter certifying his good standing. All that is to be looked for, in such a case, is, laying before the Presbytery written or oral testimony, setting forth that the candidate for admission is of exemplary moral and religious character, and is considered as sound in the faith.

'When the candidate appears before the Presbytery with such testimonials, the next step will be to converse with him briefly, but freely and fraternally, on the subject of experimental religion, and a few leading points of christian doctrine. When this is done, the whole thing may be dispatched in five minutes. There is no prescribed delay in such cases. When the candidate has subscribed our public standards, according to the usual formula, nothing more is necessary. He, of course, from that moment, takes his seat as a member of the Presbytery.

'As you have not told me so much as the name of the respected brother concerning whom you ask counsel, I am of course perfectly impartial in the opinion above given. If he has numerous and respectable Episcopal connections, I should be most agreeably disappointed if he should be able to *tear himself away* from them. I predict that he will not be able to do this. Opposition of the most determined kind will be used to prevent his taking the step, and no stone left unturned to render it difficult, if not impossible. I hope, however, that he will be able to execute his plan; and I pray God, that he may prove a rich blessing to our church.

'You seem to intimate that, if he should join our church, he may not find it convenient, or possible, to take pastoral charge. This, though desirable, is by no means absolutely necessary. He may be greatly useful in the ministry, without becoming a regular pastor. He may preach nearly as much as many, nay as most pastors do. But, if he comes to us, I should greatly deprecate his taking his place as a layman. Give no countenance to this. I should be sorry to see any one who can preach, and who has the heart to do it, giving it up. - Much as I should be disposed to welcome any one into our body of whom you thought well, I should regret to receive one who was willing to lay aside the ministry.'

As Dr. Miller predicted, the transfer of relation, about which his advice had been asked, never took place. The reasons of this, however, are to the present writer entirely unknown.

The following letters passed between Chancellor Kent, of New York, in his eighty-fifth year, and Dr. Miller.

‘My dear Sir, New York, September 6th, 1847.

‘I have had a strong inclination, for some time past, to avail myself of a fit opportunity to unite myself to some church of the Protestant character, by making a public manifestation of my belief and hopes in the Christian dispensation of grace. I was educated in the *Congregational* Church, while I lived at Norwalk, in Connecticut, with my grandparents, and at Danbury for several years, and while I was in the course of my education at Yale College. Afterwards, at Poughkeepsie and Albany, I attended church as a member of the *Presbyterian* congregation; and I have always continued in that worship, until circumstances and my removal in town rendered it most inconvenient to attend either Dr. Phillips’ or Dr. E. Mason’s church; and as my children had all become Episcopalians, and one of them the wife of Dr. Stone, that fact, the position of my residence, and my very great defect of hearing, rendered it suitable, as I thought, that I should attend them to the Episcopal Church; and I have finally joined that church, so far as to be admitted to the communion under the patronage of Dr. Stone. I have not in the least altered my prepossessions in favor of the Presbyterian and Congregational modes of worship and doctrine; but it did not strike me as very material to which of our churches I was attached, as they are all Protestant and sound; though my predilections are still in favor of the New England churches, and I have a strong aversion, in fact, to the forms and ceremonies of the Cathedral worship.

‘I have thought it, my dear Sir, due to you and to myself to make this frank explanation; our former connection and my very strong respect and friendship for you have induced me to venture to do it; and I hope you will receive it in the kindness and indulgence with which it is made, and not deem me too intrusive.

‘I have been greatly afflicted, for some months past, with a most inveterate disease, and that is *Dyspepsia*, and nervous irritability; though, through the blessing of God upon the endeavours of my physicians, and my own efforts, the disease is vastly mitigated.

‘I am, my dear Sir, with the highest esteem and regard, your friend and obedient servant,

‘Rev’d Dr. Samuel Miller.

James Kent.’

‘My dear and venerated Friend, Princeton, Sept. 19, 1847.

‘Your kind letter of the 6th instant reached me five days

after its date. It found me confined to the house by sickness, wholly unable to attend to the duties of my office in the Seminary, and too feeble to take my pen in hand. I am now, by God's blessing, considerably better, and with pleasure address myself to the privilege of answering your welcome communication.

'Your letter was indeed welcome. To be addressed by an old and highly valued friend, with whom my acquaintance commenced more than forty years ago, and to be assured that I was not forgotten by him, was truly gratifying; but to be informed that that friend had thought it his duty, and had found his way clear, at the "eleventh hour," to make a public profession of his faith and hope in the glorious Gospel of the grace of God, was doubly gratifying. True, indeed, my satisfaction, on this occasion, would have been more complete, if he had informed me that he had, finally, in his old age, joined himself to that church which I believe to be more scriptural than any other; with which he had been connected, as a stated hearer, for nearly half a century; and in which it was once my privilege and pleasure to bear to him the relation of pastor. Still, I cannot but rejoice in the step you have taken.

'Though I have no personal acquaintance with Dr. Stone, I have always understood that he was a decidedly evangelical man. From all that I have ever learned, I feel persuaded, that he preaches the Gospel substantially and faithfully. Of course, assured that he is engaged in leading souls to Christ, and, through his atoning sacrifice and life-giving Spirit, to heaven, I can cordially resign you, if you will allow me to say so, to his evangelical care. In my opinion, you judge correctly, in thinking that you cannot go essentially wrong, in joining yourself to any Protestant denomination, by the ministry of which inquiring souls are directed, as the ground of hope, not to rites and ceremonies, but to the atoning blood and perfect righteousness of the Saviour of sinners.

'My prayer, my dear Sir, is, that your christian profession, though so long delayed, may be attended with the richest consolation and peace to yourself, and with edification to all around you. Allow an old friend, once your pastor, to indulge the freedom of saying, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." You cannot conceal from yourself, that God has been pleased to assign you a conspicuous and honorable place among men. I need not say, that while this fact is to be acknowledged as a great mercy, it is also to be regarded by you as in-



ferring the most solemn responsibility to adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour, by a corresponding brightness of example.

'I take for granted that, in whatever degree your attention may have been heretofore directed to theological reading, that degree will be, hereafter, rather increased than diminished. Under this impression, permit me to say, that there are few writings that I have found more pleasant and edifying to myself, than the works of the late John Newton, of London, and of Thomas Scott, the commentator. I can also cordially recommend the two works by John Flavel, the old Puritan divine, of England, viz., his "Fountain of Life Opened," and his "Method of Grace;" both of which have been lately published, in an improved form, by the American Tract Society. Dr. Stone knows them all well, and will, I have no doubt, add his testimony to their value. True, you will not find in these volumes any thing new. They aim at exhibiting and recommending those great elementary truths of the Gospel with which you have been familiar from your earliest years; which your venerated parents and grandparents loved and rejoiced in; and which the truly pious of all Protestant denominations scarcely know how enough to value and circulate. But I shall never forget, that the great and good Dr. Watts said, in his last illness, "I find that those plain, simple truths of the Gospel, which I have been accustomed to inculcate on the humblest and most ignorant of my fellow men, are now the comfort and support of my own soul." May you and I, my dear Friend, in our closing scenes, which cannot be far distant, when all creature comforts must and will fail, find it thus! May we then find, to our unspeakable joy, that He who expired on the cross can and will, through the consolation of the Eternal Spirit, support our pardoned and sanctified spirits!

'For myself, I have now nearly completed my seventy-eighth year. I feel that my race is almost run, and that I shall soon "put off this tabernacle." But "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." May this consolation abound in you, beloved and honored Sir, more and more, and in me also, unworthy as I am! And may we be so happy as to spend a blessed eternity together in the presence and enjoyment of him who "loved us and gave himself for us."

'So wishes and prays your

'Sincere friend,

'The Honorable James Kent.

Sam'l Miller.'

After Chancellor Kent's death, his son, William Kent, Esquire, since also deceased, requested to see his father's

letter of the 6th of September, 1847, which he subsequently returned, with the following communication:—

‘My dear Sir,

‘I am exceedingly obliged to you for my father’s letter. I have copied it, and now return it to you with a copy made by one of my clerks.

‘This letter of my father is exceedingly affecting to me. You perceive in it, that he supposed he was getting better. We all knew that his death was near. He wrote the letter in one of the delusive intervals of his cruel pains, when he was almost too weak to hold the pen; and you may observe, that there is not in this letter the usual accuracy of his writing. But his mind was clear. It remained serene and undisturbed almost to the moment of death. It is one of the sweetest recollections which his children retain of him, that his beautiful intellect was never clouded nor weakened during his long life. Neither was his heart changed. It was full of sensibility and tenderness till he departed.

‘The discussions, to which I alluded in my last letter, were caused by some ill-judged attempts to claim my father as having become a convert to the Episcopal Church. I am myself a regular attendant on the services of that Church; but it would have given me vastly more pain than pleasure, had my father become alien in sentiment to the religious education of his youth, and the opinions and feelings of his middle life. This, I knew, he never had become. One of the most interesting conversations, I ever had with him, was on the subject of religion, on the eve of my departure for Europe in May, 1845. His opinions then expressed were the same as those set forth in his letter to you.

‘Let me not be unjust to the Episcopal Church. My father admired its liturgy, and, during the last ten years of his life, his deafness having become so great as to render it impossible to hear a word from the preacher’s lips, he derived great comfort and joy from the prayers of our Church.

‘But he was a thorough Protestant in feeling, and always continued attached to the Church in which he was educated.

‘Allow me to add, that you stood *very high* in his regard. I have heard him so often speak of you, that I seem no stranger to you. There could be no more unequivocal testimony of his affection and esteem, than the letter of September, written with a hand trembling and nerves thrilling at the approach of death.

‘The respect which my father felt has descended to me as

an inheritance. With thanks for your ready answer, and with my fervent hope that you may long remain a shining and living light in the glorious Church of which you are a minister, I remain,

‘Your friend and servant,  
 ‘The Rev’d Samuel Miller, D.D.                      William Kent.’

During the summer vacation of 1847, Dr. Miller attempted two excursions—the first to the Catskill Mountain House, where he remained only twenty-four hours, and the second to Long Branch, where he was able to stay but two or three days. In both cases threatened illness admonished him to return home speedily. Almost the whole vacation long, and for several weeks of the opening session, he was distressingly feeble. On the 21st of September, he writes to his son,

‘My bodily complaints and consequent debility have continued to distress me, and, in a great measure, to confine me to the house. Though the Seminary has been in session more than three weeks, I have been too feeble to go near the public edifice, or to say a word to the students. Indeed, it is three weeks since I attended public worship. In short, I have been miserably out of health for three months. I am now, however, by God’s blessing, I think, convalescent, have ridden and walked out several times, and I hope to be able to go to the Seminary, and attempt to do something there, in a week or ten days.’

In the same letter, he says, ‘The picture you give of your horse delights me. Oh that I could find such an one in Princeton! It is more than a year since I mounted one of these animals, and I feel the want of my favorite exercise. But I know not that your dear mother and —— would allow me, in my old age, again to mount a horse, after hearing of so many accidents to aged people from the capers or falling of horses supposed to be perfectly safe. If the Duke of Wellington cannot get a safe one, they think there is little chance for me.’

But, as the fall advanced, Dr. Miller’s health improved, and on the 13th of October he writes to his daughter,

‘We have enjoyed comfortable health since you left us. My strength and comfort are daily increasing. I tell your dear mother, that since we have been left alone, I have quite *taken to her*. We have gotten along surprisingly well. B—— does admirably for one so raw as she is. She is active, and very obliging and good tempered.’

To the end of life, Dr. Miller was ever ready to enter, with interest, into the projects and labors of his younger brethren, and to give them any practicable aid, by his pen or otherwise, in the prosecution of their plans. The following extracts are from a letter which he addressed to the Rev'd Septimus Tustin,<sup>1</sup> on the 26th of September, in answer to a request for help in preparing a popular lecture on "Spectral Illusions"—particularly for his explanation of the strange phenomena described in the life of Mr. Wesley; and for any additional illustrations of the subject which might occur to his mind. Says Dr. Tustin, 'It is alike creditable to his intelligence and his courtesy. In view of the circumstances under which it was written, as detailed by himself, it indicates not only the clearness of his head, but also the kindness of his heart.'

After copying from Southey's Life of Wesley the whole account, Dr. Miller added,

'You speak of the explanation of these phenomena. As far as I can gather from Mr. Southey's book, none was ever obtained. He does not intimate that the source of the singular sounds was brought to light. I never had any doubt, however, that the whole was occasioned by some mischievous person or persons, who were determined to frighten and perplex the family, and who were artful enough to keep their own secret.

'A case similar to that in Mr. Wesley's family, but less extended in its character, and of shorter continuance, occurred in the family of my son-in-law, the Rev'd Dr. John Breckinridge, in Philadelphia, about twelve or thirteen years ago. Noises unceasing, various and unaccountable, were heard day after day, and night after night, in different parts of the house. The whole family was astonished, perplexed and agitated; and so were the neighbors, after their attention had been called to the affair. But, at length, by an unexpected and most happy providence, it was ascertained that the whole was occasioned by an intelligent, artful and mischievous servant boy, who exerted all his talents for the sake of throwing the family into perplexity and alarm; and appeared to be unspeakably gratified by his success. For a number of days they had not known how to account for what they saw and heard, but by supposing that there was some supernatural agency in the case. \* \*'

From Washington College, Pennsylvania, Dr. Miller re-

<sup>1</sup> Since, D.D.

ceived in September the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws.

The following is from his diary:—

‘October 24, 1847. In the various records which I have made on the successive anniversaries of my *marriage*, I have spoken of my beloved wife in terms which may appear to some extravagant; but I am perfectly persuaded, that, if her whole character as a wife, and as a domestic manager, were known, just as it is, no one would consider me as transcending the strictest and most sober statement of facts in her case.

‘I. In the first place, she has a strong, discriminating, practical mind, admirably adapted to manage complicated affairs; to regulate and guide domestic concerns; to maintain authority over servants; to govern her household in a quiet, dignified, orderly manner; and to conduct all with an enlightened economy, adapted to make the most and best of the means committed to her disposal.

‘II. Her piety is as solid, profound, fervent, intelligent and scriptural as I have ever known. It is evidently the governing principle in all her ways. She is really better qualified than many ministers to instruct the inquiring, and to counsel the perplexed and anxious. Hundreds of times have I profited by her remarks on my sermons, and other public performances, more than by the remarks of any other human being. And when, to the eminent judiciousness of her observations, I add their fearless candor and honesty, no one will wonder at my prizing them highly.

‘III. Her knowledge of the world is peculiar, and greatly exceeds mine. She was in gay life when I married her, and had much better opportunities than her husband of becoming acquainted with the ways of the world, and the feelings and habits of society. Her superior knowledge and skill, in this respect, have availed me much on many interesting occasions, and have been the means of guiding me to decisions and courses of conduct more wise and respectable, than I should, without her, have ever reached.

‘IV. She has a degree of energy, and physical and moral courage, which on many important occasions have been an essential aid to me in the management of my affairs. I look back on some of those occasions with mingled feelings of wonder, delight and thankfulness. In a variety of domestic and other concerns, she has been enabled to meet and overcome difficulties, and to accomplish that, which I never could have overcome, or accomplished.

‘V. Her whole influence has been cast into the scale of plai

and simple living, ever since a short time after we were married. Not long after our union, before she became pious, she proposed to purchase some expensive and showy articles of furniture. This proposal was then resisted, and she readily acquiesced. But after she became decidedly pious, her whole taste and judgment seemed to undergo an entire revolution, in regard to this as well as other matters. From that hour, plainness, simplicity and enlightened economy seemed to be her governing principle in every thing. Costly and ostentatious living seemed to be her aversion. All her counsels and all her efforts seemed to be supremely directed to the maintenance of that moderation, in every personal and domestic indulgence, which the spirit of the religion of Christ evidently inculcates, and which left her at liberty to consecrate a larger portion of her means to the Redeemer's kingdom.

‘In short, every year since our marriage, she has appeared to me to be growing in grace as a Christian; in prudence in the management of our domestic affairs; and in enlightened economy, and, at the same time, increasing liberality to the poor; ever devising liberal things for the indigent and distressed; denying herself; assisting her husband by her counsels and her prayers; contributing every hour to his comfort and his reputation, without laying the least claim to credit for it; and doing more for the welfare and true honor of the family, than any other individual on earth. \* \*

‘October 31, 1847. \* \* I am this day *seventy-eight* years old. \* \* For the last five months my health has been frail and distressingly impaired; insomuch that all my excursions to different places, for the restoration of strength, seemed to be altogether vain, and even injurious. The session in the Seminary commenced on the 28th of August; but for the first five weeks of its continuance, I was in a great measure confined to the house, and wholly unable to take any part in public instruction. Through the goodness of God, I am now much better; but still so weak and so unfit for official duty, that I have come to the resolution to resign my office, and to send in a communication to that amount, to the Board of Directors, at a special meeting of that body appointed to take place on Wednesday of next week.

‘This was the first time that I had ever been absent, at the opening of a session, since my connection with the Seminary. This fact alone surely calls for devout and humble thanksgivings, in which it is one object of this day humbly and gratefully to engage. \* \* As my whole family, on both father's and mother's side, have manifested a tendency to pulmonary weak-

ness and disease, I was apprehensive, from an early period of my life, that my course would be terminated by that disease, and would be short; especially as my lungs appeared, from the commencement of my ministry, to be the weakest in the family. It appears, however, that abundant public speaking, not only did not, in the end, morbidly affect my chest, but rather helped and strengthened it. While resident in the city of New York, I was much incommoded and afflicted with hoarseness and pulmonary debility. But, on coming to Princeton, where I was removed further from the sea air, but had twice or three times as much public use to make of my lungs, I became stronger, spoke with more ease, and observed a growing power of lungs; so that at my present advanced period of life, I can make myself heard, in the largest house, with far more ease than thirty years ago. \* \*

‘May not those who inherit weakness of the chest, and who apprehend danger from pulmonary disease, be benefited by my example? I apprehend that nothing is more adapted to strengthen the lungs, than well conducted and cautiously guarded, but habitual and abundant use of them. Let them be exercised every day, in singing, reading aloud, declaiming; and like a limb constantly used, they will daily become stronger.’

Dr. Miller now addressed the Board of Directors of the Seminary in a more decisive tone than before. After a few preliminary words, he said,

‘Having now entered on the seventy-ninth year of my age and being conscious of labouring under many of the infirmities which usually attend on that advanced period of life, I have deliberately come to the conclusion, that the best interests of the Seminary, as well as my own health and comfort, render it expedient that I should, as soon as circumstances will allow, withdraw from the labors incumbent on me as an occupant of this office.

‘I therefore beg leave most respectfully to announce to the Board my resignation of the office which I hold in this institution. This resignation I wish to be considered as taking effect at the close of the present session, until which time it is my desire and purpose to attempt the discharge of my official duties, as far as health and strength may be given me.

‘In making this communication, I should do great injustice to my feelings, were I not respectfully and gratefully to acknowledge the uniform kindness with which I have been treated by the members of the Board, and by all with whom my office has brought me into connection. The degree in which the

manifestations of this kindness have encouraged and sustained me in my arduous labors it will not be easy for me to express or estimate.

I also feel constrained by a sense of duty, to record my hearty thanks to the great Head of the Church for the uniform and cordial harmony which has constantly subsisted between my revered colleagues and myself, in laboring together for the benefit of our beloved pupils. While each, as was proper, thought and acted for himself, I am not conscious that our harmony has ever been painfully interrupted, in any one instance, for a single hour. The influence of this precious fact, in promoting our personal comfort, as fellow-laborers, as well as in ministering to the best interests of the Seminary, is so obvious and important, that it cannot fail to be appreciated, and to excite the gratitude of every real friend of the institution. I could not reconcile it with my feelings to say less of my colleagues, my relation to whom will, in a few short weeks, be forever dissolved, and with whom I desire to bless God that I was ever connected.

‘While I thus announce my contemplated withdrawal from the responsibilities and the duties of an office which I have so long held, I shall never cease, while I live, to cherish the most earnest desires, and to offer fervent prayers, for the prosperity of an institution, which I persuade myself has been already extensively useful, and which I trust is destined to be a blessing to the Church of God for ages to come. May it continue to be a pure and abundant fountain of instruction in sound Biblical knowledge, in experimental, ardent piety, in pastoral diligence and fidelity, and in missionary zeal, until time shall be no longer! And may every member of the Board long enjoy that most precious of all consolations that can be experienced in this world—the consolation of seeing the work of the Lord prospering more and more in their hands!

‘I am, reverend and respected Brethren, with great regard,  
your brother and fellow-laborer in christian bonds,

‘Princeton, N. J.        }  
November 3, 1847.’ }

‘Sam’l Miller.

To his son he wrote on the 4th,

‘I yesterday presented to the Board of Directors of the Seminary, at a special meeting in this place, the resignation of my office as professor. To my very gratifying surprise, they refused to accept of it, and appointed a committee to wait on me and request me to withdraw it; assuring me, that whatever might be my infirmities, and my inability to discharge the du-



ties of my office, they wished me still to hold it—and all this in the most unanimous and affectionate manner.’

Dr. Miller accordingly withdrew, for the time, his resignation.

The Rev. Thomas L. Janeway,<sup>1</sup> a highly esteemed graduate of the Seminary, son of the venerable Dr. J. J. Janeway, wrote promptly and most kindly to his aged theological preceptor, expressing great pleasure at the withdrawal of his resignation, and a fond recollection of the privileges he had enjoyed in Princeton. In his reply, Dr. Miller said, on the 15th of November,

‘Your truly filial and affectionate letter of the 6th inst \* \* found me quite unwell. \* \*’

‘These interruptions of health and strength, by the frequent recurrences of nervous debility, were among the considerations which admonished me to withdraw from the office which I now occupy. I feel grateful to the Board of Directors for the kindly manner in which they disposed of my resignation. I commit myself to them in the Lord,—willing to labor on while I have strength, and to “die in harness.” God grant that as my day is so my strength may be! I have no desire to pass a day of idleness or self-indulgence; but I cannot bear the thought, that the interests of the Seminary should suffer on account of my infirmities. But the Lord, I trust, will provide, and order everything in mercy to his precious cause.

‘I thank you, my dear Brother, for the sentiments of kindness and respect with which your letter abounds. Be assured that everything of this kind is cordially reciprocated. May the Lord graciously preside over every department and step of your ministry, and make you and yours more and more a blessing to the Church and the world.’

<sup>1</sup> Now, D.D.

## CHAPTER FORTY-SECOND.

LABOUR AND SORROW.

1848, 1849.

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### 1. IN WEAKNESS, YET TOILING.

EVEN yet Dr. Miller enjoyed, at intervals, seasons of comfortable health; but these seasons were becoming evidently shorter, and were more and more frequently interrupted by turns of lingering indisposition, confining him to the house, and, with every renewed attack, evidently and permanently diminishing the force of the vital energies. He says in his diary,

‘January 1, 1848. \* \* Since last spring my health has been extremely feeble. During the greater part of the summer, I was so unwell as to fear the entire and final loss of health. My efforts in travelling, and other means for regaining it, seemed to be in vain. But, by the blessing of God, as the cool weather came on, I became better; and when severe frost occurred, it was mercifully made effectual for my restoration, in a great measure, to my usual health; so that the opening year, by the favor of a kind Providence, finds me in the possession of health nearly as good and comfortable as I have enjoyed for several years past. “Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me bless his holy name.”’

This year through, he was able to discharge most of his official duties in the Seminary, though not unfrequently complaining of the languor and gradual decay of old age, and excusing himself, therefore, from various extra undertakings. His labours at the desk, however, were still continued: he was indefatigable in writing, whenever he enjoyed any tolerable degree of bodily comfort.

The Synod of Albany having condemned promiscuous

dancing, one *Clericus*, as he signed himself, addressed to that body a letter, in a printed pamphlet, severely censuring their action, as going beyond the Word of God. Subsequently, the same writer continued his defence of dancing in the Presbyterian. In the latter, briefly, in the month of February, 1848, Dr. Miller expressed his deep regret, that a Presbyterian clergyman should defend, what the early Christian fathers, the Waldenses and other "witnesses" for the truth, the Church of Scotland, the Westminster divines, and consistent, devoted Presbyterians, always and everywhere, had condemned.

To the Rev. Ansley D. White, settled at Trenton, Dr. Miller wrote on the 4th of September, 1848,

'After the observation and experience of a long life, I have come decisively to the conclusion, that, if I had my life to live over again, I would pay ten times as much attention to the children of my charge, as I ever did when I had a pastoral charge. If I were now about to undertake the care of a new or feeble church, I should consider special attention to the children and young people of the neighborhood as one of the most certain and effectual methods of collecting and strengthening a large flock that, humanly speaking, could possibly be employed.'

In September, he wrote a long letter of reminiscences of Dr. Green, for his biographer, the Rev. Dr. Joseph H. Jones.<sup>1</sup> "In a private note," writes Dr. Jones, "which accompanied the contribution, he speaks of its "failing to come up to what he had hoped to make it;" but with characteristic humility he adds, that "such as it is, you must receive it as the affectionate tribute of an aged man who, amidst all his infirmities and official cares and burdens, has done what he could." "<sup>2</sup>

This letter was a most hearty and generous tribute to the memory of a life-long friend. For extracts of any length, there is no room here; but the account given of Dr. Green's participation in the establishment of the Theological Seminary at Princeton, it may be well to reproduce, as a specimen of the whole.

"In planning and establishing the Theological Seminary in this place, he took, as on every other great occasion, a leading part. He labored indefatigably to pave the way for its estab-

<sup>1</sup> Life of Dr. Green, 523-540.

<sup>2</sup> Id. 523.

lishment. He was the penman of its constitution. When it was organized, he was made the first President of its Board of Directors. He made a liberal donation of land by purchase, in addition to that made by the Hon. Richard Stockton, for the location of its public buildings. He was one of the most liberal contributors to the formation of its library, and might be said more than any other individual, to have been the father of the institution; for which he delighted to contrive, to labour and to pray, as long as he lived."<sup>1</sup>

In his diary and correspondence, Dr. Miller often, towards the close of life, adverted to the harmony which had prevailed throughout the intercourse of the Seminary professors. On the 3d of December, 1848, the anniversary of his removal to Princeton, he writes on this subject,

‘When I came to Princeton, it was under a deep impression of the importance of harmony among those who were united in office in the same institution, and with a fixed and recorded resolution to have no quarrel or disagreement with any colleague whom the Lord might appoint me, if it should be possible to avoid it without a dereliction of truth or duty. But it has pleased a gracious God so to order my lot, that I have never been brought to this dilemma. All my colleagues have been men with whom it was easy, nay delightful, to work. I have never known any one of them, on any occasion, to manifest a disposition to raise a rival, a personal, or a selfish standard in our little camp; but on the contrary, a uniform desire to promote, by all the means in their power, the best interests of the Seminary, as a nursery of ardent piety, and of sound biblical and theological knowledge. I have no recollection of any one instance, in which any of them seemed for a moment to postpone these great interests to his own private or selfish aims. With such men it was, surely, not difficult for a right-minded man to co-operate in any and every duty. With such men who could quarrel, that was not himself unreasonable and criminal?’

## 2. THE LAST OF AUTHORSHIP.

Dr. Miller's last publication seems to have been completed for the press more than a year before he died: at least the Dedication “to the younger ministers, and candidates for the ministry, in the Presbyterian Church in the United States,” is dated, “October 31st, 1848”—his

<sup>1</sup> P. 529.

seventy-ninth birth day. It was entitled, "Thoughts on Public Prayer,"<sup>1</sup> and was issued by the Board of Publication, to which he made it a free gift. The subject had always been presented to the successive classes under his instruction in the Seminary, and such a work he had had in contemplation for several, perhaps many, years. It was therefore by no means altogether the product of the months of decline during which it was prepared for the press; and if, in comparison with previous works, it exhibits any diminution of vigour, it is in the style rather than in the matter.

Mr. (afterwards Bishop) Hobart, in his Apology, noticing the plea that other denominations offered "greater edification" and "purer administrations" than the Episcopal, remarks, "The admission of this plea would exalt *preaching* above public worship, and those other *ordinances* which are the "signs and seals of the covenant of grace." Such an admission, therefore, would be contrary to the principles of the Presbyterian Church; for she justly and wisely declares, "One *primary* design of public ordinances is to pay *social acts of homage* to the Most High God." "Sermons ought not to be so long as to interfere with the more *important* duties of *prayer and praise*."<sup>2</sup> It is obvious that the latter clause alone affords the least countenance to such a view of Presbyterian principles; and this, only according to an interpretation which certainly cannot be correct, although not inconsistent with the construction of the sentence. No doubt the meaning of the Directory is, that some of the "duties of prayer and praise" are more important than others; and not that all of them are more important than preaching. We have already noticed Dr. Miller's connexion with the revisal of this part of our standards; and the work now before us proves conclusively, that his understanding of the passage referred to was not Mr. Hobart's. A short quotation will demonstrate this.

"The Romanists, overrating the importance of external rites and ceremonies, and laying undue stress on their Missals and Breviaries, have confidently taught that their liturgical performances were far more important than public preaching; and, of course,

<sup>1</sup> "Thoughts on Public Prayer. By Samuel Miller, D.D., LL.D., Professor in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey. Philadelphia: 1849."—12mo. Pp. 306.

<sup>2</sup> Apology, (Ed. 1843,) 102, 103. Directory for Worship VI, 4.

that the latter might be much more safely dispensed with than the former. \* \* With a view to justify this estimate, it has been said, by those who take this ground, that in *Prayer* we speak directly to God, and implore his blessing; whereas, in *Preaching*, we listen to the speculations of men exhibiting to us their own opinions of truth and duty. They judge, therefore, that if it be necessary or convenient to discontinue either, it is much the less evil to discontinue preaching. And in this judgment some who call themselves Protestants, but who too much resemble Romanists, seem disposed to concur. They deem and pronounce the service of the "Reading Desk" of far more value, as a means of grace, than the discourses which proceed from the pulpit.

"This is, doubtless, a deeply erroneous judgment. Nothing can be more evident than that, in the New Testament history, public preaching makes a much more prominent and important figure, as an instrument for converting the world and edifying the Church, than public prayer; for it has pleased God, in all ages, eminently "by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Nay, more than this, the very statement of our opponents in this argument may be turned against themselves; for if, in prayer, we always *speak to God*, in the way of his own appointment; in preaching, *God speaks to us* by his commissioned servant, if that servant preaches the preaching which the Master bids him. And which is the more serious and solemn employment—our speaking to God, and imploring his favour, or God's speaking to us, and communicating his will, either in the language of instruction, of threatening, or of promise?"<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Miller frequently recommended devotional composition to others, and he continued it himself to the end of life. Among his Princeton manuscripts are found many specimens of precomposed prayers. The occasion on which each was used is generally noted. Here is one headed 'Funeral of R. Stockton, Esquire, March 9th, 1828'; another, 'Commencement, September 29th, 1830.' He evidently sometimes made such preparation with only the expectation of possibly being called upon. Here is a prayer marked, 'not used'; here another, headed, 'Dr. Carnahan's Baccalaureate Sermon, September 21st, 1823. Did not make the prayer. Mr. Woodhull was afterwards applied to, and officiated.' This habit of laborious precom-

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 12, 13, 14.

position not only rendered Dr. Miller's specially prepared prayers more appropriate and impressive, but also manifested clearly its benefits in his extemporaneous efforts.

One of his grandchildren, Margaret E. Breckinridge, since deceased, in throwing together a few reminiscences for this work, wrote,

'I remember being much impressed by what occurred in the Seminary chapel, one of the last times, I think, that he preached there. He was then very infirm, and, when he rose to offer the second prayer, seemed unusually feeble. Many events of importance were taking place at that time, in both the church and the world, and in regard to each he made special prayer. The most affecting part was that in which he mentioned the Pope, who was then in Gaeta, and in much danger. His supplication for him was so tender, so compassionate, and yet so earnest and faithful in its recognition of him as "the Man of Sin," as he called him, that all present were moved. I never have heard from any one else so striking a prayer.'

Chief Justice Andrew Kirkpatrick and his excellent lady were, for many years, Dr. Miller's kind entertainers in New Brunswick, whenever his duties called him thither; and he appreciated most feelingly their friendship, and their unaffected and delightful hospitality. A member of the family has kindly assured the writer, that Dr. Miller's occasional visits were always looked for with great pleasure, and by none more than by the children. Certain it is, that few of his intimate friends held as exalted a place in his esteem and affection, as the Chief Justice and his interesting family. On both sides, these feelings seem to have ripened and gathered strength with the continuance of social and official intercourse. The Chief Justice and his household long remembered a prayer which Dr. Miller offered at their family worship, during a session of presbytery, when a minister of the gospel had been arraigned before his brethren for very serious delinquencies. The appropriateness and fervor of the prayer made it a subject of remark at the time; and even the words, 'unutterably vile,' by which the offence charged was characterized, have lingered ever since with their earnest, impressive tone, in the recollection of at least the respected reminiscents mentioned.

None were more opposed to empty form, none more observant of outward, as well as inward reverence, than

Dr. and Mrs. Miller. They both earnestly reprobated the growing habit of self-indulgence in God's house, which has so generally resulted, throughout the Presbyterian church, in the adoption of a sitting instead of a standing posture in prayer. Even in extreme old age, they put to shame by unweariedly standing, many a strong young person, who would not bear the fatigue of such reverence.

With his work on Public Prayer, Dr. Miller's career of authorship, extending through about fifty-five years, terminated."<sup>1</sup> Here may be added a few testimonies, omitted elsewhere, to his character as a writer; closely connected with which are allusions to other points, which there is no reason, however, for omitting.

"It is impossible to give an adequate estimate of the amount of service rendered to the church and country during his long and useful public life, through the pulpit, the press, and the professor's chair. By his writings, and by his instructions, he became, perhaps more than any other man, the recognized authority of the Presbyterian Church in all matters relating to her polity and order. His views and opinions, on these and kindred topics, have had an influence in the Presbyterian Church as widely extended as it has been conservative and beneficial. He is probably our most voluminous author; while all his writings have been eminently judicious and practical. \* \* They are among the standard classics of Presbyterianism. \* \*

"Whether regarded as a preacher or a teacher, he was a great and good man—preëminently great in his goodness. And in his day he did a great work for God and the Church. It was fortunate for the Presbyterian Church that God gave her two such men as Drs. Alexander and Miller, to lay the foundations of her first Theological Seminary, and to be the patterns of all subsequent theological instructors. Each was distinct in his peculiar sphere and order. So distinct, so peculiar, so eminently fitted was each to his work, that the hundreds of students taught by them were constrained to feel

<sup>1</sup> Besides the works already particularly mentioned, Dr. Miller had published many fugitive pieces, a large number of which, doubtless, have not come to the knowledge of the biographer, though some, of which he knew, have not been mentioned. Here, a simple list of a few of the latter may be given:—An Introductory Essay" to "The Articles of the Synod of Dort," issued by The Board of Publication:—An Introduction to Harvey's History of Popery:—An Introduction to Agnew on the Sabbath:—A Recommending Letter to the Publishers of Jean Paul Perrin's History of the Waldenses:—Tract 167 of The Board of Publication:—"Church Attachment and Sectarianism":—Two Tracts of the American Tract Society:—130—"Theatrical Exhibitions:" 361—"Atoning Blood."



that there was but one Archibald Alexander, and but one Samuel Miller in the world."<sup>1</sup>

"To say that in \* \* his works Dr. Miller has shown himself an accomplished champion of the system of faith and order imbodyed in our Standards, would be only to give utterance to the verdict which has long since been passed upon his writings, by the general voice of all who receive the Westminster Confession and the Presbyterian Form of Government. His works are a repository to which, next to the Bible, the intelligent youth in our Bible-classes, our heads of families, our Ruling Elders, our candidates for the ministry, and very many of our ministers, naturally repair when they would inform themselves as to the distinctive peculiarities of our system, and the authority on which it reposes. The library of no Presbyterian family can be regarded as complete without them. His tract, entitled "Presbyterianism the truly Primitive and Apostolical Constitution of the Church of Christ," should be read and re-read by every individual who worships with a Presbyterian congregation; and parents should see that it is placed betimes in the hands of their children. There is nothing extant which exhibits, in a concise form, so accurate and satisfactory a view of Presbyterianism in its history, doctrines, government, and worship. Nor is there any publication of the same compass, so well adapted to gratify the curiosity of persons of other communions, who would know what our system is; or to rebuke and correct the calumnies of those who misrepresent it."<sup>2</sup>

"Dr. Miller accomplished much by his labours as an author. His publications are numerous, and relate to a great variety of subjects, showing that he was a vigorous student, and that his mind took a wide range. His first work of any considerable extent, was a "*Retrospect of the Eighteenth Century*," written in quite the early part of his ministry: it acquired for him great reputation not only on this side of the water but in Great Britain; and it is not invidious to say, even at this day, that it is on some accounts, among the most valuable contributions to History of which our country can boast. Several of his works were controversial; at least were designed to defend what he regarded as important truth: they are all perspicuous, logical and well considered, and have a high rank among the ablest works on the subjects of which they treat. Two or three of his larger productions are biographical, commemorating faithfully

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Halsey in N. W. Presbyterian, 22d August, 1868.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Boardman's Tribute, 31, 32.

and beautifully some of the illustrious dead to whom he had been intimately allied and specially endeared. His work on the "Eldership" is in great and general repute, at least throughout his own denomination; and I have no less authority than that of Dr. Chalmers for saying that it is the very best work that has been given to the church on that subject. He published a large number of occasional discourses which are worthy of a more permanent existence than, I fear, from the form in which they have appeared, they are likely to have. I think it will be generally conceded that few, if any, of his contemporaries in the American church, have done so much by the pen to perpetuate their influence as himself; and if a list were to be made out of a very small number of our writers who are most known and most respected abroad, his name would undoubtedly have a prominent place among them."<sup>1</sup>

"Although the public has reason to expect a memoir of this venerable servant of Christ, we cannot refrain, at this point, from adding something to what we have already said concerning his character. His excellencies were admitted widely in the Church, for he was known throughout our own country and in foreign lands. His publications were numerous, and were to a large extent vindications of the doctrines and polity of the church which he loved. No Presbyterian is ignorant of the promptitude, courage and address with which he came forward on more than one occasion, when what he deemed important truth was assailed. As a writer, he was remarkable for the purity and perspicuity of his style, and the absence of all meretricious ornament. He was a great reader, and was accustomed to enrich his works with numerous and apt citations from other authors. As an instructor, he was laborious, full and lucid. For six and thirty years he occupied the chair of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government, with a respect from all concerned which augmented with his age."<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Miller, while a correct and careful writer, cultivated no special exactness, or uniformity, orthographical or rhetorical. Between new and old styles his spelling often varied. If he followed Walker, in this respect, more frequently than Webster, it was from habit rather than a hyper-classical taste. As to orthoepy, he was somewhat particular; and even when, at a family meal, a sound struck his ear unfavourably, or any word-question was proposed,

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Sprague's Disc. Commem., 28-30.

<sup>2</sup> Life of Dr. Alexander, 577.

he often rose from the table, to consult a dictionary at once, lest the matter should be forgotten; and, doubtless, this correction of errors and settlement of right usage upon the spot, and in detail, was, for his children, a constantly cultivating process. Now and then, he fell, for the nonce, into that manner of semi-ritualistic typographical reverence, which is coming now-a-days more and more into vogue—the use of capitals, at the beginning not only of the names of Deity, but also of every personal pronoun standing for the Divine Being. This, however, was but an occasional vagary. He was no purist in any respect, and delighted in no literary fopperies.

His handwriting was rapidly executed, bold and clear. He composed with the pen with considerable celerity and ease, always standing at a desk of convenient height, and, when his thoughts flagged, pacing his study floor, to quicken them by gentle bodily motion. This habit helped to maintain his erect carriage and physical buoyancy.

### 3. DIARY AND CORRESPONDENCE.

One happy result of Dr. Miller's continuing to the latest possible moment, his labour with the pen and in the professor's chair—his accustomed exercise also out of doors—was the preservation of his mental faculties in wonderful vigour to the last. These became sluggish somewhat at times, but never otherwise sensibly impaired.

The following is from his diary,

'January 1, 1849. \* \* Among the many mercies, during the past year, which I have to recount and acknowledge, is the enjoyment of better health than during the year previous. I have been enabled to accomplish much more official duty within the last twelve months, than in the preceding twelve; to write more and to labor more in public. Particularly, I would here record my thanksgiving, that I have been enabled to complete for the press my "Thoughts on Public Prayer," and to correct all the proof-sheets, before the arrival of this day.'

To one of his sons Dr. Miller wrote on the 3d of January,

'I am still very weak, and can write but little. We are, by the good Providence of God, all well excepting myself. I never had so severe an attack of influenza. It has left me, in

my eightieth year, very much debilitated, indeed, and rising very slowly.'

At the request of an association in one of the Presbyterian churches of Cincinnati, called a "Society of Inquiry," Dr. Miller wrote a long letter of counsel and encouragement, which the Society published in a small pamphlet. This bore date of the 24th of January, 1849.

The letter from which an extract will next be given, was written in acknowledgment of a bag of clothing sent, by an association of ladies, for indigent students in the Seminary, and in reply to a question which the letter itself, bearing date of the 14th of February, 1849, sufficiently discloses.

'I am so little acquainted with the members of the churches in ——, that I feel diffident about giving advice, or even making suggestions as to what ought to be done to obtain their patronage to the institutions of our own church. On the whole, I am persuaded that nothing ought to be said or done, that looks like attempting to force any to act contrary to their convictions of duty. The present pastor of the First Church I do not remember ever to have seen; but I have heard accounts of him which prepare me to love and esteem him very much. His father was my beloved and venerated friend, for whom I entertained a peculiar affection; and I feel, of course, an attachment for, and an interest in, all his descendants. I should by no means be surprised if he should prefer Auburn to Princeton, and be disposed to throw his influence in that direction. Nor should I ever think of complaining of this. But there are, doubtless, some of both churches, who would prefer devoting their contributions to our own institutions. If I were to give any advice, it would be, that those who feel so should understand each other, and quietly, and without casting any reproach upon their neighbors, reserve their bounty for their own seminary and missionary boards. Ten or twelve years ago, there were a few individuals even in this seminary, among the students, who preferred giving their contributions to the American Board and to the Home Missionary Society, rather than to our own boards. The Professors did not attempt to coerce these; but, when the students attended the Monthly Concert, in their own place of worship, all that preferred other boards to our own were allowed to throw in their mites folded up and marked for the object which was preferred. This was done quietly, and without controversy or offence; and worked so well, that after a

short time, all came into the plan of patronizing none but our own institutions; so that for seven or eight years past, they have been unanimous in favour of the latter. I have known some congregations to adopt the same quiet, amicable practice; and, in almost every case, it led to gradual, but, finally, entire unanimity, in favour of our own boards. I think, if you were to manage thus in ——, it would put an end to all controversy on this subject, and perhaps lead to a similar ultimate unanimity.’

#### 4. THE AGED COLLEAGUES.

The following extracts are from a letter of the 28th of February, to the Rev. Dr. Henry A. Boardman.

‘Do you know that I have never laid eyes on you since your return from Europe; and that this letter is the first “scrape of a pen” from your hand that I have seen for more than two years? You will not wonder then that it was welcome.

‘I thank you, my dear Brother, for the kind expressions which you employ on the prospect of my retiring from office. I am, indeed, nearly *worn out*. Far advanced in my eightieth year, I have outlived all my relatives, and all my own expectations, and am compassed about with so many infirmities, that I am persuaded a longer continuance in office would be in no respect just either to the Seminary or myself. Yet in looking forward to retirement from official labour, and especially to that day, which is near at hand, when I must “put off this tabernacle,” I desire to bless God for the humble hope which I am permitted to entertain, that I have so good a home to go to, where there will be no more infirmity, and especially no more sin; but perfect union and conformity to him, who, though he was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich.

‘I desire to unite with you, my dear Brother, in thanksgiving to the great Head of the Church, that our beloved Seminary has been made so useful to our Zion, by training so large a portion of our ministry, under the same Teachers; and I hope I have some sincere gratitude, that I have been permitted to occupy a place, and take some humble part in this hallowed work. But I can truly say that the sentiment which most strongly and prominently occupies my mind, is that of thankfulness that the Lord has been pleased to unite me with Colleagues so wise, so faithful, so much superior to myself, and so eminently adapted to be a blessing to the Church. I consider it as one of the greatest blessings of my life to be united with

such men, and pre-eminently with my senior Colleague, whose wisdom, prudence, learning and peculiar piety, have served as an aid and guide to myself, as well as to others. I desire to leave it on record for the eye of intimate friendship, that, in my own estimation, my union with these beloved men has been the means of adding to my own respectability, and my own usefulness far more than I could ever, humanly speaking, have attained, either alone, or in association with almost any other men. I desire especially to be thankful that I ever saw the face of my venerated senior Colleague. He has been, for thirty-six years, to me, a counsellor, a guide, a prop, and a stay, under God, to a degree, which it would not be easy for me to estimate or acknowledge.

‘The union in our faculty has been complete. And the solid basis of the whole, has been a perfect agreement, on the part of all of us, in an *honest subscription* to our *doctrinal formulae*. There has been no discrepance—no pulling in different directions here.

‘I am glad you approve of the little volume which I have lately published. I did think it was needed; and I trust it will not be useless.’

In a note of the 30th of May, 1850, forwarding this letter to one of Dr. Miller’s sons, Dr. Boardman kindly remarked,

‘I send herewith a letter of your honored father’s, which, I am persuaded, will be read by his family with peculiar interest. It would be quite superfluous for me to attempt to characterize it; but I cannot refrain from saying, that I have never seen a more beautiful and impressive exhibition of the spirit of true Christian humility than that which is here presented. We felt assured, (my family and myself,) on receiving this letter—if, indeed, we had needed any fresh assurance—that grace had well-nigh perfected its work with the venerable patriarch, and that he must be very near his crown.’

The larger part of the letter thus referred to appears in the *Life of Dr. Alexander*,<sup>1</sup> whose biographer says, “It has a pathos which will go to many a heart.”

The same biographer, after speaking of the strong contrasts, which his character and habits and those of Dr. Miller exhibited in several respects, goes on to observe,

“With such marked differences, it is certainly no slight

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 582-584.

matter to record, that during a lifetime of common service, these two men never had an alienation, or the difference of an hour. In opinion they frequently diverged; yet mutual respect and affection were never violated, but rather increased with every year of their lives. Placed in circumstances which might have engendered rivalry, they appeared to rejoice in each other's gifts and success. From the beginning of their acquaintanceship, Dr. Miller always resorted to his younger colleague as his wisest adviser. He admired his learning, testified the profoundest reverence for his judgment and piety, coveted his company, and unfeignedly delighted in his ministrations. On the other hand, Dr. Alexander regarded his friend and brother with the heartiest affection. Again and again has he been heard to say, that for the charitable use of his means, for adherence to his rules of self-control, and especially for exemption from all traces of vanity and of envy, Dr. Miller surpassed all men he had ever known. He was fond of saying, that after more than thirty years' proximity, he had never detected in his colleague the slightest appearance of jealousy. This was the more remarkable, as it is well-known that with all his varied excellencies, Dr. Miller, as a preacher, was less followed by popular admiration than his friend."

"\* \* as years rolled on, and old age arrived, the concord and affection of these servants of Christ presented a beautiful and edifying spectacle. They conversed together and prayed together; and as their hoary heads appeared, with a punctuality belonging to both, in the devotional and other more public services of the Seminary, the moral influence of the sight upon their numerous and respectful pupils was happy and indelible."<sup>1</sup>

What, in the foregoing extract, the biographer alleges concerning Dr. Miller's high appreciation of his honored colleague's talents, learning, judgment, piety and power in the pulpit, those who were most intimately acquainted with the former can not only endorse, but even reiterate in much stronger terms. Dr. Miller regarded Dr. Alexander as pre-eminent in spiritual experience, discernment and skill; as a singularly gifted preacher; as a truly wonderful man in native vigor of mind, and varied erudition; as indeed far beyond all thought of competition in these respects.

Of Dr. Alexander's last years, his biographer remarks,

"At no time did he carry more weight among his attached

<sup>1</sup> Life of Dr. Alexander, 382, 383.

pupils than in these years of venerable decline. \* \* \* It was a touching sight to behold the forms of himself and his aged colleague on those occasions when they appeared together at the head of their students. Many an observer was prompted to exclaim, "The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness!"<sup>1</sup>

The following paragraphs appeared in *The Presbyterian* after Dr. Miller's death.

"DR. MILLER'S VIEWS OF "BEGGING."—As a member of the Board of Managers of the Missionary, Bible, Tract, and Education Society of the Theological Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey, in the spring of 1849, I called upon the venerable Dr. Miller, to solicit his annual contribution to one of the objects of its care. As soon as he knew the purpose for which I came, he said, "Certainly, Mr. L——, I will contribute, for I esteem it a great privilege, as well as an important duty; and I am greatly obliged to *you* (!) for that kind attention which enables me to do it at home."

"He seemed as much gratified as if I had been the bearer of a costly present.

"In what bold contrast does this language and conduct stand with that of those professing Christians, who are ever complaining of being "dogged by agents" to give without trouble or expense, "at home," what they owe to God! J. K. L."

##### 5. RESIGNATION.

On the 20th of March, Dr. Miller again offered his resignation to the Board of Directors of the Seminary, to take effect at the close of the session in May. Referring to his previous communication of the 3d of November, 1847, he said,

'You were pleased to request me to withdraw that resignation, and to continue my labours awhile longer. To this proposal, made so much in the spirit of respectful kindness, I was prevailed upon to accede. But I am now persuaded that any further delay in urging this resignation, would be, on my part, altogether unwise. In saying this, my first wish, and that which is most strongly dictated by a sense of infirmity, is to be entirely and finally released from all stated labour in the Seminary. But, if, in the opinion of the Board of Directors, any consideration, either of convenience or usefulness, should lead them to believe, that my continuing to lecture occasionally, as

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Dr. Alexander*, 574, 575.



my health and strength may allow, on Church Government and Sermonizing, would be in any respect desirable, I shall certainly not decline to do all that the providence of God may render practicable, to serve an institution in which I have passed the happiest years of my life, and to the guardians of which I feel so deep an obligation.'

To the Rev. Dr. Dana, of Newburyport, Dr. Miller wrote on the 22d of March,

'I hope, my reverend and venerated Brother, that your health and comfort, in your advanced life, are happily maintained. I am far advanced in my eightieth year, and am encompassed with many of the infirmities which attend that period of life. I gave in, the day before yesterday, the resignation of my office to our Board of Directors; but they declined accepting it, appointed a brother to take a part of my labor off my hands, and requested me to continue in office. They certainly have treated me with most fraternal kindness; but I shall not be able, in all probability, to labor much longer.'

To one of his sons he wrote four days later,

'I presented the resignation of my office to the Board of Directors of the Seminary on the 20th instant. They again refused to accept of it, but appointed Dr. J. A. Alexander to take the department of Ecclesiastical History off my hands, and authorized the Faculty again to employ a teacher in Hebrew. I, of course, remain in my place until the providence of God removes me. But, in the meantime, as I am relieved of one-third of my labor, I shall probably deem it good policy, and even a duty, to give up one-third of my present salary. However generous the Board may be as to this point, I am persuaded that public opinion will demand something like this at my hands.

'\* \* But all this may be undone by the General Assembly. \* \* with that body is the ultimate action in the case.'

Dr. Miller had previously, for a year or more, satisfied his views of propriety, by contributing a considerable portion of his salary to the support of the institution. From this time he regularly paid back one-half of it to the Treasurer.

The General Assembly adopted the following minute:—

"1. *Resolved*, That the Assembly unite with the Board of Directors in expressions of thankfulness to God, that he has spared the life and health of the venerable Professor of Eccle-

siastical History and Church Government for so many years, and that our beloved Church has enjoyed the benefit of his valued instructions and labours from the infancy of the Seminary to this time.

“2. *Resolved*, That the Assembly unite with the Board in recording their grateful sense of the manifold faithful and most important services which the venerable Professor has rendered to our Church, and to the cause of truth and righteousness, and they beg to assure him of their cordial sympathy in the bodily infirmities which have led him to seek a release from the duties of his office.

“3. *Resolved*, That the Rev. Samuel Miller, D.D., be and hereby is entirely released from all obligation to give instruction in each and all of the departments of his professorship.

“4. *Resolved*, That Dr. Miller be requested to give such instructions and perform such services as on consultation with his fellow professors may be convenient and agreeable to himself.

“5. *Resolved*, That the Rev. Samuel Miller, D.D., shall continue to enjoy intact the salary and all the other rights of his professorship, during his natural life, under the title of Emeritus Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government.”<sup>1</sup>

The foregoing resolutions were in accordance with the views of the Board of Directors, who, meanwhile, had reconsidered their refusal to accept the resignation, and in kindness determined that all the burdens of the professorship should be removed, without, however, any deduction from the salary; while Dr. Miller should be permitted to retain any portion that he preferred of his professorial duties. To the Rev. William S. Plumer, D.D., he wrote on the 8th of June,

‘I rejoice that you were permitted to go to Pittsburgh, and feel a deep sense of my debt to you for what was done there, and especially done so largely, under God, through your counsel and instrumentality.

‘The manner in which the General Assembly disposed of my resignation was not only kind, respectful and generous, but to me most unexpectedly and marvellously so. I certainly feel highly gratified and thankful for it all on my own account; but I think I do not deceive myself when I say, that I feel still more gratified and thankful, when I think of the honor the Church has done herself by such elevated and generous mea-

<sup>1</sup> Minutes 1849, p. 249.

tures. When I contrast it with some other things, I feel that it is honorable to me to be a minister of the Presbyterian Church. God grant that I may be enabled suitably to appropriate this honor, and to acquit myself accordingly.

‘For all your kind, affectionate remarks, for all your generous proposals, and for all your filial influences exerted in the Assembly in my behalf, I beg of you to accept my grateful acknowledgments. A deep sense of them will never be erased from my mind while I retain a memory.

‘But, my dear Brother, a grave question arises:—will public sentiment bear what has been done in my case? and will the low state of the Seminary treasury bear it? What will be thought of giving a man full wages who does not pretend to do full work; nay, who is not obliged to do any, or more than just what he pleases? I *could* live without any part of the salary voted to be continued to me; but in this case I must instantly lay aside many of the comforts which I now enjoy, and confine myself to a style of living painfully restricted. I am resolved to return into the Treasury a part of my salary. But how much will it be equitable and wise to return? And in what manner ought the thing to be done? I feel as if we were now setting precedents. I am not acting for myself alone. My present intention is to return just one-half, at each quarterly payment, into the Treasurer’s hands. Yet I have made no public promise to this amount; and as no one living has done more to secure this salary to me, so no one has a better right than yourself to offer an opinion how I ought to manage the business. If I could live in tolerable comfort without any part of the salary, I should doubt the delicacy and wisdom of declining to receive any of it, lest I might embarrass those who shall come after me.

‘May blessing rest upon you and yours in every thing; so prays your affectionate brother, etc.’

## 6. MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS.

Dr. Miller sent to the Rev. Dr. W. W. Phillips, a member of this Assembly, a formula of adult baptism, to be laid before the body. The latter, writing to him on the 1st of June, gave the following account of the action taken on this paper.

‘I also received the formula for administering baptism to adults, and, being one of the Committee of Bills and Overtures, brought it immediately before them. All approved the object, and thought it very desirable to have a uniform mode of per-

forming that service. It was, however, longer and more expanded than was considered necessary ; and all, except two, of the committee were in favor of inserting a question requiring a recognition of our public standards of faith. It was therefore referred to a sub-committee of three, to modify and condense it, and to add, "Do you approve of the doctrine, government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church, so far as you understand them?" In this form it was about to be reported to the Assembly, when I mentioned it to Dr. Hodge. He objected strongly to such a question, and said that you and Dr. Alexander would also. I then conversed with the chairman, Dr. McGill, and brought the question again before the Committee, with a view of leaving out that part ; but they refused. By this time it had been noised abroad among the members, that such a paper was to be reported, and opposition was arrayed against it ; so that when it was reported, the person who had been, as I suppose, spoken to on the subject, arose and, after remarking, very inconsistently, that it was the most important business that had been before us, moved that it be indefinitely postponed. The friends of the paper, being unwilling to introduce a discussion when they saw the Assembly impatient, allowed the vote to be taken silently, and the motion was carried by a large majority. I need not say that I felt more than disappointed, and still feel pained at this disposal of it. \* \* \* I ought also to say, that the committee decided to ask the Assembly to pass it as a recommendation merely, instead of asking them to send it down to the presbyteries, knowing the reluctance and unwillingness which are felt to alter our Book.'

The minutes represent the paper to have been laid upon the table by a vote of ninety-two to thirty-two.<sup>1</sup>

Most kindly and bountifully, as we have seen, the church had provided for the honor and comfort of Dr. Miller's declining health and strength ; but he was not long to enjoy her liberality, or to serve her with even his counsel, or his prayers. The twilight of his closing day was comparatively short—perhaps shortened, and that, for himself, not unhappily, by the calm in which he was now already permitted to repose, if not altogether from his labors, at least from their burden and harassing responsibility. The Church, as if in anticipation of a higher award, had said, "Well done, good and faithful servant!"—had crowned his old age with her most indulgent honors. His remain-

<sup>1</sup> P. 266.

ing earthly blessings of home and affection were complete; while his assurance of the Saviour's love, and of heavenly mansions, seemed unwavering. Henceforth his life appeared to be, practically, but a continued reiteration of the sentiment—"Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace!"

To the eyes of ever watching affection, less visibly than to the sight of those who saw Dr. Miller only at intervals, the infirmities of age had crept over him. Time had, indeed, been long noiselessly and gently at work, subduing and wasting his still erect form, and stealing away the vigor from his limbs, which yet found it hard to accustom themselves to "go softly." His health, always delicate and easily affected, had nevertheless rallied, and, uniformly, though with increasing age more slowly, recovered itself, until the last spring which he spent on earth. Up to the close of the Seminary session in May, he continued to discharge his professorial duties with tolerable comfort; and preached in regular turn in the chapel on the Lord's day, April 22d; when his text was John 14, 2—"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." This was his last sermon in Princeton, though he preached one more which will be referred to by and by.

During this spring, the symptoms of his decline became gradually more apparent, his infirmities more discomfoting. Now his health was evidently and steadily sinking, without any promise of even temporary convalescence; or each rising wave fell so far short of the wave preceding, as to prove clearly that life's tide was rapidly ebbing. In the month of May, he began to be perceptibly affected with a difficulty and shortness of breath, ascribed by his medical attendant, to incipient disease of the heart, a frequent result of old age—the wheel breaking at the cistern. From this cause he continued to suffer, more or less, as long as he lived—at intervals distressingly. Yet his pains were never very acute or racking. It is one of the desirable privileges and blessings of those who have lived long, and, even in a physical sense only, lived well, that they pass away at last more softly and serenely than others. The slow decay of nature is far less painful, commonly, than

its violent breaking down. With the access of this disease, or infirmity, came also the loss of that healthy and regular appetite for food, which he had for the most part enjoyed; and his strength failed so much, that he was soon obliged to forego, almost entirely, his accustomed invigorating walks, for exercise, as he had before his rides on horseback. All the summer, however, and until October, he continued to drive himself out, spending sometimes a large part of the afternoon, accompanied by some member of his family, in this only kind of exercise that remained for him.

During the month of June, Dr. Miller was invited to take part in a festival of the graduates of the University of Pennsylvania, of which he was now the oldest living alumnus. It was proposed to celebrate the first complete Centenary of the Institution. His answer to the committee who wrote to him was as follows:—

“Gentlemen, Princeton, June 22d, 1849.

“I had the honour of receiving, a few days ago, your polite note, announcing to me the approaching “Second Annual Dinner of the Graduates of the University of Pennsylvania,” and inviting me, as one of your number, to attend and take part in that interesting festival. It is just sixty years, since that University—my beloved and venerated Alma Mater, conferred upon me my first literary honours. Nor is this all I have to acknowledge at her hands. More than twenty years afterwards, not unmindful of her humble son, she, unsolicited, conferred upon me a higher professional degree, for which I have ever felt deeply thankful. Yet more, besides these personal obligations, I cannot help calling to mind on this occasion, so well adapted to revive the impressions of the past, that three beloved brothers, long since deceased, were, in succession, sharers with myself in the favours of this honoured parent. You will readily believe me, then, when I say, that I regard the University of Pennsylvania with the deepest filial and grateful interest; and that it would give me more pleasure than I can express to be present with you, and to unite in the literary feast which you have announced; but being now in the *eightieth* year of my age, and feeling the heavy and growing pressure of the infirmities which usually attend that period of life, I am compelled to avoid all ceremonious meetings and public assemblies of every kind.

“The great advantage of such anniversary celebrations is, that they afford opportunities of cherishing and expressing senti-

ments favourable to the best interests of society and of mankind, and especially of uniting in plans and counsels subservient to the honour and elevation of the institutions in whose behalf they are held. The longer I live, the more deep is my conviction that the training which is denominated *Liberal Education*, is of little real value, either to the individual who receives it, or to the community of which he is a member, unless it be accompanied and directed by *true religion*. To labor to impart a high degree of the former to him who knows nothing of the latter, is like putting a weapon of keen edge and of great power in the hands of a madman. He may not use it for destruction; but there is the highest probability that he will not employ it for good.

“I do not know, my respected friends, on what principles, as to one point, your coming festival is to be conducted. Whether your toasts or sentiments are to be accompanied with the use of intoxicating drinks, or with those only of a different kind. If the former, I feel at liberty only to say, that, after having been for two and twenty years a pledged abstainer from all that can intoxicate, and convinced as I am, with daily growing confidence, that this system of abstinence from stimulating beverages is desirable and important for all classes of men, but peculiarly so for youth, and above all for the members of our literary institutions, I can take no part in countenancing an opposite system. But if your anniversary feast is to be conducted without the use of intoxicating beverages, then I would most respectfully propose a sentiment to be disposed of at the time and in the way your wisdom may dictate.

“Sincerely hoping and praying that every thing ornamental and gratifying may attend your anniversary, and that our beloved and venerated Alma Mater may every year grow in strength, honour, and in usefulness, I am

“Your fellow graduate,

“SAMUEL MILLER.”

To one of his grandchildren, Polly (Mary Cabell) Breckinridge, afterwards married to Colonel Peter A. Porter, of Niagara Falls, Dr. Miller wrote on the 30th of July,

‘I live a most laborious life. The demands on me for letter-writing are always beyond my strength. Were you called upon to write a long letter every day that you live, besides all your other engagements, you would doubtless consider it a burden. I have scarcely passed a day for thirty years, without such a demand on me; and sometimes three or four letters of considerable length are required; so that I have hardly been

able, for many years together, to keep up with these demands. Instead of being able to get ahead of them at any time, I am ever a delinquent, and habitually have the discomfort of feeling myself to be so.'

#### 7. THE LAST SERMON.

Once more—on the 19th of August—he was able, according to his long and often indulged taste, to drive out upon the Sabbath to a neighboring church, where he thought his services might be useful and acceptable, and offer to preach. It was to the church of Dutch Neck, distant about five miles, where he had, perhaps, preached in this way, oftener than in any other place, that he now consecrated his latest effort. After Dr. Miller's death, this service was very kindly and graphically described by the greatly respected pastor of the church—the Rev. George Ely, since deceased—in the *Presbyterian*, as follows:—

“*Messrs. Editors*—It will probably afford some pleasure to you, and many others of the numerous friends of the late venerated Dr. Miller, to have some account of his *last public service*. And to most of us, we cannot but believe, that it will be more than a matter merely of gratification; that it will be for our edification to contemplate this last exhibition of his entire devotedness to his Master's service.

“The third Sabbath in August last was a very pleasant day; and as usual, I left my home in time to be at Dutch Neck a few moments before the hour of public worship. Upon entering the church, the first object upon which my eye rested was the feeble and emaciated person of this aged and beloved father in Israel, seated upon the platform below the pulpit. I hastened forward, and expressed to him my unexpected delight at finding him there; for he had come, not at my particular invitation, but from his own desire once more to “preach Jesus” to that little flock, which for ten or twelve years, whilst without a pastor, had been kept together by the united oversight and labours of himself and Dr. Alexander.

“As the number assembled was quite small, I stated to him as the reason of it, that it was not yet the appointed time for worship by ten minutes. Such an occasion, as all who know Dr. Miller's theory and practice, will readily imagine could not be permitted to pass without speaking a few words as to the importance of *punctuality* on the part of ministers. He had been there some ten minutes when I arrived.



“As he arose and ascended the steps to the pulpit, I saw he was very feeble; and in his request, that I would conduct all the services preceding the sermon, he stated as the reason, that he had not sufficient strength to do it himself. These done, he arose and announced his text—Heb. vi. 19, “Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast; and which entereth into that within the veil.” /

“In prosecuting his subject, he first spoke of the *differences* between the anchor of a ship and “*hope*” as the anchor of the soul. Several of these differences were noticed, but the one upon which he dwelt with the greatest feeling and fervency was, that whilst the anchor of the ship takes hold *on things below*, “*hope*,” the anchor of the believer’s soul, takes hold *on things above*. Here he had to leave his notes; his feelings became intense, and his soul was too full of deep emotion to be restricted by any thing previously written. His “*hope*,” for the moment, seemed to be changed into full fruition; the “*soul*” and its “*anchor*” to be both together “*within the veil*.”

“Much in this manner he continued throughout his discourse; leaving his notes at short intervals, and pouring forth the abundance of his heart with a force and earnestness that appeared altogether beyond his strength. His sermon, however, was very short, not exceeding twenty-five minutes in length. In his application he was exceedingly felicitous, and there was scarcely an individual in the house, who was not moved to tears. In the course of it, he remarked, that he had now become so infirm and his voice so weak, that he was entirely unable to preach in large churches, and the little that remained for him to do in the public service of God, must be done in his small houses, such as the one in which we were then worshipping. And in a most touching way alluding to the fact that his ministry was now nearly at an end, he remarked, “Whether or not this may be the last time that I shall address you, is a matter of small importance. But you may inquire how does this ‘*hope*’ appear to an old man standing just upon the verge of the grave?” Lifting up both his hands, with which he was now supporting himself upon the desk, and inclining his head backwards, as he lifted his eyes towards heaven, in a manner and with an expression of countenance which baffle any description, he exclaimed, with a voice faltering with emotion—“Oh! INEXPRESSIBLY DELIGHTFUL.” The whole sermon seemed to be re-embodied, re-preached, and again doubly enforced in this one short sentence. And we all felt, that if he had said nothing else, and we had heard nothing else, it would have been “good”

for him and for us "to be there," that morning in the house of prayer.

"As he appeared much exhausted, I expected he would call upon me to make the last prayer, but he made it himself, and often as I had heard Dr. Miller pray before, never did I hear him make *such a prayer*. One might have supposed that he had forgotten that he was in a *pulpit*, and that he thought he *was in his own private closet*, so much of his prayer was in reference to himself—"that God would remember his *aged servant*"—"that he would put underneath him his sustaining hand, and not forsake him in his old age." But it was this peculiarity of it, that gave it much of its power.

"Thus ended the long, laborious, and eventful public life of this great and good man. And what an ending! How befitting the holy office to which it had been consecrated, that he who had so long ministered the consolations of the gospel to others, should close his ministry with such an unequivocal exhibition of their efficacy in his own case—that the "blessed hope" which he had preached to us, was now the "*anchor*" of his *own soul*, "*inexpressibly delightful*."

"With the tears still in our eyes, because of what he had "thus spoken" to us, we bade him farewell, "sorrowing most of all" from the painful presentiment we then had, that we "should see his face no more." Yours, most fraternally, G. E."

On the 30th of August Dr. Miller wrote,

'My own health has been very feeble for the last fortnight. My apprehension is, that I am slowly losing ground. God bless you, my dear son! Let our eyes and our hearts be more and more directed to that blessed home, where, by the grace of God, we may all be gathered; and where there will be no more suffering, and, above all, no more sin.'

## 8. LAST LABOURS ABROAD AND AT HOME.

The following extract is from the minutes of the Board of Directors of the Seminary, convened on the 10th of September:

'The Board of Directors having been informed by the Treasurer of the Board of Trustees, that the Rev. Dr. Miller has expressed his intention of relinquishing one-half part of his salary, do unanimously, respectfully, and affectionately request the venerable Professor to recall the said purpose, and to continue to receive his full salary as heretofore, agreeably to the resolution of the last General Assembly.'

‘Dr. Janeway, Dr. Boardman, Dr. Plumer, and Dr. McDowell were appointed a Committee to present to Dr. Miller the above request of the Board.

‘The committee appointed to wait on Dr. Miller made the following report, which was approved; viz.—That, in an interview with him, the resolution adopted by the Board was read to him; on which he expressed his high and grateful sense of the honorable manner in which he had been treated by the General Assembly; but, at the same time, he considered that he had a part to act in reference to what might hereafter occur, and had made up his mind to return the one-half of his salary to the treasury of the Seminary. On which statement, the venerable Professor was assured, that the action of the General Assembly had, they believed, met with the hearty approbation of the Presbyterian Church; that he had full right to dispose of his salary in what manner he pleased; and that it was the duty of the Board to go forward and adopt means for supplying the Treasury with funds, for the support of the new Professor, and thus carry the views of the General Assembly into full effect.’

When the session of the Theological Seminary recommenced in August, Dr. Miller determined to continue, his strength permitting, some small part of his accustomed labors. That ardor in toil, which had always distinguished him, was not yet quenched; and his eager desire to be still of some service to the Church and to the Seminary, both so long loved and striven for, was seconded by his nearest and best friends, who perhaps did not realize the actual failure of his strength, and wisely regarded continued exertion, not too severe or prolonged, as likely to maintain his activity, both bodily and mental, and to lengthen out his life. He accordingly commenced a course of lectures to the Senior class, to be delivered twice a week, and was able to continue them for a few weeks, sometimes walking to the seminary—a quarter of a mile off—sometimes being driven in his carriage thither. It was with manifestly great reluctance, that, yielding at last, with the steady waning of his strength, to evident necessity, he gave up the effort.

While Dr. Miller was thus performing his last work in the Seminary, he received his last earthly call to a new field of labor. A feeble missionary church, at the far South, hearing of his resignation, wrote to the Board of Missions,

suggesting that the light services which they needed, and their mild salubrious climate would just suit his declining health and strength; and inquiring whether he might not respond favorably to a call. Those about him smiled at the idea; but the proposition was kindly intended. How could those afar off, and with but a little information, know how near he was to the close of his ministry on earth?

About this time, he expressed an earnest desire that, if possible, his children and grand-children should assemble once more under his roof, that he might give them, all together, his last counsels and his blessing. He had, besides, another object in view. His son Dickinson, a Surgeon in the Navy, had lately returned from a long cruise, and his son John from a tour in Europe. Both had been exposed, in different parts, to the dangers of war and pestilence—dangers sufficient, at least, to have made those feel anxious who were enjoying the comforts and comparative security of home. To offer united thanks for the merciful preservation and safe return of these two sons, was, to his mind, a strong additional reason for a family reunion. The 2nd of November witnessed this last solemn gathering of parents and children. Two grand-children, who, at the time, were in distant parts of the country, were alone unable to be present. To all assembled, it was a most interesting and impressive occasion. After a welcome once more at the familiar board, all were brought together in the “front parlor”—the scene of so many simple, happy gatherings in former days; where, to the children, their parents had always seemed to be present, looking down upon them from two striking life size portraits, ever the chief ornament of the ample walls. Here, with much thanksgiving and supplication, careful to devote his residue of strength to that, and that only, which was of special importance, the father, as if ready to depart, uttered many earnest, long-to-be-remembered words of counsel and exhortation. Like the ancient leader of Israel, he brought to remembrance the way in which the Lord God had led the whole family, parents, and children, for long years; the mercies, both temporal and spiritual, which every one, from infancy up, both at home and abroad, had experienced; and he urged upon all to make this God their God even unto death. He



dress from him to be replete with entertainment and instruction; and with respect to the Centenary Festival, of which you speak, I know of few things that would give me more heartfelt pleasure than meeting my beloved fellow Alumni, and especially invoking the blessing of Heaven on them and their Alma Mater.

‘But it is entirely out of the question. At the age of more than *eighty years*, I find myself so feeble—so nervous, and so unfit to appear in public and festive assemblies, especially at night, that I must at once deny myself the pleasure of attending on the occasion to which you so kindly invite me. May the best blessings of heaven rest upon you all! May the expected exercises prove as richly delightful and useful as the best wishes of the warmest friends of our Alma Mater could desire. I am, gentlemen, with cordial respect, your fellow Alumnus,

Samuel Miller.

‘P. S.—You will perceive that I employ the pen of another in this communication. My own right hand is beginning to “forget her cunning.”’

In one of his letters Dr. Miller sent the following toast:—

“*Education*.—The highest and best possible to every member of the community; but education ever adorned and sanctified by true religion, which alone can make it a safe pledge of virtue, order, social strength, and genuine freedom.”

At the dinner, the following was offered:—

“*The oldest living graduate—Samuel Miller, D.D., of Princeton*.—A model for imitation to his younger brethren, proving by his life and conversation that gray hairs are a crown of glory, when found in the paths of rectitude.”

## CHAPTER FORTY-THIRD.

THE LAST OF EARTH.

1849, 1850.

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### 1. NUNC DIMITTIS.

THE very interesting account which follows, of an interview with Dr. Miller, was prepared for Dr. Sprague's *Annals*<sup>1</sup> by the late widely known and deeply lamented Nicholas Murray, D.D.

"Among the most polished, popular, and learned ministers that have adorned the American Church, was the Rev. Dr. Samuel Miller. In stature of the medium size, formed with remarkable symmetry, with mild blue eye, bald head, high forehead, and a countenance remarkably bland and prepossessing, he immediately commanded the respect of all with whom he came in contact. His politeness was such as to gain for him the American sobriquet of the American Chesterfield; his affability was such as to attract even the fondling attention of children; so ready was he in conversation, and so full of anecdote, as to make him the attractive centre of every circle which he graced with his presence; and so wise and prudent was he withal, that his advice and counsels were sought by his brethren and by the churches as if he were an oracle. In his youth he was greatly popular as a preacher, and down to the close of his long life was remarkably solemn and instructive. Thoroughly evangelical and devotedly pious, his ministrations were sought beyond those of almost any of his contemporaries. He was a

<sup>1</sup> III Vol., 610. It is here given, as somewhat modified, chiefly in the first paragraph, and published in Dr. Murray's "Parish Pencilings." The paragraph mentioned contains in the original draft, the following:—"I shall limit myself to an account of an interview that I had with him a short time before his death—an interview rendered memorable to me not only by the fact that it was the last, but from its having witnessed to one of the most remarkable exhibitions of the very sublimity of Christian triumph, that have ever come within my knowledge."

man of varied learning, of retentive memory; was a graceful, easy, and polished writer, and, to as great an extent as almost any man of his day, enjoyed both an American and European reputation. He was a voluminous author, an able controversialist, a fine ecclesiastical historian, and an able and beloved professor in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, from its foundation to the close of his long and brilliant life. Dignified without haughtiness, condescending without descending, affable without garrulity, polite without the cold correctness which chills, firm in his opinions without bigotry, catholic without an approach to latitudinarianism, and remarkably generous in all his sympathies, he made even his enemies to be at peace with him, and embalmed his memory in the hearts of all good men; and the hundreds of students that enjoyed his instructions as a professor, while they revered him as a teacher, loved him as a father.

“The Historical Society of New Jersey met at Princeton, now a place of patriotic, and classic, and sacred associations. It was a noble gathering of men, distinguished in their various professions as jurists, advocates, professors, and divines; and there was a most cordial greeting and commingling of these historic associates. All differences in sentiments, professions, and politics were laid aside while in the pursuit of the one common object of honoring New Jersey by collecting materials for its history, and rescuing from oblivion the names of her many heroic and distinguished sons.

“But one was absent who had rarely been absent before, and who was one of the founders and vice-presidents of the society; one whose bland and polished manners always attracted regard, and whose venerable aspect always deeply impressed. His absence from the meeting, and in the town of his residence, excited inquiry; and when it was announced that Dr. Miller was very seriously sick, there was in the meeting a deep expression of sorrow and sympathy. It was solemnly felt by all that in those historic gatherings we should see his face no more.

“His son conveyed to me a message from his father that he would like to see me on the morning of the next day, if convenient. The hour of our interview was fixed; and, as other engagements required punctuality, I was there at the moment.

“But, as the barber had just entered the room, he was not quite ready to see me, and he sent requesting me to wait half an hour. This my other engagements absolutely forbade; and on sending him word to that effect, he invited me to his room. As I entered it, the picture which presented itself was truly impressive. The room was his library, where he had often coun-



seled, cheered, and instructed me. There, bolstered in a chair, feeble, wan, and haggard, was my former teacher and friend, one-half of his face shaven, with the soap on the other half, and the barber standing behind his chair. The old sweet smile of welcome played upon his face, and having received his kind hand and greetings, he requested me to take a seat by his side. His message was a brief one; he had written a history of the Theological Seminary for the Historical Society which was not yet printed, and he wished an unimportant error into which he thought he had fallen to be corrected; and that there might be no mistake, he wished me to write it down, thus showing his ruling passion for even verbal accuracy. When his object in sending for me was gained, he then, in a most composed and intensely solemn manner, thus addressed me:

“ “ My dear brother, my sands are almost run, and this will be, probably, our last interview on earth. Our intercourse, as professor and pupil, and as ministers, has been one of undiminished affection and confidence. I am just finishing my course; and my only regrets are that I have not served my precious Master more fervently, sincerely, and constantly. Were I to live my life over again, I would seek more than I have done to know nothing but Christ. The burdens that some of us have borne in the Church will now devolve upon you and your brethren; see to it that you bear them better than we have done, and with far greater consecration; and as this will, no doubt, be our last interview here, it will be well to close it with prayer. As I am too feeble to kneel, you will excuse me if I keep my chair.”

“ I drew my chair before him, and knelt at his feet. The colored barber laid aside his razor and brush, and knelt by his side. As he did not indicate which of us was to lead in prayer, I inferred, because of his feebleness, that it would be right for me to do so; and while seeking to compose my own mind and feelings to the effort, I was relieved by hearing his own sweet, feeble, melting accents. His prayer was brief, but unutterably touching and impressive. He commenced it by thanksgiving to God for his great mercy in calling us into the fellowship of the saints, and then calling us into the ministry of his Son. He then gave thanks that we ever sustained to one another the relation of pupil and teacher, and for our subsequent pleasant intercourse as ministers of the Gospel. He thanked God for the many years through which he had permitted him to live, and for any good which he had enabled him to do. “ And now, Lord,” said he, “ seeing that thine aged, imperfect servant is about being gathered to his fathers, let his mantle fall upon

thy young servant, and far more of the Spirit of Christ than he has ever enjoyed. Let the years of thy servant be as the years of his dying teacher; let his ministry be more devoted, more holy, more useful; and when he comes to die, may he have fewer regrets to make in reference to his closing ministrations. We are to meet no more on earth; but when thy servant shall follow his aged father to the grave, may we meet in heaven, there to sit, and shine, and sing with those who have turned many to righteousness, who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Amen."

"I arose from my knees, melted as is wax before the fire. My full heart sealed my lips. Through my flowing tears I took my last look of my beloved teacher, the counselor of my early ministry, the friend of my ripening years, and one of the most lovely and loved ministers with which God has ever blessed the Church. Everything impressed me; the library, his position, the barber; his visage, once full and fresh, now sallow and sunken; his great feebleness, his faithfulness, his address, and above all, that prayer, never, never to be forgotten! He extended his emaciated hand from under the white cloth that draped from his breast to his knees, and, taking mine, he gave me his parting, his last benediction. That address—that prayer—that blessing, have made enduring impressions. It was the most solemn and instructive last interview of my life.

"When I next saw him he was sleeping in his coffin in the front parlor of his house, where he often, with distinguished urbanity and hospitality, entertained, instructed and delighted his friends. That parlor was crowded by distinguished strangers, and by many of his former pupils, who mourned for him as for a father—for a father he was to them all. And as they passed around to take a parting sight of his countenance, from which even death could not remove its accustomed placid, benevolent smile, their every bosom heaved with intense emotion, their eyes were suffused with tears; and could every tongue utter the emotion of their hearts, it would be in the language of Elisha when he gazed on Elijah ascending before him unto heaven, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof."

"His death was as calm and triumphant as his life was pure, disinterested and lovely; and as pious men carried him to his burial, and as we covered up his remains under the clods of the valley, the prayer arose at least from one heart, "May I live the life of this righteous man, and let my last end be like his."

“There are many scenes in the life of Dr. Miller that memory frequently recalls—scenes in the class-room, in the General Assembly, in the Synod of New Jersey, in the pulpit, in the social party—scenes which occurred during the conflicts of parties, and in the frank and unrestrained intercourse of social life. In them all Dr. Miller was pre-eminently like himself. But the scene by which I most love to recall him, and which memory most frequently recalls, is that parting scene in his study. Oh, may that parting prayer be answered !”

Dr. James W. Alexander was elected Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government, by the General Assembly of 1849, but was not inaugurated until the 20th of November following. On the 14th of that month, he wrote to his friend, Dr. Hall,

“This morning Dr. Miller sent for me, and for the first time in his life did not rise when I entered. He then formally made over to me the charge of the instruction, and said, *inter alia* : “No, sir, my time is come. I must go to the grave; no skill of man can do me any good.” He no longer drives out. Every expression connects itself with his departure. In all my life I never saw a gentler decline, or a more serene, collected, looking into eternity.”<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Miller was too feeble to be present at his successor’s inauguration, who, in the opening of his discourse remarked,

“I should meet you with less of sadness, were it not for the absence of that venerable man, whose induction to this chair I distinctly remember six-and-thirty years ago, whose paternal guidance many of us have since enjoyed, and whose useful and eminent discharge of this function might well cause trembling in his successor. Let us therefore, hasten to look away from men, even the best, to the Great Head of the Church, who will bless both his aged servant and this school to which his life has been devoted.”<sup>2</sup>

The following are the closing paragraphs of the reminiscences kindly furnished by Dr. Sprague, the other portion of which has been given on previous pages.

“My last interview with him impressed itself upon my inmost soul. It was at the time of the inauguration of Dr. James W. Alexander, as his successor in the Professorship. It was understood that he was extremely feeble, and the current of life was fast ebbing away. I called at his house, uncertain

<sup>1</sup> 2 Familiar Letters, 108, 109.

<sup>2</sup> P. 69.

whether he would be able to see me, but wishing at least to learn the particulars of his situation from his own family. I was glad to find that I could be admitted once more to see my venerable friend. He was in his study, where I had met him a hundred times in the vigor of health. He sat in a large arm chair, breathing with so much difficulty, that I should scarcely have been surprised if his breath had left him at any moment. He extended his hand to me with the same genial warmth of feeling as when he was in health. He told me that his course was nearly finished, and that he was just going to that blessed Master whom he had served so imperfectly, but who had loved and blessed *him* so much. He occupied nearly every moment that I was with him in talking, and scarcely spoke of anything but the preciousness of his Redeemer. I never witnessed an instance of more triumphant faith. It really seemed as if the chariot was making ready, to bear him away on his upward journey. I shook hands with him for the last time; and though I heard afterwards that he was still lingering in triumph, it was not long before the tidings came that both his suffering and his triumph on earth had given place to the immortal triumph of heaven.

‘It did not occur to me, when I undertook to write a letter of personal recollections,<sup>1</sup> how prominently I should be obliged to exhibit myself; but as I could not very well write *such* a letter, keeping myself entirely in the back ground, I hope to escape the imputation of egotism, where, under other circumstances, I feel that I should be justly liable to it.

‘I am, my dear Sir,

‘Faithfully yours,

‘W. B. Sprague.’

A passage may be added, without much repetition, from Dr. Sprague’s Commemorative Discourse.<sup>2</sup>

“His whole appearance was a compound of the deep solemnity that becomes the dying man, and the joyful tranquility that becomes the dying Christian. He had no breath to waste on mere worldly matters, but began immediately to talk of the goodness of the Master whom he had served; of the great imperfection of the service he had rendered; and of the glorious eternal home, which, through grace, he was about to enter. It is my sober conviction, that I never heard such words from the lips of mortal man; and yet his spirit seemed struggling with thoughts and feelings which he had no words to express. When I intimated a wish that, if it were God’s will, he might be

<sup>1</sup> For the former part of this letter, see pp. 29–36.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 37, 38.

spared to us yet a little longer, he replied, "I am not conscious of having any wish on that subject, I think I can say, 'Blessed Master, when thou wilt, where thou wilt, as thou wilt.'" I came away convinced that I had been listening to a dying man; and yet such an impression had he left upon me, that I could not think of him in connection with the grave, but only with the glorious world beyond it. Several others who saw him about the same time, have assured me that his chamber seemed to them like a consecrated place, "quite on the verge of heaven." The venerable Dr. Janeway, who had been his intimate friend almost from early life, told me that, in a brief but most solemn interview which he had had with him shortly before his death, Dr. Miller requested, before they parted, that he would kneel down by his side, that they might once more join their supplications at the throne of grace; and when he had knelt, and was just about to commence the prayer, his revered friend, with what seemed almost literally dying breath, led off in the exercise with the utmost appropriateness, tenderness and fervour. These incidents, it is understood, were but a specimen of what was constantly occurring during his last weeks; and when I have said, that his sun went down, not only without a cloud, but in full orb'd glory, I have given you an epitome of the history of his departure."

In December, Dr. Alexander again wrote to Dr. Hall,

"Dr. Miller has declined very gradually even till now. His greeting to my brother Samuel was, "Almost home." Take it altogether I never knew such a euthanasy. All the decorum of his long life kept up "duntaxat ad imum." Never one intrusion of doubt. Heaven has seemed just as much ajar, as his next door bed-room. Still in his study, among his life-long things, and still in a sort of chair, not bed. It is not four days since he ceased going to the table. He forbids prayer for recovery; longs to depart: has not seemed to have any anxiety but about the church, for a long time. Often has wept, more than of old, on spiritual matters. Greatly revived at hearing of conversions, etc."<sup>1</sup>

His grand-daughter, Margaret Breckinridge, was a member of Dr. Miller's household during nearly the whole of the last three years of his life. She read much to him, and usually accompanied him on his drives for exercise. She said that, when listening to Paul's Epistles, he often expressed a strong desire to see that apostle; that he very frequently spoke of dying, as of an event becoming con-

<sup>1</sup> 2 Familiar Letters, 110.

stantly more and more familiar to his mind ; and when she closed the Sacred Volume, or paused in her reading, often ejaculated, ‘ Blessed Gospel ! Blessed Gospel !’

Dr. Miller had been unable, on account of indisposition, to attend the meeting of the College Board of Trustees, on the 19th of December, 1848 ; but we find him present with the Board both in June and in October, 1849. It was at the latter date, doubtless, that he took that formal leave of his fellow trustees mentioned by Dr. Carnahan.<sup>1</sup> On the 18th of December, he addressed the following letter to the Board :—

‘ Reverend and Honored Gentlemen,

‘ Fully believing that there is no probability of my ever occupying my seat among you again, \* \* I take this opportunity of tendering my resignation as a member of the Board.

‘ When I call to mind the character, the labors and the success of the illustrious founders of this institution, I cannot help entertaining the deepest veneration for their memory ; and it is my earnest hope and constant prayer, that men of the same stamp may continue to carry on its interests, with growing success, to the end of time. Deeply persuaded as I am, that no institution of this kind can truly promote the welfare of society, under any pure or free government, unless it be conducted on the strictest principles of intellectual and moral discipline, I will not disguise how deep my desire, on taking leave of the institution, is, that its management may always be faithfully conducted, with a view rather to the dignity and usefulness of the college, than to the increase of the number of the students ; and that to this end discipline may always be most sacredly regarded.

‘ I bid the College and all its interests, and yourselves, my beloved and honored associates, the profoundest and most affectionate farewell!

Samuel Miller.’

This letter he only dictated : it was penned by one of his sons, except indeed the signature and outside superscription, added with a trembling hand which had indeed “ forgotten her cunning.”

After the comfort of survivors had been carefully provided for, Dr. Miller manifested very little solicitude about anything which he was to leave behind, or about matters affecting his own posthumous reputation. He said that he

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 376, 377.

believed all his debts had been already paid ; and such, after his decease, was found literally to be the case. He gave no directions in regard to his funeral services, or burial, nor as to his papers, excepting the request, in a conversation with one of his sons, that none of his manuscript sermons should be published. It was, perhaps, among the felicities of his life, that he was able to attend personally to the publication of every thing that he designed for the public. He had often prayed for himself and others, that, in the dying hour, they 'might have nothing to do but to die;' and the prayer was perceptibly and most mercifully answered in his own experience.

## 2. DEATH BED.

Dr. Miller continued slowly, but steadily to decline, until the last of December, when new and decisive symptoms made it evident that he had but a few days to live. The writer of these memoirs spent, with him, a large part of the Sabbath, December 30th. He had noticed, previously, with pain, the drowsiness, mental torpor, and occasional incoherent utterances already described. During the forenoon, he remained with his father, while the rest of the family went to church. It had been arranged, that a part of the time of the public service—as much as the strength of the bed of languishing permitted—should be spent in united worship. The father's couch was still in his study, where he reclined unconsciously dozing. An effort, which seemed beforehand almost hopeless, was made, at the proper moment, to awaken him from this drowsiness, and fix his attention on the proposed devotional exercises. Slowly he came to himself, but once thoroughly aroused and engaged in worship, all his intellectual powers seemed as active, all his emotions as vivid, as ever. He dictated the portions of Scripture which should be read, listened to them with fixed attention, engaged, himself, audibly and with earnestness in prayer ; and for the time appeared to be completely and pleasurably awake. With the deepest concern, he spoke of the religious interests of his children, and when told of something which, in the case of one of them, seemed to promise spiritual advantage, his feelings of delight and thankfulness appeared to overflow. Altogether, a season

which had been anticipated as but at best a painfully difficult attempt to worship, was one of the most delightful and impressive the writer has ever witnessed.

On the next Sabbath, January 6th, his drowsiness increased, and his eyes began to wear a glassy appearance, betokening the near approach of death. Still, when aroused, he was sensible, and able to answer coherently. With the anxiety of maternal love, he was asked to pray that his mantle might fall on one of his sons, who was standing at the bed-side. The request seemed to move him deeply. "Oh, not *my* mantle," he said—"not *my* mantle! Let him look at such men as Dickinson, and Edwards, and Davies—men who were faithful laborers in their Master's vineyard. Pray that their mantle may fall upon him." He continued to repeat the words, "Not *my* mantle! Not *my* mantle!" with intensity of feeling, as if all the infirmities and defects of his whole ministry were crowding upon his consciousness.

The next day every unfavorable symptom seemed to be aggravated; and, as the day advanced, it became almost impossible to rouse him from the stupor, which appeared to be every moment becoming more profound. Towards evening, however, Dr. Alexander was requested to visit him once more, and try whether his strong, familiar voice would not yet awaken his dying colleague. He came about five o'clock, and approaching the bed-side, asked, in his piercing tones, "Do you know me?" "Oh, yes!" replied Dr. Miller, who had been aroused as far as possible for this last interview. His voice was almost inarticulate, yet the reply not to be mistaken. In the same way, he answered all the questions put to him—as to the foundation of his hope, his desire to depart, his view of the fundamental truths, which, after he had taught them for more than threescore years, after he had commended them to many others, as the most precious consolation of a dying hour, were now passing the test of their purity and excellence in the crucible of his own departing spirit, agitated with the pangs of dissolving nature. To every inquiry he most intelligently replied, "Oh, yes!" "Oh, no!"—with emphatic earnestness throwing all the residue of his strength into the half smothered words. Said Dr. Alexander at length, having offered a short prayer, and being about to take leave, "You are now



in the dark valley!" "Oh yes!" was the only reply. "I shall soon be after you!" Thus parted for a little time,<sup>1</sup> at the brink of the river, these veteran soldiers of the cross.

After this visit, Dr. Miller sank, almost at once, into his former deep lethargy, and lived only about six hours. He did not speak again, although, once or twice, when something was said to him he opened his eyes, and looked upon those about his bed. Apparently, he did not suffer much; yet there was a perceptible dying strife. Just at eleven o'clock that night, he rested from his last struggling breath and all his labors.

A notice or two of his latest hours, from other pens, will here be subjoined. The day after his death, Dr. J. W. Alexander wrote,

"When I heard last night, Dr. Miller was almost gone, like a sleeping child, but knew my father. One of the boys came in as I had penned this, to say that Dr. Miller died last night about 11, a few hours after my father saw him; without any struggle, oppression, or seeming pain. The funeral is to be from the church, on Thursday, (January 10,) at 2 o'clock. It has been a great comfort to the Doctor to have his medical son with him so many weeks. The Doctor was in his 81st year. Of all the deaths I ever knew, this is the most surrounded by all the things one could desire."<sup>2</sup>

The following passage is from the same pen.<sup>3</sup>

"We have already spoken of the inviolable sacredness of fraternal regard which for nearly forty years subsisted between him and his colleague. During this long period the thread of their lives had been entwined together, with increasing closeness. They were mutual advisers and confidential friends, and rejoiced in each other's progress, happiness and acceptance with the Church. Their differences of opinion, which were slight and few, were matters for amicable repartee, but never caused them even for an hour to draw in different directions; no one ever dreamed of such a thing as a faction for one or the other. It was most natural, therefore, that Dr. Alexander should look with sadness upon the tokens of decline in his respected brother. For some months Dr. Miller had been subject to attacks of disease, and at length was entirely confined to his house. His decline, however, was denoted more by great de-

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Alexander survived only until the 22d of October, 1851.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Familiar Letters, 110, 111.

<sup>3</sup> Life of Dr. A. Alexander, 578, 579.

bility than by severe pain. Amidst it all, he was calm and believing. Foresceing his departure with an unerring eye, he was resolute in his assertion of all the truths which he had taught, and humbly confident in his expressions of hope in Jesus Christ. Dr. Alexander thus briefly records his decease. "Dr. Miller's health had been declining for several months. He had scarcely any disease, except the decay of old age, By degrees he sunk, until the 7th of this month, when he gave up his spirit to God who gave it. He was calm and comfortable in mind during his whole confinement. He expressed no very lively feelings, but was troubled with no fears or doubts. A day or two before his death, I asked him whether any dark cloud at any time came over his mind; he replied, 'None whatever.'"

### 3. IN MEMORIAM.

While the body of the Rev. Dr. Miller, of Princeton, was in his late residence awaiting burial, Dr. Hodge remarked to Dr. Van Rensselaer, that it was a great thing to be kept in this world eighty years by the grace of God.<sup>1</sup>

The Presbytery of Philadelphia, being in session when his death was announced, put upon their minutes a very respectful notice of his character and labors, particularly of his more than thirty-six years of service in the Professor's chair.

The funeral took place on Thursday, the 10th of January. The following account of it, from the gifted pen of *Ireneus*, now of the New York Observer, was communicated, at the time, to the Presbyterian.

"PRINCETON, N. J. Jan. 10, 1850.

"*Messrs. Editors*—The remains of the late venerable and honoured Professor of Ecclesiastical History in our Seminary, the Rev. Dr. MILLER, have just been consigned to the tomb. The occasion has been one of deep and solemn interest.

"The attendance of strangers from abroad was large, and embraced many distinguished clergymen and laymen. Among them I observed the Hon. John Sergeant, of Philadelphia, a brother of Mrs. Dr. Miller; Hon. Daniel Haines, Governor of New Jersey; Rev. Drs. McDowell, Jones, Janeway, and others of Philadelphia; Rev. Drs. Phillips, Erskine Mason, and Campbell, of New York; Rev. Drs. Magie, and Murray, of Elizabethtown, New Jersey; Rev. Drs. Janeway and Cogswell,

<sup>1</sup> N. Y. Observer, (1862,) p. 2.

and Rev. Dr. Van Vrankin, of the Theological Seminary at New Brunswick, New Jersey, and Judges Kirkpatrick, Nelson, and Terhune, of the same place, besides many others whom I have not time to name.

“At two o’clock, P. M. the procession formed at the late residence of the Professor, and moved to the church. The Rev. Messrs. Schenck and Duffield of the Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Mr. Patterson of the Episcopal Church, and the Rev. Mr. Corbit of the Methodist Church, Princeton, walked at the head, followed by the students of the Seminary, who with pious and filial care were the bearers of the remains of their venerated instructor.

After the family and relatives of the deceased came the Professors, Trustees, and Directors, of the Seminary and the College, and a long line of clergymen and others, who had gathered here to pay the last tribute of grateful respect to one so universally beloved.

The moment when the coffin, neatly enclosed in black velvet, was placed in the front of the pulpit, the choir of the Seminary chaunted with solemn and appropriate emphasis the words “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord,” etc. The Rev. Dr. Janeway, of New Brunswick, offered prayer.

“The Rev. ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER, D.D., long the associate of Dr. Miller in the labours and the honours of this seat of learning, and now, as he said, treading hard upon the heels of his brother just gone before him, delivered the funeral discourse. It was just such a discourse as those who know Dr. Alexander would expect to hear from him on such an occasion as the burial of such a man as Dr. Miller. He took for his text those familiar words of Paul to the Hebrews, “*These all died in faith;*”—Abel, Enoch, Noah, and Abraham, were the men of whom the words were spoken; and after the venerable preacher had with his accustomed simplicity and clearness exhibited the great characteristics of that *faith* which sustained the patriarchs in life and death, he proceeded to give a sketch of the life and an outline of the character of his colleague. This task he discharged with great fidelity, and presented a portrait of ministerial and religious excellence such as could be drawn from very few originals. He bore the highest testimony to the purity of his private life, his deportment as a father, a neighbour, a friend, a man of business; he spoke of him in exalted terms as a preacher of the Gospel who loved to work to the very last, delighting to go out into the neighbouring towns to preach even up to the time when he was too feeble for such labours; as a professor and a writer, he had achieved a reputa-

tion as wide spread and honoured on both sides of the Atlantic, as that of any other American divine. But the crowning glory of his life was his piety. This was deep and unaffected. \* \* He was free, open-hearted, and generous. He gave more in proportion to his income for the cause of Foreign Missions, than any man in the speaker's knowledge.

"And now," said Dr. Alexander, as he came to close his remarks, "I am reminded that I must soon follow my departed brother and friend to the grave. There are many in this great assembly who will never hear my voice again, and as this is the last time I shall address you, I have one request to make, and that is, that *you will pray for me!*"

"The Rev. Dr. CARNAHAN, President of the College, followed with prayer, and after the benediction was pronounced, the procession formed again, and marched to the grave yard—the old grave yard—hallowed by the dust of many illustrious men who died in faith; and there they laid him to sleep till the morning of a better day.

"At the grave the Rev. JOHN McDOWELL, D.D. of Philadelphia, delivered a brief and very appropriate address, in which he said, that Dr. Miller was one of the Presbytery that ordained him, and not one of that body now remains. Dr. Miller was in the Board of Trustees of the College when he (Dr. McDowell) was elected, and not one, then a member, now survives. "The fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live forever?"

"Thus terminated the funeral solemnities of a great and good man. He leaves behind him a precious memory, which will be cherished with affection and gratitude by hundreds of the ministers of Christ's gospel, in the length and breadth of the Presbyterian Church.

"In the immediate vicinity of the grave, is the long line of tombs that contain the remains of the successive Presidents of Nassau Hall—honoured names and venerable—Burr, and Dickinson, and Edwards, and Smith, and Witherspoon, and Davies, and Green, with other men who have borne part of the labours and honours of the College, which is now in the second century of its years. But the Theological Seminary, now more than *thirty-six* years old, has not buried a Professor before. Long may it be ere it makes another contribution to the grave."

Of Dr. Miller's burial Dr. Sprague afterwards said,

"His funeral was no mere matter of solemn form; it had in it every element of substantial and honourable mourning. The great and the good were drawn thither from a distance to tes-

tify their gratitude for his services, and their reverence for his memory; and words of truth and tenderness were responded to in tears of sorrowful remembrance and deep affection. And if there is a grave yard which the saints of all-coming generations will delight to honour,—nay, at which the angels, from their reverence for redeemed dust, sometimes pause, surely it is the one in which they laid that beloved man of God; for his companions in the slumber of the tomb, as doubtless they are also in the ecstasies of Heaven, are Burr and Edwards, Davies and Witherspoon, Smith and Green; and who shall say how many more of the wise and the venerable shall hereafter be gathered to that illustrious brotherhood? I love to think that his mortal body will repose in a bed of so much honour, till, having slept out its long sleep, it shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and come forth; and in the act of coming forth, shall become incorruptible and immortal.”<sup>1</sup>

Some extracts from Dr. Alexander’s funeral sermon have been presented on previous pages. His biographer says,

“Among all who surrounded his grave, there was none whose mind was more deeply solemn than his aged colleague, who pronounced a simple but touching funeral discourse. It is much to be regretted that no full report of this was ever made. The notes which exist among his papers are no more than hints for the aid of memory: yet even these fragments we feel it to be duty to subjoin in part. A large portion is manifestly lost.”<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Alexander remarked,

“The character of our deceased friend and brother may be thus summed up. In all the private and domestic relations of life he was exemplary. As a neighbour he was kind and courteous to all, and exactly just in his dealings. As a minister he was faithful and evangelical, and was accustomed to present the truths of the Gospel in a manner so distinct and methodical, that his discourses could not only be understood with ease, but readily remembered by the attentive hearer. As a member of church judicatories, he was an able advocate for [truth], a warm friend to experimental and practical piety and of course a friend of revivals. No member of our church has done more to explain and defend her doctrines than our deceased brother. With his colleagues he was uniformly cordial; and *I have never known a man more entirely free from vain glory, envy and jealousy.* To the students under his care he was paternal and affectionate.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Discourse Commemorative, 38, 39.

<sup>2</sup> Life, 579.

<sup>3</sup> Life of Dr. Alexander, 581, 582.

In a letter of the 14th of January, his warm-hearted, and truly beloved friend, Dr. Cox, wrote,

“His country, and his age, and the Church of God on both sides of the Atlantic, and coming ages, will cherish his memory with gratitude and honor. I remember to have heard the late Rev. Dr. Chalmers, in July, 1846, speak of the Rev. Dr. Samuel Miller, of America, in terms of high and deserved eulogy, which were grateful to my ear, as to my memory. For one, I am happy to record the assurance of my own sincere indebtedness to his pen—his published works.’

A letter of condolence from the Rev. Leonard Woods, D.D., dated the 26th of January, contained the following passages:—

‘I too feel the need of comfort; for Dr. Miller has been one of the dearest friends I ever had on earth. I was led to respect and love him before I had any personal acquaintance with him; and from the time when I first saw him, my esteem and affection for him continually increased. Our friendship was like a day without a cloud from morning to night. My memory dwells with delight on the many happy seasons I enjoyed with him in his study, and his parlor, and elsewhere—seasons always instructive and refreshing to me. And Oh! if, through infinite grace, I may gain admittance into that better world to which he has gone, what a blessed and unceasing fellowship shall I have with him in the presence of our Saviour and his redeemed people!’

‘I had been intending, for months, to write to Dr. Miller. It was my wish to tell him how much I was delighted with his late book on Public Prayer, and how others agreed with me in my estimation of the work. Professor Stuart thought it uncommonly excellent throughout.

‘I hope some man, well qualified for the work, will prepare a biography of Dr. Miller.

Dr. Sprague and Dr. Boardman, the former in Albany, the latter in Philadelphia, both on the same Sabbath evening—that of the 27th of January—preached each a discourse commemorative of Dr. Miller, from which interesting extracts have been already transferred to this work. Dr. Boardman’s was repeated the Sabbath evening following, in the Second Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia, and both discourses were, by request, published. If the limits necessarily set to the volume here closing permitted, yet other eloquent passages from each, to a considerable length, would be quoted; but it is impossible.

The Presbytery of New Brunswick and the New York Historical Society, both on the 6th of February; the American Whig Society of the College, on the 22d of the same month, and the General Assembly, upon the 23d of May, passed resolutions commemorative of Dr. Miller. The latter of these—that of the Assembly,—was as follows:—

“*Resolved*, That the Assembly record, with deep emotion, the decease of the venerable Professor Emeritus of Ecclesiastical History and Church Government, Rev. Samuel Miller, D.D., of whom becoming mention is made in the Report of the Board; and while the Church is, in this dispensation of divine Providence, called to mourn the departure of one who has long stood among the foremost in her counsels and in her confidence,—one of the most prominent and able defenders of her faith and order—one of the staunchest friends of her benevolent institutions—one whose conspicuous talents, ripe judgment, and elevated piety, made him eminently a fit model and a safe guide for her rising ministers, and whose rare excellence and purity of character, beautifully exemplified, in the eyes of all who knew him, that religion to the cause of which his life was devoted,—it is matter of profound thankfulness that such a man was raised up to the Church, and spared to her through so many years of usefulness, and permitted to perform so valuable a part in founding our first Theological Seminary,—which has served, to a great extent, as the model of all our after Institutions,—in arranging its plan, and giving it establishment; and that it was not until this great work of his life was done, and he had ceased from the active discharge of these duties, that he was taken to his glorious reward.”

To the graceful pen of the Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, D.D., we are indebted for the following—an extract from the Narrative of Religion presented to the Synod of New Jersey on the 16th of October, 1850.

“One of our most aged and venerated Fathers has sunk to his peaceful slumber, in the quiet of that retirement to which he had withdrawn after fourscore years of toilsome and devoted service. The tidings of his death fell cold on many a heart which had oft been gladdened by his cordial courtesy, and cheered by his counsels of tenderness and love. “Devout men carried him to his burial, and made great lamentation over him;” for as they smoothed that honored form to its last calm sleep, they knew well that our beloved church had few such eloquent lives to lose, and few such radiant lights to be extinguished.

Some extracts from Dr. Miller's will found their way, after his decease, into the newspapers. In the first paragraph, following the mere formal introduction, the testator declared his own humble, Christian faith and hope: in the last, he said,

"I have often exhorted my dear children to make choice of Christ as their hope and portion. In that solemn view of death and eternity, which I take in writing with my own hand this my last Will and Testament, I would earnestly and affectionately repeat my exhortation and entreaty, assuring them that, the longer I live, the deeper is my impression of the importance of the claims and hopes which the Gospel of Christ exhibits; and charging them, as they value their Father's blessing, to read a portion of the Holy Scriptures every day of their lives, to make conscience of daily secret prayer, to keep their *birth-days* annually as days of special retirement, self-examination and prayer, accompanied with fasting, and to give all diligence to meet their parents on the right hand of our blessed Saviour and Judge."

The following affectionate memorial is from the pen of Dr. Hodge:—

"Having incidentally mentioned the name of Dr. Miller, we may be permitted to pause and in a sentence pay our humble tribute to that sainted man. He could be appreciated only by those who knew him intimately, who saw him day by day, and year in and year out, in all circumstances suited to try and to reveal the true character. We have never heard any one who enjoyed such means of knowing him, speak of him otherwise than as one of the holiest of men. May the writer be further pardoned for obtruding himself for a moment, so far as to say, that during twenty-nine years of intimate official association with these two venerated men, he never saw the slightest discourtesy, unkindness, or acerbity manifested by the one towards the other. Thank God the Princeton Seminary has a history! The past is safe. The memory of the two eminent men who were its first professors, and who gave it character, rests over it as a halo, and men will tread its halls for their sake with something of the feeling with which they visit the tombs of the good and great."<sup>1</sup>

On the 30th of April, 1862, the fiftieth anniversary of the Seminary was celebrated at Princeton. Dr. Sprague delivered, upon this occasion, a very appropriate and inter-

<sup>1</sup> Bib. Rep. and Princeton Rev., 1855, P. 158.



esting discourse, in which again he paid a hearty tribute of respect to Dr. Alexander and Dr. Miller. The first of a series of resolutions passed was as follows :—

“The Alumni of the Princeton Theological Seminary, assembled to celebrate its fiftieth Anniversary, record with devout gratitude their sense of the great goodness of God to this Institution. We especially recognize his beneficent Providence in raising up those two venerated men, ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER and SAMUEL MILLER, to become its first professors, and in sparing them to conduct its affairs with pre-eminent wisdom and fidelity for forty years.”

The following is Dr. Miller’s epitaph, prepared by his junior colleague, the Rev. Dr. Hodge.

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF

SAMUEL MILLER, D.D., LL.D.

Born at Dover, Delaware, Oct. 31, 1769.

Died at Princeton, N. J., Jan. 7, 1850.

For twenty-one years Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church  
in the city of New York,

For thirty-six years Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Church  
Government in the Theological Seminary  
in this place,

In both callings, faithful and edifying ;  
An acceptable and evangelical preacher ;  
A learned and assiduous teacher ;  
A voluminous and celebrated author ;  
Firm in adhering to truth, and bold to maintain it ;  
Revered in the Councils of the Church  
which he loved and served,  
And of whose ministers he was among the  
most distinguished and beloved  
Through all its extent.

In private life admired and cherished,  
Exemplary in social and domestic relations,  
A model of Christian courtesy,  
An elegant and varied scholar,  
Without a blemish on his good name,  
Temperate, Diligent, Devout,  
Humble, Forgiving, Beneficent,  
He lived esteemed by thousands,  
and died amidst light and joy  
from the Lord Jesus Christ,  
In whom was all his hope.

The Directors of the Theological Seminary  
of which he was so long an ornament and blessing,  
In gratitude for his services and reverence for his  
memory,  
Have erected this monument.

## 4. LAST YEARS OF MRS. MILLER.—HER DEATH.

1850, 1861.

Mrs. Miller survived her husband upwards of eleven years—sorrowful, yet always rejoicing. It seemed, at times, as if the loss of the companion of her youth pressed more and more heavily upon her; but as her day was, so was her strength; no one acquainted with her christian walk, doubted that she was constantly growing in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. In less than three years after Dr. Miller's death, she lost her eldest surviving brother, John Sergeant<sup>1</sup>—the next younger of the family to herself. Pursuing her accustomed course of labour, at home and abroad—still specially interested in the education of the young, and ready for every good word and work—she passed gradually, and almost imperceptibly, down the vale of life, constantly refreshed at the ever flowing fountain of heavenly grace.

<sup>1</sup> He was born on the 5th of December, 1779; prepared for College in the Preparatory schools of the University of Pennsylvania; and at Princeton, in 1795, graduated Bachelor of Arts. After a brief apprenticeship in the mercantile house of Messrs. Elliston and John Perot, he studied law with the Honorable Jared Ingersoll, and was admitted to the bar, yet a minor, in July, 1799. Very soon he obtained a large and lucrative practice. In 1800 he was appointed Deputy Attorney General for Philadelphia and Chester counties; in 1801 by Mr. Jefferson, a Commissioner of Bankruptcy. In 1805 and 1807, he was in the State Legislature, a foremost and successful advocate for internal improvements. In 1806, he declined the appointment of City Recorder. In 1815, he was elected to Congress, where he remained during four successive terms of the House of Representatives. Here he distinguished himself in 1820, as a leading advocate of the Missouri restriction upon Slavery, in consequence of which he was re-elected without opposition. In 1825, he was President of the Pennsylvania Board of Canal Commissioners. In 1826, he was commissioned by Mr. Adams as one of the ministers plenipotentiary to the proposed American Congress at Panama. On his return from this fruitless errand; he was elected to Congress. In 1832, he was the Whig candidate for the Vice Presidency of the United States, Mr. Clay being the candidate for President. He was President of the Convention, which assembled in 1838, to remodel the Constitution of Pennsylvania. In 1840, he was elected again, and for the last time, to Congress. Subsequently, he received from Mr. Tyler the nomination of Minister to the Court of St. James, which he declined. By Mr. Marcy, Secretary of War, he was appointed arbitrator to determine a long pending and vexatious controversy, between the United States and the State of New Jersey, which was finally settled by his award. He died, after a lingering decline, on the 23rd of November, 1852.

Her decline was slower even, if possible, than Dr. Miller's, and she was not confined at all to her bed. By day, she reclined upon a couch in the family sitting-room, and there, unexpectedly, and quietly as an infant drops asleep, she closed her eyes, at length, upon all earthly scenes. Of the "article of death" she had frequently expressed a lingering dread; and it seemed as if, though to the last retaining her mental faculties, she was borne in tender mercy across the river, without feeling its cold waters. She died on Saturday, the 2d of February, 1861, having, a month before, completed her eighty-third year.

Her funeral was attended on Wednesday afternoon by a large concourse, the exercises of the day in both the Seminary and the College being suspended out of respect to her memory. The Rev. Dr. McDonald, of the First Presbyterian Church, in which the religious services were held, preached, as her pastor, an able and appropriate discourse from Psalm 92, 14. The Rev. Dr. Hodge took part in the exercises. Her mortal remains were then deposited in the village grave yard, beside those of her husband. It was almost sixty years since their first union in life, when they were thus united in death, and, as to their corruptible bodies, in the sepulchre.

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