

W. C. Shields - '89 -

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THE

DISTINCTIVE PRINCIPLES

OF THE

Presbyterian Church in the United States,

COMMONLY CALLED

THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

AS SET FORTH IN THE FORMAL DECLARATIONS, AND ILLUSTRATED BY EXTRACTS FROM PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, FROM 1861-70.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

EXTRACTS FROM THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE O. S. ASSEMBLY, FROM 1861-67;

AND

OF THE N. S. ASSEMBLY, FROM 1861-66.

SECOND EDITION.

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PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION submits this pamphlet to the public, under the immediate order of the General Assembly. In exercising the discretion conferred on it, the Committee has made the compilation somewhat larger than was probably intended at first; but nothing has been inserted which is not included within the language of the resolution of the Assembly. It is not necessary to give the reasons in detail which have prevailed with the Committee in making this compilation, some of which originated and others have gained additional force since the adoption of the resolution. It will be manifest, however, on the least reflection, that it will be a convenience and advantage to our ministers and people, to have before them, in a compact form, all the documents and facts which bear on these subjects. Moreover, the Committee was persuaded that this full digest of the proceedings was necessary in order to accomplish the very objects aimed at by the Assembly, which are supposed to have been such as the following: 1. To correct the misrepresentations of the position, principles and action of our Church, which have been extensively published in America and Europe. 2. To bring afresh before the minds of our own people, the principles which led to the organization of our Church, which we have steadfastly maintained, and to the faithful adherence to which we are distinctly committed. 3. To make the utterances of the Assembly touching the spiritual and non-secular character of the Church, a living and permanent testimony, especially at this time when this principle is becoming a subject of increasing inquiry among the Protestant Churches on both sides of the Atlantic.

A careful examination and study of the declarations and pro-

proceedings here presented is earnestly desired; and it will be seen that they constitute a complete vindication of our Church against the accusations by which its good name has been defamed. As this pamphlet will fall into the hands of many who have not previously examined the subject, the Committee desires to call attention to some of the more important facts and principles which are herein set forth.

I. THE RELATION OF THE CHURCH TO THE STATE.

I. It will be seen that the doctrine announced and maintained by the Assembly, on the relation of the Church to the State, is not, as has often been charged, the unscriptural and impracticable idea that the Church and Christians as such have no duties to perform toward the State. True, the Assembly denies the right of Church courts to interfere with the domain of Cæsar by legislating on political questions; but, at the same time, it enjoins the duties which the citizen owes to the Commonwealth. "The relation of the Church of Christ to the State," says the Assembly of 1865, "is not one *de jure*, but *de facto*. As right and good, or wrong and wicked, they rise and fall by the agency or permission of God's providence. In either case, the attitude of the Church towards them is essentially the same. As long as they stand and are acknowledged, obedience is to be enjoined as a duty; factious resistance is to be condemned as a sin." "The only serious danger of collision" between the Church and State, says the Assembly of 1861, "is where moral duty is conditioned on a political question. Under the pretext of inculcating duty, the Church may usurp the power to determine the question which conditions it; and that is precisely what she is debarred from doing. The condition must be given. She must accept it from the State, and then her own course is clear. If Cæsar is your master, then pay tribute to him; but whether the 'if' holds; whether Cæsar is your master or not; whether he ever had any just authority; whether he now retains it or has forfeited it, these are points which the Church has no commission to adjudicate."

Now, in 1861, at the time of its organization, the Assembly found the people represented in it placed under the civil author-

ity of the Confederate government, and that of the respective States which constituted it. Its authority was disputed, not among us, but outside of our bounds; and the United States government was only known to us, as a nation with which we were at war, menacing us by land and by sea.

Under these circumstances, in accordance with the above principles, the Assembly recognized "the powers that be," which "are ordained of God," to be none other than the Confederate States, and the respective States confederated in it. Hence, the Assembly was simply carrying out its own principles, and the doctrines of the Word of God, when it taught the citizen and the soldier to discharge to the Confederate government the duties which the Scriptures enjoin towards the civil power; teaching them to render to Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; "tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour;" and when it made intercession "for all that are in authority."

In all this action of the General Assembly, fairly considered, there is nothing that offends against the principles set forth in its formal declarations. Nor is there anything which contravenes the doctrines of the Kentucky and Missouri Synods, which have contended for the same principles we have maintained, as they have given their views to the world in the "Declaration and Testimony," or as they are presented in the letter of the Synod of Kentucky to the Assembly of 1867. Of this letter the portions that relate to this subject are given in this pamphlet.

There is a single clause in the narrative of 1862 which is frequently quoted as violating these principles. Looking at that paragraph from our present condition, it has a seeming political aspect. But let us candidly consider the situation of the country when that Assembly was in session. Our government was confessedly none other than the Confederate government; and the war, if successful on the part of the United States, threatened the extermination of that government, the forfeiture of our political rights, the destruction of our domestic institutions, the loss of our property, and other evils to Church and State which were universally dreaded, because announced in the proclamations of military commanders. Under such circumstances what

do we find that the Assembly did? Simply utter a strong declaration of sympathy for our people, the members of our own congregations, who were engaged in an effort to avert these calamities, and a decided expression of approval of those who were performing these acts of patriotic duty, with the offering of its heartfelt prayers on their behalf; and that very unanimity for which it renders thanks to God, went far to justify the expression of them. But whether this explanation is accepted or not, the Assembly has made as full concession on this point as any one ought to require, when it acknowledges that a close criticism may detect some incidental clauses in our proceedings inconsistent with the formal declarations of the Assembly on the subject.

2. It will be seen there is no discussion of any political question, nor the announcement of any political dogma whatsoever, in the Pastoral Letter to our youth in the army. Its politics it accepted from the State, which consisted in recognizing the actual posture of the case. Taking this for granted, it based its counsels to our youth on the situation in which they were placed in the providence of God, and under the call of the government, which they were bound by the law of God to obey.

3. The prayers offered, it will be seen, were for God's blessing on this people, at a time of blockade, invasion, and all the calamities of war. It was always done simply as an act of holy worship, and with the hope and expectation of the Divine blessing. It was never done as a matter of political significancy, or because it was required as a manifestation of allegiance to the Confederate government. On the other hand, our ministers suffered imprisonment, persecution, the despoiling of their goods, and banishment, because they would not make their prayers the vehicle for proclaiming the restoration of the authority of the government of the United States in the places occupied by the army during the progress of the war; not because any one of them objected to praying for the government and officers under whose power they were actually placed, but because they would not prostitute the occasions of worship to political purposes, nor engage in the professed worship of God under military or governmental dictation.

Again : Let the pastoral letter of 1865 be carefully read, and it will be seen that the Assembly, after the Confederate govern-

ment was overturned, was far more positive and careful in explaining the duties of our people towards the United States than it ever had been in enjoining duty towards the Confederate government. During the war, the people performed the duties of the citizen towards the government with a spontaneous unanimity which rendered any special injunctions from the Assembly unnecessary; and hence, in all its proceedings, it will be seen those duties are simply taken for granted. But, when the Confederate government was defeated and the circumstances of the people wholly changed, the authority of the Church in enjoining the duties which the new relations required, was found necessary to quiet agitation and to satisfy the consciences of our people. Hence the Assembly enjoins the duties which the Scriptures prescribe to the civil magistrate, as due to the United States; and bases its instructions on the ground that the practical question which conditions these duties is not in dispute; because the authority of the United States as the actual or *de facto* government is universally conceded.

It was just so among *us* during the war; and hence, by unanimous vote, the Church took the name indicative of the *de facto* state of things: it was the Church in the Confederate States. When the war was over, the government *de facto* by which we were held in subjection and to which we owed our political duties was that of the United States, and the name of the Church was changed accordingly. In neither case did the Assembly say a word as to the rightfulness or wrongfulness of these governments respectively, but only acknowledged the actual existing facts, and recognised the corresponding obligations. In so doing it did not transcend its sphere, according to its own doctrines. But if it did in the first instance, much more in the second. This will not be affirmed.

II. THE SUBJECT OF SLAVERY.

The extracts given from the proceedings of the Assembly about slaves and slavery, will be read with interest and pleasure. It ought here to be stated, as an additional fact, that the paper of Dr. J. A. Lyon was on the relation of master and servant, and on the treatment of slaves; and that of Dr. J. L. Wilson was on their

religious instruction. Both of these papers were before the Assembly of 1864, and were received with great favour by that body, but required some verbal alterations. A few phrases having been objected to, and Dr. Lyon having requested some one else to be appointed to the service, these papers were referred for such amendment to a committee of which Dr. Dabney was chairman. Before it had time to meet, tidings from the war were received which created apprehensions that members might be prevented from returning home, and this caused a sudden adjournment of the Assembly. Before another Assembly met the institution of slavery was overturned, and the two papers became obsolete.

In the Narrative of the state of religion for 1864, two expressions concerning slavery are found which have given rise to much criticism. It is proper to state, as a preliminary remark, that these Narratives in general are not closely scrutinized when presented in the General Assembly, inasmuch as they are not expected to introduce difficult or debatable points. And in regard to the Narrative for that year, it is a well known fact that it was read on the very eve of the final adjournment of the body, at a time when the most exciting reports of battles occurring or impending had just reached the place, (Charlotte, North Carolina,) and when the members, apprehensive of being cut off by military operations from a return home, were impatient to get away. If, therefore, some things may be found in this paper less carefully expressed than could be desired, the statement just presented may account for the fact that attention was not drawn to them. But taking them as they are, there are certain remarks to be offered which are due to a fair understanding. We notice,

I. The expression that “domestic servitude is of divine appointment.”

Slavery has existed under various forms, as in the villanage of England, the serfdom of Russia and the peonage of Mexico. Domestic servitude is an instance in which the order of things constituting slavery is made a part of the family relation. The head of the family is the master, and the slave is subject in the use of his time and labour, to the control of the master, as are other members of the family. Properly explained, it may be

rightly affirmed that domestic servitude is of divine appointment.

(1.) Not precisely in the sense that civil government, as opposed to anarchy, is of divine appointment.

(2.) Nor precisely in the sense that marriage is the divinely appointed law of society, as opposed to concubinage, polygamy and general licentiousness.

Civil government under some form, and marriage under the prescribed form, are absolutely necessary to the social state, and are therefore obligatory upon all conditions of society.

(3.) The essential principle of slavery is submission or subjection to control by the will of another. This is an essential element in every form of civil government, also, and in the family relation itself.

(4.) The application of this principle in the form of "domestic servitude" is right or wrong according to circumstances. It is not an institution essential to the social state, and therefore is not of universal obligation. But in certain conditions of society it has been expressly recognized by God, permitted and appointed. See Ex. xx: 10, 17, Ex. xxi: 7; Lev. xxv: 44-46; Matt. v: 17; 1 Tim. vi: 1-4-

When established in such conditions of society as render it lawful and proper, it becomes a right arrangement of the civil government.

(5.) If domestic servitude was ever justifiable, the circumstances of the case in this country made it right and best that such should be the relation, in general, of the negro to the white population.

(6.) If it was a relation justifiable and lawful in the sight of God, it was of divine appointment, since whatever is thus lawful implies the sanction of the Lawgiver. And the existence of wrong laws and usages connected with it, no more disproves the lawfulness of the relation itself, than such things disprove the lawfulness of marriage or of civil government.

(7.) The dogma which denies the lawfulness of this relation under any circumstances; which condemns it as always contrary to the Divine will; which asserts its inherent sinfulness, is completely contradicted by the plainest facts and teachings of the

Old Testament and the New; is a doctrine unknown to the Church until recent times; is a pernicious heresy, embracing a principle not only infidel and fanatical, but subversive of every relation of life, and every civil government upon earth.

II. It is affirmed that it was "the peculiar mission of the Southern Church to conserve the institution of slavery."

Concerning this we remark—

(1.) That the same form of expression is to be found in the Minutes of the General Assembly (New School) of 1865. In a carefully considered paper on "the state of the country," that Assembly say:

God has taught us, in this war, that the Church must conserve the State, by instructing the people in the great principles of justice, and inspiring them to practice the same.

No exception has been taken to this expression, which was uttered the year after it was used by our Assembly. In the sense intended the sentiment is entirely proper. But if any one will define the sense in which it is proper for the Church to "conserve the State," in the same sense it would be also proper for it to "conserve the institution of slavery." It certainly is not the duty of the Church to conserve the State in the sense of dictating what form of civil government it shall establish, how long it shall continue, or for what causes it should be changed. Its duty is limited to condemning at all times factious resistance to established civil authority, to inculcating obedience while it remains, and those virtues, by which it may be made, as far as possible, a blessing to society. The very same applies to slavery; and whoever will read in its connection the expression used by our Assembly, must see that such is the sense there intended by that word; namely, to make the best of the institution as it existed, and by the ministration of that Gospel entrusted to the Church, to "make it a blessing both to master and slave." This, we know, was the sense intended by the writer of the Narrative, and we have no doubt was the sense in which the Assembly adopted it.

(2.) It has been widely proclaimed that our Assembly meant, by the word "conserve," to assert that it was the duty of the Church to *perpetuate* the institution of slavery.

On this point it may be remarked,

(a) That no such intention is to be gathered from the context.

(b.) That such an interpretation of the Assembly's meaning is negated by the explicit and carefully considered statement of our Church on this very point, at its first organization in 1861, where it declares concerning slavery: "The policy of its existence or non-existence is a question which exclusively belongs to the State. We have no right to enjoin it as a duty, or condemn it as a sin." It is a maxim of law and common sense, that all documents are to be construed by a comparison of one part with another; what is obscure is to be explained by what is explicit.

(c.) **Even those** who have raised a clamor against us, do not **themselves seem** to be satisfied that the word "conserve" necessarily **means to perpetuate**. This is evident from the fact that in the **Minutes** of their General Assembly, charging us with "grievous heresy," and "blasphemy," they repeatedly misquote, and therefore misrepresent us. The word *perpetuate* is never used by our Assembly, but is to be found in the *interpolation* of its accusers! See Minutes of the General Assembly (North) for 1865, p. 560., etc.

(d.) Finally, conceding as we do that the word "conserve," in this connection is ambiguous, our Assembly in 1865 has done all that **the case demanded**. In the sense already explained, and the one **intended**, **it** conveyed a sentiment proper to be held by **any Church of Christ**. But it had been widely represented as conveying a meaning not intended, and which neither that Assembly nor our Church ever held: it was therefore proper it should be relieved from the responsibility of such an interpretation. Formally to expunge or repudiate the record would have been an act uncalled for, if not unseemly. All that was necessary or proper was to declare that the Address of 1861 "contains the only full, unambiguous, deliberate and authoritative exposition of our views in regard to this matter." (See Pastoral Letter.) The design of introducing that sentence was expressly stated in the Assembly of 1865, and it was adopted for the special purpose of disavowing an interpretation which was inconsistent with the deliberately expressed views of our Church.

III. UNION WITH THE UNITED SYNOD.

III. It will be seen that the plan of union with the United Synod,

as originally prepared by the joint Committees, was amended so that the Presbyteries of the United Synod were received into the Synods of the General Assembly; thus preserving the undoubted historical succession of the Assembly, and maintaining the authority of all its testimonies and precedents; and it will also be seen that the doctrinal testimony was only omitted because it had subserved its purpose, and was no longer necessary. It had been unanimously adopted by all the Presbyteries of the United Synod which finally united with us, and by a large majority of the Presbyteries under the care of the Assembly. No alteration was made in the position, the regulations, or the principles of our Church; and what is far more important, *none was asked*. The reason is obvious; we were like-minded; and well did the Assembly of 1864 assert that our conferences had shown such unanimity as might "ground an honourable union."

Again: Let it be observed that a large part of the United Synod never united with the Assembly. There were elements in it that could not, or at all events did not harmonize with us. The Presbyteries of the District of Columbia and of Ozark (in Missouri,) did not unite with us, and a majority of the ministers and churches of East Tennessee did not.

Again: Observe that the proceedings of the Assembly about the doctrinal statement are such that no minister could consistently have united with the Assembly, who held any of the doctrines condemned by that testimony.

IV. ACTION OF THE NORTHERN CHURCH.

IV. The extracts given from the records of the Northern Assemblies are only sufficient to illustrate the allusions in the pastoral letter.

With these brief explanations, this pamphlet is submitted to the Christian public, with the hope that it will serve to set forth the true principles of our Church, and thus promote the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace.

By order of the Committee:

E. THOMPSON BAIRD,
Secretary of Publication.

ADDRESS
BY THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TO ALL THE CHURCHES OF JESUS CHRIST THROUGHOUT
THE EARTH, UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED AT THEIR
SESSIONS IN AUGUSTA, GEORGIA,
DECEMBER, 1861.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America to all the Churches of Jesus Christ throughout the earth, greeting: Grace, mercy and peace be multiplied upon you!

Dearlly Beloved Brethren:

It is probably known to you that the Presbyteries and Synods in the Confederate States, which were formerly in connection with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, have renounced the jurisdiction of that body; and dissolved the ties which bound them ecclesiastically with their brethren of the North. This act of separation left them without any formal union among themselves. But as they were one in faith and order, and still adhered to their old standards, measures were promptly adopted for giving expression to their unity, by the organization of a Supreme Court, upon the model of the one whose authority they had just relinquished. Commissioners, duly appointed, from all the Presbyteries of these Confederate States, met accordingly, in the city of Augusta, on the fourth day of December, in the

year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-one, and then and there proceeded to constitute the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate State of America. The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States—that is to say, the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, the Form of Government, the Book of Discipline, and the Directory for Worship—were unanimously and solemnly declared to be the Constitution of the Church in the Confederate States, with no other change than the substitution of Confederate for United wherever the country is mentioned in the standards. The Church, therefore, in these seceded States, presents now the spectacle of a separate, and independent and complete organization, under the style and title of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America. In thus taking its place among sister Churches of this and other countries, it seems proper that it should set forth the causes which have impelled it to separate from the Church of the North, and to indicate a general view of the course which it feels it incumbent upon it to pursue in the new circumstances in which it is placed.

We should be sorry to be regarded by our brethren in any part of the world as guilty of schism. We are not conscious of any purpose to rend the body of Christ. On the contrary, our aim has been to promote the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace. If we know our own hearts, and can form any just estimate of the motives which have governed us, we have been prompted by a sincere desire to promote the glory of God, and the efficiency, energy, harmony and zeal of His visible kingdom in the earth. We have separated from our brethren of the North as Abraham separated from Lot—because we are persuaded that the interests of true religion will be more effectually subserved by two independent Churches, under the circumstances in which the two countries are placed, than by one united body:

1. In the first place, the course of the last Assembly, at Philadelphia, conclusively shows that if we should

remain together, the political questions which divide us as citizens, will be obtruded on our Church Courts, and discussed by Christian Ministers and Elders with all the acrimony, bitterness and rancour with which such questions are usually discussed by men of the world. Our Assembly would present a mournful spectacle of strife and debate. Commissioners from the Northern would meet with Commissioners from the Southern Confederacy, to wrangle over the questions which have split them into two Confederacies, and involved them in furious and bloody war. They would denounce each other, on the one hand, as tyrants and oppressors, and on the other, as traitors and rebels. The Spirit of God would take His departure from these scenes of confusion, and leave the Church lifeless and powerless, an easy prey to the sectional divisions and angry passions of its members. Two nations, under any circumstances, except those of perfect homogeneousness, cannot be united in one Church, without the rigid exclusion of all civil and secular questions from its halls. Where the countries differ in their customs and institutions, and view each other with an eye of jealousy and rivalry, if national feelings are permitted to enter the Church Courts, there must be an end of harmony and peace. The prejudices of the man and the citizen will prove stronger than the charity of the Christian. When they have allowed themselves to denounce each other for their national peculiarities, it will be hard to join in cordial fellowship as members of the same spiritual family. Much more must this be the case where the nations are not simply rivals, but enemies—when they hate each other with a cruel hatred—when they are engaged in a ferocious and bloody war, and when the worst passions of human nature are stirred to their very depths. An Assembly composed of representatives from two such countries, could have no security for peace except in a steady, uncompromising adherence to the Scriptural principle, that it would know no man after the flesh; that it would abolish the distinctions of Barbarian, Scythian, bond and free, and recognize nothing but the new creature in

Christ Jesus. The moment it permits itself to know the Confederate or the United States, the moment its members meet as citizens of these countries, our political differences will be transferred to the house of God, and the passions of the forum will expel the Spirit of Holy Love and of Christian communion.

We cannot condemn a man, in one breath, as unfaithful to the most solemn earthly interests—his country and his race—and commend him in the next as a loyal and faithful servant of his God. If we distrust his patriotism, our confidence is apt to be very measured in his piety. The old adage will hold here as in other things, *falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus*.

The only conceivable condition, therefore, upon which the Church of the North and the South could remain together as one body, with any prospect of success, is the rigorous exclusion of the questions and passions of the forum from its halls of debate. This is what always ought to be done. The provinces of Church and State are perfectly distinct, and the one has no right to usurp the jurisdiction of the other. The State is a natural institute, founded in the constitution of man as moral and social, and designed to realize the idea of justice. It is the society of rights. The Church is a supernatural institute, founded in the facts of redemption, and is designed to realize the idea of grace. It is the society of the redeemed. The State aims at social order, the Church at spiritual holiness. The State looks to the visible and outward, the Church is concerned for the invisible and inward. The badge of the State's authority is the sword, by which it becomes a terror to evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well. The badge of the Church's authority is the keys, by which it opens and shuts the Kingdom of Heaven, according as men are believing or impenitent. The power of the Church is exclusively spiritual, that of the State includes the exercise of force. The Constitution of the Church is a Divine revelation; the Constitution of the State must be determined by human reason and the course of Providential events. The Church has no right to construct

or modify a government for the State, and the State has no right to frame a creed or polity for the Church. They are as planets moving in different orbits, and unless each is confined to its own track, the consequences may be as disastrous in the moral world, as the collision of different spheres in the world of matter. It is true that there is a point at which their respective jurisdictions seem to meet—in the idea of duty. But even duty is viewed by each in very different lights. The Church enjoins it as obedience to God, and the State enforces it as the safeguard of order. But there can be no collision, unless one or the other blunders as to the things that are materially right. When the State makes wicked laws, contradicting the eternal principles of rectitude, the Church is at liberty to testify against them; and humbly to petition that they may be repealed. In like manner, if the Church becomes seditious and a disturber of the peace, the State has a right to abate the nuisance. In ordinary cases, however, there is not likely to be a collision. Among a Christian people, there is little difference of opinion as to the radical distinctions of right and wrong. The only serious danger is where moral duty is conditioned upon a political question. Under the pretext of inculcating duty, the Church may usurp the power to determine the question which conditions it, and that is precisely what she is debarred from doing. The condition must be given. She must accept it from the State, and then her own course is clear. If Cæsar is your master, then pay tribute to him; but whether he holds, whether Cæsar is your master or not, whether he ever had any just authority, whether he now retains it, or has forfeited it, these are points which the Church has no commission to adjudicate.

Had these principles been steadily maintained by the Assembly at Philadelphia, it is possible that the ecclesiastical separation of the North and South might have been deferred for years to come. Our Presbyteries, many of them, clung with tenderness to the recollections of the past. Sacred memories gathered around that venerable Church which had breasted many a storm

and trained our fathers for glory. It had always been distinguished for its conservative influence, and many fondly hoped that, even in the present emergency, it would raise its placid and serene head above the tumults of popular passion, and bid defiance to the angry billows which rolled at its feet. We expected it to bow in reverence only at the name of Jesus. Many dreamed that it would utterly refuse to know either Confederates or Federalists, and utterly refuse to give any authoritative decree without a "thus saith the Lord." It was ardently desired that the sublime spectacle might be presented of one Church upon earth combining in cordial fellowship and in holy love—the disciples of Jesus in different and even in hostile lands. But, alas! for the weakness of man, these golden visions were soon dispelled. The first thing which roused our Presbyteries to look the question of separation seriously in the face, was the course of the Assembly in venturing to determine, as a Court of Jesus Christ, which it did by necessary implication, the true interpretation of the Constitution of the United States as to the kind of government it intended to form. A political theory was, to all intents and purposes, propounded, which made secession a crime, the seceding States rebellious, and the citizens who obeyed them traitors. We say nothing here as to the righteousness or unrighteousness of these decrees. What we maintain is, that whether right or wrong, the Church had no right to make them—she transcended her sphere, and usurped the duties of the State. The discussion of these questions, we are sorry to add, was in the spirit and temper of partizan declaimers. The Assembly, driven from its ancient moorings, was tossed to and fro by the waves of popular passion. Like Pilate, it obeyed the clamor of the multitude, and though acting in the name of Jesus, it kissed the sceptre and bowed the knee to the mandates of Northern phrenzy. The Church was converted into the forum, and the Assembly was henceforward to become the arena of sectional divisions and national animosities.

We frankly admit that the mere unconstitutionality

of the proceedings of the last Assembly is not, in itself considered, a sufficient ground of separation. It is the consequences of these proceedings which make them so offensive. It is the door which they open for the introduction of the worst passions of human nature into the deliberations of Church Courts. The spirit of these proceedings, if allowed to prevail, would forever banish peace from the Church, and there is no reason to hope that the tide which has begun to flow can soon be arrested. The two Confederacies hate each other more intensely now than they did in May, and if their citizens should come together upon the same floor, whatever might be the errand that brought them there, they could not be restrained from smiting each other with the fist of wickedness. For the sake of peace, therefore, for Christian charity, for the honour of the Church, and for the glory of God, we have been constrained, as much as in us lies, to remove all occasion of offence. We have quietly separated, and we are grateful to God that while leaving for the sake of peace, we leave it with the humble consciousness that we ourselves have never given occasion to break the peace. We have never confounded Cæsar and Christ, and we have never mixed the issues of this world with the weighty matters that properly belong to us as citizens of the Kingdom of God.

2. Though the immediate occasion of separation was the course of the General Assembly at Philadelphia in relation to the Federal government and the war, yet there is another ground on which the independent organization of the Southern Church can be amply and scripturally maintained. The unity of the Church does not require a formal bond of union among all the congregations of believers throughout the earth. It does not demand a vast imperial monarchy like that of Rome, nor a strictly universal council, like that to which the complete development of Presbyterianism would naturally give rise. The Church Catholic is one in Christ, but it is not necessarily one visible, all-absorbing organization upon earth. There is no schism where there is no

breach of charity. Churches may be perfectly at one in every principle of faith and order, and yet geographically distinct and mutually independent. As the unity of the human race is not disturbed by its division into countries and nations, so the unity of the spiritual seed of Christ is neither broken nor impaired by separation and division into various Church constitutions. Accordingly in the Protestant countries, Church organizations have followed national lines. The Calvinistic Churches of Switzerland are distinct from the Reformed Church of France. The Presbyterians of Ireland belong to a different Church from the Presbyterians of Scotland, and the Presbyterians of this country constitute a Church, in like manner, distinct from all other Churches on the globe. That the division into national Churches, that is, Churches bounded by national lines, is, in the present condition of human nature, a benefit, seems to us too obvious for proof. It realizes to the Church Catholic all the advantages of a division of labor. It makes a Church organization homogeneous and compact—it stimulates holy rivalry and zeal—it removes all grounds of suspicion and jealousy on the part of the State. What is lost in expansion is gained in energy. The Church Catholic, as thus divided, and yet spiritually one, divided, but not rent, is a beautiful illustration of the great philosophical principle which pervades all nature—the co-existence of the one with the many.

If it is desirable that each nation should contain a separate and an independent Church, the Presbyteries of these Confederate States need no apology for bowing to the decree of Providence, which, in withdrawing their country from the government of the United States, has at the same time determined that they should withdraw from the Church of their fathers. It is not that they have ceased to love it—not that they have abjured its ancient principles, or forgotten its glorious history. It is to give these same principles a richer, freer, fuller development among ourselves than they possibly could receive under foreign culture. It is precisely because we love that Church as it was, and that

Church as it should be, that we have resolved, as far as in us lies, to realise its grand idea in the country, and under the government where God has cast our lot. With the supreme control of ecclesiastical affairs in our own hands, we may be able, in some competent measure, to consummate this result. In subjection to a foreign power, we could no more accomplish it than the Church in the United States could have been developed in dependence upon the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. The difficulty there would have been, not the distance of Edinburgh from New York, Philadelphia or Charleston, but the difference in the manners, habits, customs and ways of thinking, the social, civil, and political institutions of the people. These same difficulties exist in relation to the Confederate and United States, and render it eminently proper that the Church in each should be as separate and independent as the Governments.

In addition to this, there is one difference which so radically and fundamentally distinguishes the North and the South, that it is becoming every day more and more apparent that the religious, as well as the secular interests of both will be more effectually promoted by a complete and lasting separation. The antagonism of Northern and Southern sentiment on the subject of slavery lies at the root of all the difficulties which have resulted in the dismemberment of the Federal Union, and involved us in the horrors of an unnatural war. The Presbyterian Church in the United States has been enabled by the Divine grace to pursue, for the most part, an eminently conservative, because a thoroughly scriptural policy in relation to this delicate question. It has planted itself upon the Word of God, and utterly refused to make slaveholding a sin, or non-slaveholding a term of communion. But though both sections are agreed as to this general principle, it is not to be disguised that the North exercises a deep and settled antipathy to slavery itself, while the South is equally zealous in its defence. Recent events can have no other effect than to confirm the antipathy on the one hand, and to strengthen the attachment on the other. The North-

ern section of the Church stands in the awkward predicament of maintaining in one breath that slavery is an evil which ought to be abolished, and of asserting in the next that it is not a sin to be visited by exclusion from communion of the saints. The consequence is, that it plays partly into the hands of abolitionists, and partly into the hands of slaveholders, and weakens its influence with both. It occupies the position of a prevaricating witness whom neither party will trust. It would be better, therefore, for the moral power of the Northern section of the Church to get entirely quit of the subject. At the same time it is intuitively obvious that the Southern section of the Church, while even partially under the control of those who are hostile to slavery, can never have free and unimpeded access to the slave population. Its Ministers and Elders will always be liable to some degree of suspicion. In the present circumstances, Northern alliance would be absolutely fatal. It would utterly preclude the Church from a wide and commanding field of usefulness. This is too dear a price to be paid for a nominal union. We cannot afford to give up these millions of souls and consign them, so far as our efforts are concerned, to hopeless perdition, for the sake of preserving an outward unity, which after all, is an empty shadow. If we would gird ourselves heartily and in earnest for the work which God has set before us, we must have the control of our ecclesiastical affairs, and declare ourselves separate and independent.

And here we may venture to lay before the Christian world our views as a Church, upon the subject of slavery. We beg a candid hearing.

In the first place, we would have it distinctly understood, that, in our ecclesiastical capacity, we are neither the friends nor the foes of slavery, that is to say, we have no commission either to propogate or abolish it. The policy of its existence or non-existence is a question which exclusively belongs to the State. We have no right, as a Church, to enjoin it as a duty, or to condemn it as sin. Our business is with the duties that spring from the relation; the duties of the masters on the one hand, and of

their slaves on the other. These duties we are to proclaim and to enforce with spiritual sanctions. The social, civil, political problems connected with this great subject transcend our sphere, as God has not entrusted to His Church the organization of society, the construction of governments, nor the allotment of individuals to their various stations. The Church has as much right to preach to the monarchies of Europe and the despotisms of Asia, the doctrines of republican equality, as to preach to the governments of the South, the extirpation of slavery. This position is impregnable, unless it can be shown that slavery is a sin. Upon every other hypothesis, it is so clearly a question for the State, that the proposition would never for a moment have been doubted, had there not been a foregone conclusion in relation to its moral character. Is slavery, then, a sin?

In answering this question, as a Church, let it be distinctly borne in mind that the only rule of judgment is the written word of God. The Church knows nothing of the intuitions of reason or the deductions of philosophy, except those reproduced in in the Sacred Canon. She has a positive constitution in the Holy Scriptures, and has no right to utter a single syllable upon any subject, except as the Lord puts words in her mouth. She is founded, in other words, upon express *revelation*. Her creed is an authoritative testimony of God and not a speculation, and what she proclaims, she must proclaim with the infallible certitude of faith, and not with the hesitating assent of an opinion. The question, then, is brought within a narrow compass: Do the Scriptures directly or indirectly condemn slavery as a sin? If they do not, the dispute is ended, for the Church, without forfeiting her character, dares not go beyond them.

Now, we venture to assert that if men had drawn their conclusions upon this subject only from the Bible, it would no more have entered into any human head to denounce slavery as a sin, than to denounce monarchy, aristocracy or poverty. The truth is, men have listened to what they falsely considered as primitive intuitions, or as ne-

cessary deductions from primitive cognitions, and then have gone to the Bible to confirm the crotchets of their vain philosophy. They have gone there determined to find a particular result, and the consequence is, they leave with having made, instead of having interpreted Scripture. Slavery is no new thing. It has not only existed for ages in the world, but it has existed under every dispensation of the covenant of grace, in the Church of God. Indeed, the first organization of the Church as a visible society, separate and distinct from the unbelieving world, was inaugurated in the family of a slaveholder. Among the very first persons to whom the seal of circumcision was affixed, were the slaves of the father of the faithful, some born in his house, and others bought with his money. Slavery again reappears under the law. God sanctions it in the first table of the Decalogue, and Moses treats it as an institution to be regulated, not abolished; legitimated, and not condemned. We come down to the age of the New Testament, and we find it again in the Churches founded by the apostles under the plenary inspiration of the Holy Ghost. These facts are utterly amazing, if slavery is the enormous sin which its enemies represent it to be. It will not do to say that the Scriptures have treated it only in a general, incidental way, without any clear implication as to its moral character. Moses surely made it the subject of express and positive legislation, and the apostles are equally explicit in inculcating the duties which spring from both sides of the relation. They treat slaves as bound to obey, and inculcate obedience as an office of religion—a thing wholly self-contradictory, if the authority exercised over them were unlawful and iniquitous.

But what puts this subject in a still clearer light, is the manner in which it is sought to extort from the Scriptures a contrary testimony. The notion of direct and explicit condemnation is given up. The attempt is to show that the genius and spirit of Christianity are opposed to it—that its great cardinal principles of virtue are utterly against it. Much stress is laid upon the

Golden Rule and upon the general denunciations of tyranny and oppression. To all this we reply, that no principle is clearer than that a case positively excepted cannot be included under a general rule. Let us concede, for a moment, that the laws of love, and the condemnation of tyranny and oppression, seem logically to involve as a result, the condemnation of slavery; yet, if slavery is afterwards expressly mentioned and treated as a lawful relation, it obviously follows, unless Scripture is to be interpreted as inconsistent with itself, that slavery is, by necessary implication, excepted. The Jewish law forbade, as a general rule, the marriage of a man with his brother's wife. The same law expressly enjoined the same marriage in a given case. The given case was, therefore, an exception, and not to be treated as a violation of the general rule. The law of love has always been the law of God. It was enunciated by Moses almost as clearly as it was enunciated by Jesus Christ. Yet, notwithstanding this law, Moses and the apostles alike sanctioned the relation of slavery. The conclusion is inevitable, either that the law is not opposed to it, or that slavery is an excepted case. To say that the prohibition of tyranny and oppression include slavery, is to beg the whole question. Tyranny and oppression involve either the unjust usurpation or the unlawful exercise of power. It is the unlawfulness, either in its principle or measure, which constitutes the core of the sin. Slavery must, therefore, be proved to be unlawful, before it can be referred to any such category. The master may, indeed, abuse his power, but he oppresses not simply as a master, but as a wicked master.

But, apart from all this, the law of love is simply the inculcation of universal equity. It implies nothing as to the existence of various ranks and gradations in society. The interpretation which makes it repudiate slavery, would make it equally repudiate all social, civil and political inequalities. Its meaning is, not that we should conform ourselves to the arbitrary expectations of others, but that we should render unto them precisely the same measure which, if we were in their circum-

stance, it would be reasonable and just in us to demand at their hands. It condemns slavery, therefore, only upon the supposition that slavery is a sinful relation—that is, he who extracts the prohibition of slavery from the Golden Rule, begs the very point in dispute.

We cannot prosecute the argument in detail, but we have said enough, we think, to vindicate the position of the Southern Church. We have assumed no new attitude. We stand exactly where the Church of God has always stood—from Abraham to Moses, from Moses to Christ, from Christ to the Reformers, and from the Reformers to ourselves. We stand upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone. Shall we be excluded from the fellowship of our brethren in other lands, because we dare not depart from the charter of our faith? Shall we be branded with the stigma of reproach, because we cannot consent to corrupt the word of God to suit the intuitions of an infidel philosophy? Shall our names be cast out as evil, and the finger of scorn pointed at us, because we utterly refuse to break our communion with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, with Moses, David and Isaiah, with apostles, prophets and martyrs, with all the noble army of confessors who have gone to glory from slave-holding countries and from a slave-holding Church, without ever having dreamed that they were living in mortal sin, by conniving at slavery in the midst of them? If so, we shall take consolation in the cheering consciousness that the Master has accepted us. We may be denounced, despised and cast out of the synagogues of our brethren. But while they are wrangling about the distinctions of men according to the flesh, we shall go forward in our divine work, and confidently anticipate that in the great day, as the consequence of our humble labors, we shall meet millions of glorified spirits, who have come up from the bondage of earth to a nobler freedom than human philosophy ever dreamed of. Others, if they please, may spend their time in declaiming on the tyranny of earthly masters: it will be our aim to resist the real tyrants which oppress the soul—Sin and Satan.

These are the foes against whom we shall find it employment enough to wage a successful war. And to this holy war it is the purpose of our Church to devote itself with redoubled energy. We feel that the souls of our slaves are a solemn trust, and we shall strive to present them faultless and complete before the presence of God.

Indeed, as we contemplate their condition in the Southern States, and contrast it with that of their fathers before them, and that of their brethren in the present day in their native land, we cannot but accept it as a gracious Providence that they have been brought in such numbers to our shores, and redeemed from the bondage of barbarism and sin. Slavery to them has certainly been overruled for the greatest good. It has been a link in the wondrous chain of Providence, through which many sons and daughters have been made heirs of the heavenly inheritance. The Providential result is, of course, no justification, if the thing is intrinsically wrong; but it is certainly a matter of devout thanksgiving, and no obscure intimation of the will and purpose of God, and of the consequent duty of the Church. We cannot forbear to say, however, that the general operation of the system is kindly and benevolent; it is a real and effective discipline; and without it, we are profoundly persuaded that the African race in the midst of us can never be elevated in the scale of being. As long as that race, in its comparative degradation, co-exists side by side with the white, bondage is its normal condition.

As to the endless declamation about human rights, we have only to say that human rights are not a fixed, but a fluctuating quantity. Their sum is not the same in any two nations on the globe. The rights of Englishmen are one thing, the rights of Frenchmen another. There is a minimum without which a man cannot be responsible; there is a maximum which expresses the highest degree of civilization and of Christian culture. The education of the species consists in its ascent along this line. As you go up, the number of rights increases,

but the number of individuals who possess them diminishes. As you come down the line, rights are diminished, but the individuals are multiplied. It is just the opposite of the predicamental scale of the logicians. There, comprehension diminishes as you ascend and extension increases, and comprehension increases as you descend and extension diminishes. Now, when it is said that slavery is inconsistent with human rights, we crave to understand what point in this line is the slave conceived to occupy. There are, no doubt, many rights which belong to other men—to Englishmen, to Frenchmen, to his master, for example—which are denied to him. But is he fit to possess them? Has God qualified him to meet the responsibilities which their possession necessarily implies? His place in the scale is determined by his competency to fulfil its duties. There are other rights which he certainly possesses, without which he could neither be human nor accountable. Before slavery can be charged with doing him injustice, it must be shown that the minimum which falls to his lot at the bottom of the line is out of proportion to his capacity and culture—a thing which can never be done by abstract speculation. The truth is, the education of the human race for liberty and virtue, is a vast Providential scheme, and God assigns to every man, by a wise and holy decree, the precise place he is to occupy in the great moral school of humanity. The scholars are distributed into classes, according to their competency and progress. For God is in history.

To avoid the suspicion of a conscious weakness of our cause, when contemplated from the side of pure speculation, we may advert for a moment to those pretended intuitions which stamp the reprobation of humanity upon this ancient and hoary institution. We admit that there are primitive principles of morals which lie at the root of human consciousness. But the question is, how are we to distinguish them? The subjective feeling of certainty is no adequate criterion, as that is equally felt in reference to crotchets and hereditary prejudices. The very point is to know when this certainty indicates a primi-

tive cognition, and when it does not. There must, therefore, be some eternal test, and whatever can not abide that test has no authority, as a primary truth. That test is an inward necessity of thought, which, in all minds at the proper stage of maturity is absolutely universal. Whatever is universal is natural. We are willing that slavery should be tried by this standard. We are willing to abide by the testimony of the race, and if man, as man, has everywhere condemned it—if all human laws have prohibited it as crime—if it stands in the same category with malice, murder, and theft, then we are willing, in the name of humanity, to renounce it, and to renounce it forever. But what if the overwhelming majority of mankind have approved it? what if philosophers and statesmen have justified it, and the laws of all nations acknowledged it; what then becomes of these luminous intuitions? They are an *ignis fatuus*, mistaken for a star.

We have now, brethren, in a brief compass, for the nature of this address admits only of an outline, opened to you our whole hearts upon this delicate and vexed subject. We have concealed nothing. We have sought to conciliate no sympathy by appeals to your charity. We have tried our cause by the Word of God; and, though protesting against its authority to judge in a question concerning the duty of the Church, we have not refused to appear at the tribunal of reason. Are we not right, in view of all the preceding considerations, in remitting the social, civil and political problems connected with slavery to the State? Is it not a subject, save in the moral duties which spring from it, which lies beyond the province of the Church? Have we any right to make it an element in judging of Christian character? Are we not treading in the footsteps of the flock? Are we not acting as Christ and His Apostles have acted before us? Is it not enough for us to pray and labor, in our lot, that all men may be saved, without meddling as a Church with the technical distinction of their civil life. We leave the matter with you. We offer you the right hand of fellowship. It is for you to

accept it or reject it. We have done our duty. We can do no more. Truth is more precious than union, and if you cast us out as sinners, the breach of charity is not with us, as long as we walk according to the light of the written word.

The ends which we propose to accomplish as a Church are the same as those which are proposed by every other Church. To proclaim God's truth as a witness to the nations; to gather His elect from the four corners of the earth; and through the Word, Ministries and Ordinances to train them for eternal life, is the great business of His people. The only thing that will be at all peculiar to us, is the manner in which we shall attempt to discharge our duty. In almost every department of labor, except the pastoral care of congregations, it has been usual for the Church to resort to societies more or less closely connected with itself, and yet logically and really distinct. It is our purpose to rely upon the regular organs of our government, and executive agencies directly and immediately responsible to them. We wish to make the Church not merely a superintendent, but an agent. We wish to develop the idea that the congregation of believers, as visibly organized, is the very society or corporation which is divinely called to do the work of the Lord. We shall, therefore, endeavor to do what has never yet been adequately done—bring out the energies of our Presbyterian system of government. From the Session to the Assembly we shall strive to enlist all our courts, as courts, in every department of Christian effort. We are not ashamed to confess that we are intensely Presbyterian. We embrace all other denominations in the arms of Christian fellowship and love, but our own scheme of government we humbly believe to be according to the pattern shown in the Mount, and, by God's grace, we propose to put its efficiency to the test.

Brethren, we have done. We have told you who we are, and what we are. We greet you in the ties of Christian brotherhood. We desire to cultivate peace and charity with all our fellow Christians throughout

the world. We invite to ecclesiastical communion all who maintain our principles of faith and order. And now we commend you to God and the Word of His grace. We devoutly pray that the whole Catholic Church may be afresh baptized with the Holy Ghost, and that she may speedily be stirred up to give the Lord no rest until He establish and make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

[Signed] B. M. PALMER, *Moderator*.
 JNO. N. WADDELL, *Stated Clerk*.
 JOSEPH R. WILSON, *Permanent Clerk*.
 D. McNEILL TURNER, *Temporary Clerk*.

[*Extracts from the Minutes of 1861.*]

On motion of Dr. Thornwell, the Assembly—

Resolved, That a Committee, consisting of one Minister and one Ruling Elder, from each of the Synods belonging to this Assembly, be appointed to prepare an Address to all the Churches of Jesus Christ throughout the earth, setting forth the causes of our separation from the Churches in the United States, our attitude in relation to slavery, and a general view of the policy which, as a Church, we propose to pursue. (See page 7.)

The Moderator then announced the following Committee on the Address to the Churches: James H. Thornwell, D. D., Theodorick Pryor, D. D., F. K. Nash, R. McInnis, C. C. Jones, D. D., R. B. White, D. D., W. D. Moore, J. H. Gillespie, J. I. Boozer, R. W. Bailey, D. D., J. D. Armstrong, C. Philips, Joseph A. Brooks, W. P. Finley, Samuel McCorkle, W. P. Webb, Wm. L. Black, T. L. Dunlap, and E. W. Wright. (See page 9.)

W. P. Webb offered the following resolutions, which were adopted:

Resolved, That the Address to the Churches of Jesus Christ throughout the world, reported and read by the Rev. Dr. Thornwell, Chairman of the Special Committee appointed for that purpose, be received, and is hereby adopted by this Assembly.

Resolved, That three thousand copies of this Address be printed, under the direction of the Stated Clerk, for the use of this Assembly.

Resolved, That the original Address be filed in the archives of the Assembly, and that a paper be attached thereto, to be signed by the Moderator and members of this Assembly. (See page 19.)

PASTORAL LETTER

TO THE MINISTERS AND MEMBERS OF OUR CHURCHES
AND THE YOUNG MEN OF OUR CONGREGATIONS
IN THE CONFEDERATE ARMY.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America, sendeth greeting to the Ministers and Members of our Churches and to the Young Men of our Congregations in the Armies of the Confederate States—wishing them grace, mercy and peace, through our Lord Jesus Christ :

DEAR BRETHREN: Assembled as the Supreme Judiciary of your Church during these troublous times which the Providence of God has sent upon us, our minds have been turned with irresistible solicitude towards our friends and brethren who have forsaken the endearments and comforts of home, and the privileges and blessings of the sanctuary, for the tented ground and the battle field. We have been called on to witness the desolations of the land, and to mourn over the wastes of Zion, created by the havoc of war; and from all our Churches we hear the report that the ranks of the armies of our national independence are crowded with the noblest of our brethren, and with the choicest of our youth, who have rushed to the rescue of the Republic, driven by the impulses of patriotism, and in obedience to the calls of God and our country. In the midst of all your trials, privations and sufferings, you have our deepest sympathy, and a constant place in our supplications. From every family altar throughout our wide denomination, in every social prayer-meeting, and at every assembly for public worship, our ministers and Christian people pour out their souls unto God, interceding

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with Him that His gracious blessing may rest on you, and that all of you may become partakers of His grace. During the sessions of this Assembly, we have set apart the first half hour of each day as a season of special prayer for you. Be assured you are not forgotten. Your fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters—your ministers and brethren in Christ, cannot cease to remember you. We have called you brethren, and brethren ye are. Some of you are brethren in the ministry of God's dear Son; many of you are brethren in the fellowship of the gospel; multitudes of you are brethren in the consecrated hopes of the baptismal seal; and all of you are brethren in the common infirmities, the common trials, the common sympathies, and the common hopes of our race, sprung from the same original head, and candidates for the same tomb. Would to God ye were all brethren in Christ, possessing an interest in the great salvation which that gracious Saviour hath so freely provided. But, alas! we fear, we know this is not the case. Wherefore, in the discharge of the great trusts committed to us as overseers of the flock of Christ, and as those who must watch for souls, we feel it incumbent on us to address you this pastoral epistle, whereby we may assure you of our sympathy, and may speak a word of encouragement, exhortation, and warning, thus stirring up your pure minds by way of remembrance.

You are surrounded with many temptations. The very fact that you are absent from home, bereft of the genial influences of the family and the restraints of female society, is a source of manifold evils and temptations. But besides, the nature of the duties devolving on you, and the companionships you are compelled to keep, is such as to cause a weakening of religious restraint and an abrasion of the moral sensibilities, which may result in leading you far astray from God and His Church, to the destruction of your souls, unless by the help of the Spirit you are able through watchfulness to overcome.

Those of you who are Ministers of the Gospel of Christ, have great responsibilities resting on you. You

occupy positions which may make you eminently useful, if you prove steadfast and faithful, but which will render you the instruments of great evil if you come short of duty, or stumble into sin. Whether you are officers, soldiers, or chaplains, remember in every case that you are ambassadors for God, and that the eyes of the impenitent and the scoffer are on you. Your actions and words are strictly scrutinized, and multitudes will form their estimate of the truth of our holy religion by the judgment they reach as to the sincerity of your professions, and the consistency of your lives. And here we rejoice to tell of the good report which comes to us from every part of the army, pertaining to many of our brethren who have gone to share the privations and dangers of the camp and battle field. Some, indeed, have fallen in the midst of the conflict, showing in death the power of the grace of Christ. Many other honored brethren there are whose precious lives God has yet spared, we doubt not to become blessings to the army. But, alas, we have been overwhelmed with sorrow to hear that all have not proved thus steadfast. Brethren, let us, in all faithfulness, exhort you to watch. Be much in prayer. Avoid every semblance of evil. With Christian courage and zeal, admonish the young, the wayward, and the tempted, and strive to do good. We honour you for your self-denial and patriotic zeal; we would love to see you become the honoured instruments in God's hands in leading sinners to the Saviour. Brethren, be ye faithful unto death, and ye shall receive a crown of life.

Those among you who confess the name of Christ, and profess to be His followers, sustain responsibilities of proportionate magnitude. God has placed you in unusual circumstances of trial, and surrounded you with new opportunities of usefulness. The great duty which Jesus Christ enjoins on all His disciples, is to "let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is heaven." You now probably occupy a position where you are more closely observed than ever before. "A city which is set

on a hill cannot be hid." Not only would we urge on you that careful circumspection over your conduct, which the Saviour enjoins, but would exhort you to seek opportunities of usefulness. "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Give no countenance, by word, look, or gesture, to wickedness or immorality. Show that reverence for God and holy things which the Christian feels, by the uprightness of your lives, and the purity of your conversation; and as God shall give you opportunity, speak the word of reproof, encourage the feeble and wavering, and aim to win souls. Thus, you may at once establish yourselves in the faith, becoming courageous soldiers for Christ; and add stars to that crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, hath in reserve for all them who love His appearing.

But our hearts turn with especial solicitude toward the noble youth of our congregations who have gone from our midst to this bloody contest for national life and independence. For you we have laboured and toiled. Our prayers have ascended to the mercy seat on your behalf; and during the years that are past we have anxiously waited to see you come out on the side of Christ. In you are wrapped up all the hopes of our Church and country. With the solution of the question, what are you to become, will be determined the problem of our national glory or shame, and that of the success and usefulness of the Church in our beloved land. We tremble for you as we see you drawn away by the duties of patriotism from the constant use of the means of grace and the divine influences of the sanctuary. We sympathize with you as you endure fatigue and sickness in camp; as you engage in the life struggle on the sanguinary field, and as you consecrate everything dear on earth on the altar of patriotic duty. And, oh, when we contemplate your many temptations, how do our hearts yearn over you! As your pastors, we can no longer be heard by you. But we fain would address you these words of affectionate admonition, in the name of the great Master, whom we serve, and on behalf

of our brethren, whom we represent. Listen to us, we beseech you, while we warn you against the prevailing vices of the camp, and present before you the gospel of eternal life.

The awful and prevailing sin of our people is *profanity*. The name of God is taken in vain in the wicked curse, and the lewd joke—yea, fearful as the statement is, our own ears bear testimony to the fact that the great name of the Majestic Jehovah has become a by-word, a jest and a mockery, by the dissolute and profane, on our public thoroughfares. This is our crying, national sin, which, with many others, has brought down on our land the wrath of offended heaven. This international strife and all the dreadful havoc which this war is making, are, doubtless, sent on us as judgments from God on account of our sins. How can we expect the blessing of God if we thus dishonour Him, treat His name with irreverence, and speak of His authority and judgments with levity and derision? Soon all of you must stand up in deadly conflict with our enemies, and many of you will doubtless receive your final summons. The issues of the battle, as well as of life and death, are with God. If you are to be successful, and stand safe from the fear of evil, it will only be because God becomes your Shield and Buckler. How unseemly, then, that He should be insulted, and His holy name taken in vain! But we are pained to know that this is one of the most common sins in the army. We fear that officers and privates alike transgress in this particular; yea, that those very officers who are required by the army regulations to suppress profanity, not only fail in this important duty, but set the evil example before the men of their commands, which is only too frequently imitated. We desire, beloved friends, to warn you to shun evil example; to abstain from every minced oath, as well as gross profanity, and in all things to reverence God. While we would respect and love you for banishing the fear of man, we would beseech you ever to cherish the fear of God, which the wise man, taught of inspiration, tells us is the beginning of wisdom.

The *desecration of the holy Sabbath* is another crying sin of our land, which we fear abounds in our army. We are aware that this is a matter which is not wholly under your control. But we would guard you against the prevailing tendency to trample down the barriers of religion which surround that sacred day and its consecrated objects, and would entreat you to remember it in its true spirit so far as you possibly can in your present circumstances. You are denied, for the most part, the regular services of Sabbath worship, which you enjoyed at home; but still you have the Holy Bible, or New Testament, you have a throne of grace, sometimes you attend religious worship, and God is everywhere present. As you stand in the constant presence of death, make the Sabbath day, as far as possible, an occasion of preparation for it. And be encouraged by the fact that God's people are everywhere engaged in solemn and earnest supplication for you. Thus the Sabbath will prove a blessing, and you will avert from your heads the wrath of God that comes on the land, because of the dishonour we, as a people, have placed on the day which He calls His own. Therefore, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

In like manner we would warn you against the prevailing vice of *intemperance*. Besides the moral defilement which it always causes, wherever it prevails, the evil of this particular vice has manifested itself in a most striking manner, during the progress of this war. We are rejoiced at the vigorous measures which the Government is using to eradicate this evil from the army. We would fondly hope that all of you will yield a cheerful acquiescence in these wholesome requirements, not only from that sense of manly duty, which animates the true soldier, but through a regard for your present respectability and happiness, and your everlasting welfare. Intemperance is that fell destroyer which carries to the grave more victims than war, pestilence and famine, all combined; it makes the wife a widow, and children fatherless—it spreads misery and woe in its pathway, and death and hell follow in its train. Some

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of you have families, others have left plighted vows of love, all of you indulge in hopes of future happiness in the family relation, should God spare your lives. But this fiend of intemperance, which makes its insidious advances, in the absence of the restraints of home, and while you are surrounded by reckless companions, can and assuredly will blast all these bright dreams of happiness—will dash the cup of bliss from the lips of beauty and the hands of tenderest love, and will leave you and them in the midst of wreck and ruin to eke out the bitter remnants of life. But this is not all. God, in whom you believe, and by whom you must be judged, has solemnly declared that no drunkard shall enter the kingdom of heaven. Doubtless you think there is no danger of your coming to the drunkard's grave and the fearful doom with which God has cursed it. Nor is there, if you only resist all temptation. No one of the millions who have died from intemperance ever suspected when he drank the first glass that such would be his end; nor would it have been, had he not tasted the first glass. Therefore, resist this vice in all its insidious forms, and tolerate not the thought of returning to those you love with your youthful comeliness marred by the bloating effects of alcohol; or if you are to perish in the strife, brook not the thought of going to the drunkard's grave and the drunkard's doom.

Another vice which has heretofore been confined in our country to the saloons of dissipation, we are sad to believe, has become very common among the young men of the army. We refer to *gambling*. Besides the moral turpitude and sin of gambling, the taking from your fellows that which is theirs without a just return, this vice creates a morbid thirst after speedy gains and a spirit of reckless extravagance, which usually go together, injuring the moral character, rendering a man reckless, dissatisfied and unhappy, and generally ends in his temporal ruin. A practice which produces such results is necessarily evil. "By their fruits ye shall know them," is the Saviour's rule—and here is a tree whose fruit is bitter. Beware of this vice, however enticing

may be its enchantments. Shun every approach to it. Rather send your gains from your professional services back to your homes for the aid of your parents in these times of straitness, or otherwise for investment for your own future emolument, than thus throw them away in a manner injurious to your moral integrity, destructive of your happiness, and ruinous to your souls.

All these points which we have considered are very important, and unless God shall give you grace to overcome these temptations, and many others which we might mention, those bright hopes which we have pictured for you must prove illusive. To resist temptation, to overcome sin, and to escape from the allurements of vice, requires more than human fortitude; and the external observance of the commands of religion and morality is not enough to make us fit for the grave, and to prepare us for everlasting happiness. But the blessed Bible is full of precious promises to those who seek the favour and salvation of God. Beloved friends and brethren, seek that salvation now; for "why will ye die?" "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Then there is salvation in store for you, if you will only come to Jesus. You are invited to come to Him without money and without price, on the simple condition of repentance and faith. Do you ask what is repentance? The evangelical prophet shall answer: "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, that He may have mercy on him, and to our God that He may abundantly pardon." Then, repentance of sin is a forsaking of it in thought and action, a turning away from it with hatred, and a returning unto the Lord. Do you ask what is faith? It is needless to enter into theological discussions of this subject. The practical exercise of faith is what concerns you—is what deeply interests us all. When the publican stood in the temple and smote upon his breast, saying: "God be merciful to me a sinner," he gave utterance to the faith that was in his soul. When Peter began to sink in the waters,

he cried out, "Lord save me," and thus gave expression to his faith. Then, dear friends, do you not feel yourselves to be sinners? Do you not know yourselves to be lost, ruined, undone, without an interest in Christ—neither fit for life, nor ready for death? Then, go to Jesus, and ask Him to save you. And whenever you are able by God's grace to forsake sin with a godly sorrow, and can pray from the heart to Jesus Christ, "Be merciful to me a sinner," you have exercised that repentance and faith which is unto salvation. Oh, how needful is this salvation in your present circumstances. None of you can tell what a day may bring forth. You are standing on the verge of eternity, with its surging waves ready to surround and overwhelm you. Are you ready? You answer, no. Then we come to you as the ambassadors of God, and assure you that yet there is room. Jesus is ready and waiting to be gracious; and, saith the Scripture, "Behold, now is the accepted time—behold, now is the day of salvation."

How precious are these hopes to those of you who are lying on beds of suffering, pining away from disease, or lacerated with wounds. Doubtless you have the skilful care of the physician, and the daily and nightly watchings of tender hands to nurse and soothe you. But truly you need a more radical medicine and a more enduring balm than earthly skill can supply. For after all the body must die, and the cold ground must become its habitation. But the soul may be saved and live forever. For there is balm in Gilead, and a Physician there. Wherefore, let us tenderly plead with you to seek this Great Physician who can heal both soul and body; yea, and who is become both resurrection and life unto His people.

But, brethren and friends beloved, we must bid you farewell. Many of you shall no more see the faces of your ministers and brethren in Christ in the flesh. The clash of war and the shock of battle cannot happen without results from which our hearts recoil with anguish. But God is a great Saviour and a glorious deliverer—and He is our refuge and strength, and a very present

help in trouble. We would joyfully feel safe under the shadow of His wing, and we would gladly see you all nestling beneath that covert which He spreads out. Then, come weal, come woe, as to earth's temporal kingdoms, all shall be well with us. Wherefore live close to Christ—stand steadfast in your place of appointed duty, acquit yourselves like men, and God shall bless you. But, brethren, by the great grace of Christ we shall meet again. It may not be here, in the midst of the afflictions and trials of life—it may not be until we are summoned away from this world of strife and sin. But Jesus has gone to prepare mansions for us, and no one of His children shall be absent from Him in glory. If we are His people, if we turn to Him with our whole hearts, we shall meet in His presence, where there is fullness of joy, and at His right hand, where there are pleasures forevermore. May God bless and keep you until that day.

By order of the Assembly,

Attest:— J. L. KIRKPATRICK, *Moderator.*

E. T. BAIRD, *Acting Stated Clerk.*

J. R. WILSON, *Permanent Clerk.*

[*Extracts from the Minutes of 1862.*]

On motion of Dr. Baird, it was

Resolved, That a Committee of five be appointed by the Moderator to prepare a Pastoral Letter, to be addressed by this Assembly to the Ministers and members of our Churches, and the youth of our congregations, now in the armies of the Confederacy, fighting the battles of our national independence.

The Moderator appointed upon this Committee, E. T. Baird, D. D., S. H. Higgins, D. D., Rev. James H. Fitzgerald, N. S. Graham, and R. I. McDowell. (See page 9.)

Dr. Baird, from the Committee to prepare a Pastoral Letter to the Ministers and members of our Churches, and the youth of our congregations in the army of the Confederacy, reported a letter which was unanimously adopted by the Assembly; and on motion of Dr. Leyburn, was ordered to be forwarded to the Executive Committee of Publication, with directions that it be published as a circular for distribution among the classes to whom it is addressed, and that it be also published in the Appendix to the Minutes. (See page 15.)

MINUTE

ON THE

DEATH OF GENERAL THOMAS J. JACKSON.

The Rev. Dr. Palmer, from a Committee appointed to report a Minute upon the death of General T. J. Jackson, presented the following, which was unanimously adopted by the members rising in silence in their places:

The Committee appointed to draft a Minute upon the death of General Thomas J. Jackson, respectfully submit the following:

The despatches announcing the severe illness of this beloved servant of God, and invoking the prayers of this Assembly on his behalf, had scarcely aroused our alarm before the sad intelligence of his death fell, with its crushing weight, upon our hearts, and turned these prayers for him into weeping supplications for ourselves and for our bereaved country. Seldom in history has one been able, in so short a time, to write his name so deeply upon the hearts of his countrymen, and to raise the admiration of the world at large. Uniting the most beautiful simplicity with the most intense earnestness of character, with a religious consecration to duty as the regulative principle of his life, he was a true man in all the relations in which he moved. The additional endowment of a military genius, quick to perceive and to improve the advantage and its opportunity, made him what he was, the true soldier and the consummate general. It were idle to compress within this record his brilliant military career, which forms so large a part of this young nation's history. The rapidity of his movements, imparting to him a seeming

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ubiquity, the promptness and daring and uniform success of his achievements, rendered his name a terror to our foes, and a tower of strength to ourselves. It is not invidious to say that, whilst other generals of the army, superior to him in rank, command equally with himself the confidence of the people, he was the most deeply of them all enshrined in their affections. It will be the office of history to assign the position he will occupy upon her impartial page; and we doubt not that the verdict of posterity will confirm the judgment of his contemporaries, in pronouncing that the life of a hero has been crowned with the death of a martyr.

But General Jackson has stronger claims upon the affectionate and tearful remembrance of this General Assembly than those founded upon his merits as a patriot and a warrior. He was a warm and zealous Christian, a man that feared God and walked carefully before Him; who, being found blameless, used the office of a deacon in the house of God, filling up the portrait drawn by the apostle's hand: "Grave, not double tongued, and holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience." His religion was woven into the whole texture of his character and life, the constructive element which made him the man he was. It has been tersely and truthfully, and therefore beautifully said of him, that in the army he was the expression of his country's confidence in God and in itself. Even those who withheld from God the homage of their own obedience and love, took refuge in the thought that their great military leader drew his strength from the God of heaven, and, like the Hebrew Moses, daily communed with Him upon the mount; and the Church of Christ turned their eyes to him with a loving joy, as the embodied and concrete representative, the living exposition of those precious truths which it is her mission to testify to a dying world. In the army his religious influence diffused itself like the atmosphere around him; and by that strange magnetic power over other minds which is given to all who are born to command, none were drawn into

his presence who did not bow before the supremacy of that piety so silently yet conspicuously illustrated in the carriage of this Christian general.

The evidence is cumulative before this Assembly of his zeal to overtake the religious wants of his soldiery, and of the yearnings of his soul that this venerable court should, during its present sessions, concert large plans for the evangelization of the army, and of the country at large. Therefore it is, this Assembly, at the moment of its dissolution, as its last solemn act, would place upon its record this memorial to his praise, and bedew it with their parting tears. We shall not attempt here the interpretation of the mysterious providence which has taken away from the country, at such a juncture, so strong an arm. It is enough that He has done it who does all things well; we will "be still and know that He is God." But in the depth of our own sadness, we would speak a word of cheer to our bereaved countrymen; that in the disappointment of many of our most reasonable calculations, no less than unexpectedly blessing us when all seemed dark and forbidding, God seems to us only the more to have charged Himself with the care and protection of this struggling Republic; and in this new chastening we recognize the token of Him whose way it is to humble those whom it is His purpose to exalt and to bless.

With the immediate family and kindred of our departed brother, we desire to mingle our grief, as they pay the tribute of their sorrow over his grave; and the Assembly conveys through this Minute its tenderest sympathy to those whose hearts are bleeding under what is to them a more close and personal bereavement, praying the God of all consolation to grant them joy for mourning, beauty for ashes, and the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

Respectfully submitted,

B. M. PALMER, *Chairman.*

[Minutes of 1863, p. 152-3.]

TERMS OF UNION

WITH THE

UNITED SYNOD OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

The following report was presented from the Committee of Conference with the United Synod, by Rev. Dr. Dabney, the Chairman. [See Minutes 1864, p. 253-259.]

The Committee to confer with a Committee of the United Synod report to the General Assembly:

That they met a Committee, appointed by the United Synod, in July last, and, after prayer and conference, unanimously agreed to recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of the following, which the Committee of the United Synod likewise recommended, with similar unanimity, to that body:

The General Assembly and the United Synod of the Presbyterian Churches in the Confederate States of America, holding the same system of doctrines and Church order, and believing that their union will glorify God, by promoting peace, removing the dishonour done to religion by former separations, and increasing their ability for the edification of the Body of Christ, do agree to unite under the name and existing charter of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America, on the following basis:

ARTICLE I.—The General Assembly and the United Synod declare that they continue to sincerely receive and adopt the Confession and Catechisms of the Presbyterian Church, as containing the system of doctrines taught in the Holy Scriptures, and approve of its government and discipline.

Inasmuch as some have been supposed to hold the system of doctrines and Church order in different senses, the General Assembly and the United Synod do further adopt the following *Declaration*, touching former grounds of debate, in order to manifest our hearty agreement, to remove suspicions and offences, to restore full confidence between brethren, and to honour God's saving truth.

§ 1. Concerning the *Fall of Man* and *Original Sin*, we faithfully hold, with the Confession of Faith, that our first parents, by their first act of disobedience, "fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body; that they, being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity, descended from them by ordinary generation; and that from this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions."

This imputation of the guilt of this sin of our first parents we hold in this sense: that thereby their posterity are judicially condemned by God on account of that sin, and so begin their existence in that corruption of nature and subjection to wrath into which our first parents fell by their first sin. And we mean that the guilt of their sin, which is imputed, is, according to the constant usage of theology, "obligation to punishment," and not the sinfulness of the act itself, which latter can not, by imputation, be the quality of any other than the personal agents.

Touching the moral corruption of Adam's posterity, we believe that it is entire, and also native and original; that all actual transgressions do proceed from it as their source, and not merely from imitation of evil example, as the Palagians vainly affirm, and that this native tendency to sin is itself morally evil, deserving of God's righteous wrath, and requiring, both in infants and adults, the righteousness of Christ to justify from its

guilt, as well as His regenerating grace to overcome it. We do also believe that, because of this original corruption, men have wholly lost all ability of will to choose spiritual good for its own sake, or to regenerate, convert, or sanctify their own hearts. But we equally reject the error of those who assert that the sinner has no power of any kind for the performance of duty. This error strips the sinner of his moral agency and accountableness, and introduces the heresy of either Antinomianism or Fatalism. The true doctrine of the Scriptures, as stated in our Confession, keeps constantly in view the moral agency of man, the contingency of second causes, the use of means, the voluntariness of all the creature's sin, and his utter inexcusableness therein. It teaches that, while the Fall has darkened and impaired all the faculties of man's soul, and inclined his free-will to evil only, it has not destroyed in him any capacity of understanding or conscience, whereby the holy creature knows and serves God, and on which free-agency and responsibility depend.

And touching God's permission of the entrance of sin among His creatures, we reject the doctrine of those who assert that He had no power efficiently to prevent it in consistency with man's freedom and responsibility, and we believe that God permitted the introduction of sin for wise and good reasons, which He has not revealed.

§ 2. Concerning *Regeneration*, we hold that this act doth essentially consist, not of a change of the creature's purpose by himself as to sin and holiness, but of a change of the dispositions of soul from which such purposes do proceed, and in which change all regenerating power is of the Holy Spirit. But yet all the acts of soul, wherein the sinner turneth from his sins unto God and holiness, are by the instrumentality of God's truth, and are as rational and free as those which are performed wholly of his natural powers.

§ 3. Concerning the *Atonement* of Jesus Christ, we hold that He, being very God and very man in one person, was our Substitute under the law; that the guilt of men's sins was imputed to Him, that His sufferings were

borne as the penalty of that guilt, and were a vacarious yet true satisfaction therefor to the justice of God, and that without this, God's perfections would forbid the pardon of any sin. This Atonement, we believe, though by temporary sufferings, was, by reason of the infinite glory of Christ's person, full and sufficient for the guilt of the whole world, and is to be freely and sincerely offered to every creature, inasmuch as it leaveth no other obstacle to the pardon of all men under the gospel, save the enmity and unbelief of those who voluntarily reject it. Wherefore, on the one hand, we reject the opinion of those who teach that the atonement was so limited and equal to the guilt of the Elect only, that if God had designed to redeem more, Christ must have suffered more or differently. And, on the other hand, we hold that God the Father doth efficaciously apply this redemption, through Christ's purchase, to all those to whom it was His eternal purpose to apply it, and to no others.

§ 4. Concerning the believer's *Justification*, we hold that Christ not only bore the penalty of their guilt, but fully obeyed the law as their Substitute; and that the righteousness of His sufferings and obedience, imputed unto them that believe, is the sole ground for which God pardoneth all their sins, and accepteth them as righteous in His sight. And we account the agency of the believer's faith in this justification to be only instrumental, and not meritorious.

§ 5. Holding these views of the doctrines of Grace, we believe that the Church is dependent, under God, for the revival of her spiritual life, and the implanting of it in sinners, on the work of the Holy Ghost through the truth. Wherefore we hold that the proper means for promoting revivals are the labours of holy living and teaching through the Word and Sacraments; and, on the one hand, we testify, from our observation and the Word of God, that it is dangerous to ply the disordered heart of the sinner with a disproportionate address to the imaginations and passions, to withhold from his awakened mind Scriptural instruction, and to em-

ploy with him such novel and startling measures as must tend to impart to his religious excitement a character rather noisy, shallow, and transient, than deep, solid, and Scriptural. But, on the other hand, we value, cherish, and pray for true revivals of religion; and wherever they bring forth the permanent fruits of holiness in men's hearts, rejoice in them as God's work, notwithstanding the mixture of human imperfections. And we consider it the solemn duty of ministers to exercise a Scriptural warmth, affection, and directness in appealing to the understandings, hearts, and consciences of men.

§ 6. We hold that God hath organized His *Church Visible* to be "the pillar and ground of the truth," "for the gathering and perfecting of the saints in this life to the end of the world;" that hence it is the duty of every member and officer of the Church to further this work by his personal labours in his appropriate sphere, and by stated oblations from his worldly goods unto God; and that their common and concerted efforts for this end, [which is the proper end of the Church in this world,] are by God committed to the Presbyters and Deacons thereof, whom He has appointed as her officers. Whence it follows that the associated and organized acts of the people of God for the conversion of the world unto Christ, are the proper functions of these officers, or of Church-courts constituted of them. Those who seek the world's conversion by societies of voluntary and human origin distinct from the branches of Christ's visible Church, therefore ought not to ask the officers and courts of the Church to relinquish these labours to them. Yet we can bid them God-speed in all their sincere efforts to diffuse the true Word of God, and we concede to the members of our Churches full liberty to extend to them such personal aid as their Christian consciences approve.

ARTICLE II.—The General Assembly and the United Synod hereby agree that the Synod of Virginia, under the care of the General Assembly, and the Synod of

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Virginia, under the care of the United Synod, with the Presbytery of New River, shall constitute the Synod of Virginia, and shall hold its next meeting on the—— day of —— in Lexington, Virginia, and the opening services shall be conducted by the two last Moderators present from the respective bodies. The Presbytery of Texas, under the care of the United Synod, shall be united to the Synod of Texas, under the care of the General Assembly. The Presbyteries of Lexington South, Clinton, and Newton, under the care of the United Synod, together with those now included in the Synod of Mississippi, under the care of the General Assembly, shall constitute the Synod of Mississippi, and shall hold their next meeting at —— on the——day of—— and shall be opened as above. The Presbyteries of Holston, Union, and Kingston, under the care of the United Synod, together with those now included in the Synod of Nashville, under the care of the General Assembly, shall constitute the Synod of Nashville, and shall hold their next meeting at —— on the——day of—— and shall be opened as above. And the Churches of the Presbytery of North Alabama, under the care of the United Synod, which are within the State of Alabama, shall be united to the Synod of Memphis, and those Churches of said Presbyteries which are within the State of Tennessee, to the Synod of Nashville. And that the Presbytery of Osage, under the care of the United Synod, be attached to the Synod of Arkansas, under the care of the General Assembly.

ARTICLE III.—These Synods, at their first annual meetings, or as soon thereafter as practicable, shall define the boundaries of Presbyteries, where ministers and Churches, under the care of the General Assembly and of the United Synod, exist in the same territory, and shall so distribute said ministers and Churches that those within the same geographical limits shall not belong to different Presbyteries. It is recommended that, in such changes, that Presbytery shall hold its name and succession which has the major number of ministers, and shall receive the records and presbyterial funds

of the other Presbytery, assuming also its existing pecuniary obligations. And it is agreed that no other condition shall be required of the members constituting said Presbyteries, except the approval of this plan of union.

ARTICLE IV.—Wherever organized Churches, under the care of the General Assembly and of the United Synod, exist in the same neighbourhood, if their union is necessary to the successful sustentation of the gospel, they are affectionately exhorted to unite immediately, postponing private convenience to the glory of God. But no organized Churches, or existing compacts with pastors or stated supplies, shall be extinguished by this act of union, except they voluntarily agree to combine with neighbouring Churches. And when such unions of Churches take place, they, with their sessions, shall be organized under the direction of their own Presbyteries.

ARTICLE V.—Inasmuch as the General Assembly and the United Synod have similar agencies for aiding pious youth in their education for the ministry, for circulating divine truth by printing, and for missions, home and foreign, it is agreed that the Committees of the General Assembly, from and after the union, shall receive and sustain, according to existing compacts, all colporteurs, beneficiaries studying for the ministry, and home and foreign missionaries, then under the care of the United Synod, as well as those of the General Assembly. And that all funds and other property now held for the above objects by the United Synod, or its Committees or other agencies, shall be passed over to the appropriate Committees of the General Assembly. And these Committees shall thereafter solicit contributions for these evangelical labourers in all the Churches alike, as they are enabled.

ARTICLE VI.—Whenever this above written plan of union shall have been adopted by the General Assembly and the United Synod, it shall be in full force. And the Presbyteries, at their next spring meetings, shall

elect Commissioners to meet in General Assembly at _____ on the _____ day of May, 186—, on the following ratio of representation, viz: [See Form of Government, ch. 12, § ii.]

(Signed)

R. L. DABNEY,
WILLIAM BROWN,
JAS. B. RAMSEY,
J. N. WADDEL,
F. N. WATKINS,
J. T. L. PRESTON,

Committee of General Assembly.

JOS. C. STILES,
CHAS. H. READ,
J. D. MITCHELL,
J. J. ROBINSON,
J. F. JOHNSTON,

Committee of United Synod.

In connection with this report, the following communication from the Rev. Dr. Baird was read:

The undersigned desires to state to the Reverend General Assembly that he was not present at the meeting of the Joint Committee on Union, owing to the presence of the enemy in the part of the country where he resides, causing an interruption of the mails. A very kind and fraternal note was written him by the respected Chairman, informing him that a meeting of the Committee would shortly be called, and begging him to make his arrangements to be present; but, owing to the cause already mentioned, this note did not reach him until the very week of the meeting of the Committee; nor did the notice of the time and place of the meeting reach him at all. Immediately, however, on the receipt of the note from the Chairman, he left home with the hope of being present, but on his way learned that the Committee had met and adjourned. The undersigned would have rejoiced to see his way clear to sign his

name to the plan agreed on; but this he was not able to do. While he cordially rejoices in the conviction that his colleagues are sound and orthodox brethren, worthy of the highest confidence of the Church, and of whom she may justly be proud, and that the doctrinal articles are Calvinistic and true, according to the sense the Committees manifestly designed in preparing them, at the same time, he believes that, in probably three different places, the language is liable to misapprehension, and might become the cause of trouble among ourselves hereafter. Nor does he believe that any series of doctrinal articles could be framed which would not be obnoxious to the same objection. Moreover, as published in the newspapers, the doctrinal statement was called, "The Doctrinal Basis of Union." He felt that the Assembly had no constitutional right to make anything the basis of union but the constitution itself. On examining the proceedings of the Committees in manuscript, however, he was glad to find no such language was employed by them.

The undersigned believes that the union of these two denominations, if effected in such a manner as to secure the undoubted succession of the General Assembly and of our various Synods on the basis of our symbols of doctrine and order, interpreted and adhered to according to the plan and obvious sense of the ordination engagements, will be promotive of the best interests of our Zion. It is necessary, in order to the preservation of existing chartered rights, that this point be carefully guarded, and that the principle of elective affinity be carefully excluded. A union on such terms as these the undersigned publicly advocated nearly three years ago, and he still adheres to the same view.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

E. T. BAIRD.

After discussion the above papers were referred to a Committee, from which Dr. Lyon, the Chairman, subsequently, presented a report, which was adopted by a

vote of 53 to 7, and is as follows. [See Minutes, p. 271-273.]

The General Assembly having received the report of the committee appointed last year to confer with a similar committee of the United Synod of the Presbyterian Church, on the subject of the union of the two bodies, and having heard the explanatory statements accompanying the said report, do hereby adopt the following resolutions as expressive of their views on the whole subject, viz :

Resolved, 1. That the Assembly express their approval of the diligence and fidelity of the committee in regard to the important trust with which they were charged, and also the great satisfaction with which they have heard of the brotherly love and spirit of harmony in which the conference of the two committees was held.

Resolved, 2. That the Assembly believe the most satisfactory terms of union to be the cordial adherence of the two bodies to their existing symbols of faith and order.

Resolved, 3. That the report of the committee be adopted after amendment in the following particulars, viz: 1. From the preamble omit the words "removing the dishonour done to religion by former separations," and modify the provisions as to the name and charter. 2. Omit all of the first article after the first paragraph. 3. Amend the second article, so as in every case to require the reception of the Presbyteries under the care of the United Synod into the Synods of this Assembly, so as to preserve the undoubted succession of the latter; and add to the article the following words, viz: "Should providential hindrances prevent the consummation of any of the measures above mentioned during the year 1864, they shall take effect as soon thereafter as practicable." 4. Omit all after the words "in full force," in the last article.

The plan of union as thus amended is as follows, viz :

The General Assembly and the United Synod of the Presbyterian Churches in the Confederate States of America, holding the same system of doctrine and church order, and believing that their union will glorify God by promoting peace and increasing their ability for the edification of the body of Christ, do agree to unite under the name of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America, and under the existing charter of the trustees of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America, on the following basis, viz:

ARTICLE I. The General Assembly and the United Synod declare that they continue sincerely to receive and adopt the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of the Presbyterian Church, as containing the system of doctrines taught in the Holy Scriptures, and approve of its government and discipline.

ARTICLE II. The General Assembly and the United Synod hereby agree that the Presbyteries composing the Synod of Virginia, under the care of the United Synod, together with the Presbytery of New River, shall be received into the Synod of Virginia, under the care of the General Assembly, at their meeting in Lexington, on the day of October, 1864. The Presbytery of Texas, under the care of the United Synod, shall be received into the Synod of Texas, under the care of the General Assembly, at its next meeting. The Presbyteries of Lexington South, Clinton, and Newton, under the care of the United Synod, shall be received into the Synod of Mississippi, under the care of the General Assembly at their meeting in Brandon, on the day of October, 1864. The Presbyteries of Holston, Union, and Kingston, under the care of the United Synod, shall be received into the Synod of Nashville, under the care of the General Assembly at their next meeting. And the ministers and churches of the Presbytery of North Alabama, under the care of the United Synod, which are within the State of Alabama, shall be united to the Synod of

Memphis, and those churches and ministers of such Presbytery which are within the State of Tennessee, to the Synod of Nashville. And the Presbytery of Osage, under the care of the United Synod, shall be attached to the Synod of Arkansas, under the care of the General Assembly. Should providential hindrances prevent the consummation of any of the measures above mentioned during the year 1864, they shall take effect as soon thereafter as practicable.

ARTICLE III.—These Synods, at their annual meetings, or as soon thereafter as practicable, shall define the boundaries of Presbyteries, where ministers and churches under the care of the General Assembly and of the United Synod, exist in the same territory, and shall so distribute said ministers and churches that those within the same geographical limits shall not belong to different Presbyteries. It is recommended that in such changes that Presbytery shall hold its name and succession which has the major number of ministers, and shall receive the records and presbyterial funds of the other Presbytery, assuming also its existing pecuniary obligations. And it is agreed that no other condition shall be required of the members constituting said Presbyteries, except the approval of this plan of union.

ARTICLE IV.—Whenever organized churches under the care of the General Assembly and the United Synod exist in the same neighborhood—if their union is necessary to the successful sustentation of the Gospel—they are affectionately exhorted to unite immediately, postponing private convenience to the glory of God. But no organized churches, or existing compacts with pastors or stated supplies, shall be extinguished by this act of union, except they voluntarily agree to combine with neighbouring churches. And when such union of churches takes place, they, with their sessions, shall be organized under the directions of their own Presbyteries.

ARTICLE V.—Inasmuch as the General Assembly and the United Synod have similar agencies for aiding pious youth in their education for the ministry, for circulating divine truth by printing, and for missions, home and foreign, it is agreed that the committees of the General Assembly, from and after the union, shall receive and sustain, according to existing compacts, all colporteurs, beneficiaries studying for the ministry, and home and foreign missionaries then under the care of the United Synod, as well as those of the General Assembly; and that all funds and other property now held for the above objects by the United Synod, or its committees or other agencies, shall be passed over to the appropriate committees of the General Assembly. And these committees shall thereafter solicit contributions for these evangelical labours in all the churches alike, as they are enabled.

ARTICLE VI.—Whenever the above written plan of union shall have been adopted by the General Assembly and the United Synod, it shall be in full force.

4. *Resolved*, That the Assembly proposes the omission of the doctrinal propositions of article I on the following ground solely, viz: That, believing the approval of those propositions by the Committees of Conference, and extensively among both bodies, has served a valuable purpose, by presenting satisfactory evidence of such harmony and soundness of doctrinal views as may ground an honourable union, the Assembly does yet judge that it is most prudent to unite on the basis of our existing standards only, inasmuch as no actual necessity for other declarations of belief in order to a happy union now exist.

EXTRACTS FROM MINUTES, 1861-1864.

PRAYERS FOR THE CONFEDERACY.

On motion of W. P. Webb, it was

Resolved, That this General Assembly will spend the next half hour which is appointed for devotional exercises, in prayer to Almighty God, for His blessing upon these Confederate States, and especially upon the Officers and Soldiers of our armies who are exposed to the dangers and temptations of the battle field and the camp. [Minutes 1861, p. 11.]

The Assembly met and spent the first half hour in special prayer for the blessing of God upon the cause of the Confederate States, according to previous order. [Minutes, p. 12.]

On motion of Dr. Baird, it was ordered that the first half hour of the morning sessions be spent in devotional exercises, with special reference to the distracted state of the Church and country, under the direction of the Moderator. [Minutes of 1862, p. 7.]

Resolved, 2. That it be recommended to the Churches under the care of this Assembly to offer special prayer on the last Sabbath of every month for all our baptized young men now in the army—that God would preserve them from all evil, and make them faithful to the Captain of their salvation. [Minutes, p. 15.]

On motion of the Rev. D. A. Penick, the Assembly resolved to spend the first half hour of every morning session, and the hours between 4 and 6 of Saturday afternoon next, in devotional exercises with special reference to the state of the Church and country. [Minutes of 1864, p. 242.]

In pursuance of the arrangement ordered on yesterday, the Rev. B. M. Palmer, D. D., the Rev. John N.

Waddel, D. D., and the Rev. B. T. Lacy, Commissioners to the Army, addressed the Assembly on the subject of their mission; when, on motion of J. T. L. Preston, the Standing Committee on Domestic Missions was instructed to report a minute in specific response to the subject matter of those addresses, and also having special reference to the request made, in behalf of General R. E. Lee, for the prayers of the Assembly and the Church, in view of his great responsibilities as the commander of one of our principle armies. [Minutes, p. 251.]

9. That the Assembly, having engaged in frequent and solemn acts of devotion to intercede for our brave soldiers and their officers and commanding generals, does earnestly exhort all the ministers, Churches, and people, in like manner, to constant supplications in the same behalf. [Minutes, p. 279.]

SYMPATHY FOR THE CONFEDERACY.

In the absence of any official documents on which to base a report, the Committee think that the Assembly may, with propriety, express a unanimous opinion in favour of liberally sustaining our Theological Seminaries during these days of tribulation; also in favour of our candidates for the ministry, under ordinary circumstances, prosecuting their studies with unmolested diligence, through these troublous times; until by the skillful use of spiritual weapons they are prepared for wide fields of usefulness as pastors in our vacant Churches, as missionaries in our destitute fields, or as chaplains in our army. We distinctly recognize the right of the State to claim the services of any, or all her citizens, in this the time of her need. We also acknowledge it as a high privilege, as well as a plain duty, for our people to pledge to each other, and the government of their choice, their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honour, in united efforts to drive back the invaders of our soil, and the enemies of our institutions. Yet when and where this necessity does not exist, we think that our candidates can better serve their genera-

tion and do more for their country, by diligently preparing to preach the gospel. [Minutes of 1862, p. 19.]

The relation of our congregations to the great struggle in which we are engaged. All of the Presbyterian Narratives, without exception, mention the fact that their congregations have evinced the most cordial sympathy with the people of the Confederate States in their efforts to maintain their cherished rights and institutions against the despotic power which is attempting to crush them. Deeply convinced that this struggle is not alone for civil rights, and property, and home, but also for religion, for the Church, for the gospel, and for existence itself, the Churches in our connection have freely contributed to its prosecution of their substance, their prayers, and, above all, of their members and the beloved youth of their congregations. They have parted, without a murmur, with those who constitute the hope of the Church, and have bidden them go forth to the support of this great and sacred cause, with their benedictions, and with their supplications for their protection and success. The Assembly desires to record, with its solemn approval, this fact of the unanimity of our people in supporting a contest to which religion, as well as patriotism, now summons the citizens of this country, and to implore for them the blessing of God in the course they are now pursuing. [Narrative of 1862, p. 21.]

We cannot but feel that we are called, in the Providence of God, to address the Churches in these Confederate States under circumstances of painful interest. During the period which has elapsed since the last annual session of this body, our unhappy country has been the theatre of a war unexampled, perhaps, in the scope of its operation, of the vast numbers engaged, and in the pitiless barbarity with which it has been conducted on the part of our invaders. The blood of our brethren, our fathers, and our children, unjustly and untimely slain, cries to heaven. A considerable portion of our territory is in the possession of the enemy, and all communication with the Churches embraced in those districts

must for the time be suspended. We look forward, however, with cheerful confidence to a renewal of our relations to those Churches, when, by the favour of our God, the enemy shall have been expelled. We commend these afflicted brethren to your sympathies and prayers. It is to us matter of devout gratitude to Almighty God, that He has so often and so signally baffled the efforts of our enemies to effect our subjugation, and that He has vouchsafed to our arms victories so repeated and so wonderful. [Narrative of 1863, p. 155.]

These reports bring to the attention of your Committee the painful fact that the number of students in these seminaries has been very small, owing to the continuance of the war; but we find encouragement in the consideration that the students of these institutions who, in obedience to the call of patriotism, have enlisted in the service of the country, are not only in the field of duty, but one in which they are receiving a training which will prepare them for a larger measure of usefulness, when, having completed their theological studies, they go forth to the service of the Church in the gospel ministry. [Report on Seminaries of 1864, p. 284.]

SLAVES AND SLAVERY.

On motion of W. P. Webb, Dr. C. C. Jones was requested to address the Assembly to-night upon the subject of the religious instruction of the colored people, and that the Resolution in the Report which refers to this subject, be made the first order for this evening.

In pursuance of the previous order, the Assembly proceeded to the consideration of the Resolution in the Report on Domestic Missions, which refers to the religious instruction of the colored people, when Dr. C. C. Jones addressed the Assembly, according to arrangement.

After discussion by other Commissioners, the Resolution was, on motion of Dr. Joseph R. Wilson, unanimously adopted.

On motion of Dr. Turner, the Assembly requested Dr. Jones to prepare a Pastoral Letter, to be addressed

to the Churches on the subject of the instruction of the colored population of these States. [Minutes of 1861, p. 14.]

On motion of R. M'Innis, the Assembly resolved to reconsider its action with reference to the appointment of Dr. C. C. Jones to prepare a Pastoral Letter to the Churches on the subject of instructing the colored people; when, on motion of Rev. W. T. Richardson, the Assembly

Resolved, That Dr. C. C. Jones be requested to prepare and publish the address which he delivered last evening.

On motion of Dr. Lyon, the Assembly

Resolved, That a Committee, of which Dr. Jones shall be Chairman, shall be appointed to prepare a Pastoral Letter on the subject of the religious instruction of the colored people, to be submitted to the next General Assembly.

At his own request Dr. Jones was excused from serving as Chairman of this Committee. The Committee was afterwards constituted as follows: Dr. James A. Lyon, Dr. C. C. Jones, and Dr. Theodoric Pryor. [Minutes, p. 15.]

IV. That the great field of Missionary operations among our Colored population falls more immediately under the care of the Committee on Domestic Missions; and that said Committee be urged to give its serious and constant attention, and the Presbyteries to co-operate with the Committee in securing Pastors and Missionaries for this field. [Minutes, p. 20.]

IV. In the fields of Domestic Missions we are cheered with reports of encouraging success in this great work, amid difficulties and discouragements. In several of the Presbyteries a system of evangelical labours has been adopted, which has resulted in the formation of new Churches, and centres of Christian instruction, rendering former waste places fruitful in piety and holiness. Especially in those labours of Domestic Missions, which are devoted to our colored population, a degree of success has been graciously afforded, which calls for devout gratitude. In the efforts of our Churches and

ministers to give gospel instruction to these multitudes of immortal souls entrusted to our care, and for whom we are specially accountable, a rich blessing has been enjoyed. In several places in our bounds, there have been blessed revivals of religion, adding to our Churches hundreds of hopeful converts among the colored people. It is, indeed, a most precious token of the smiles of the Great Head of the Church, in giving such signal success to our labours for the spiritual benefit of our servants, in these days of trial and confusion. It is our privilege to know that many of our pastors, evangelists, and licentiates, devote their ministry to children as well as parents, to servants as well as masters. The blessed effects of such labours are manifest in the gathering of several large congregations, composed of colored members exclusively. In having received so many of the sons and daughters of Africa into the communion of our Churches, we have cause of devout thankfulness to our gracious LORD. *Bless the Lord, O our souls, and all that is within us, bless His holy name.* [Narrative of 1861, p. 43.]

A communication was received from Rev. James A. Lyon, D. D., Chairman of the Committee appointed by the last General Assembly, to prepare a Pastoral Letter on the "religious instruction of the colored people," asking to be excused for their failure to report to this Assembly; whereupon, on motion of Rev. R. Q. Mallard, the reasons given for not reporting according to the order of the last Assembly were declared to be satisfactory, and the Committee was continued with directions to report to the next Assembly. [Minutes of 1862, p. 11.]

Nearly all the Presbyteries make special mention of the fact that religious instruction is faithfully imparted to the colored people. We cannot but rejoice at this intelligence. The great and startling fact that about four millions of souls are immediately dependent on the Church, in these Confederate States, for all that they can know of Christ and His salvation, and that if that Church neglects them, none other can impart this

essential knowledge, and they must be doomed to go down to the pit at our own doors:—this, surely, is enough to incite us to a diligent and faithful cultivation of this field. We have the motives to the discharge of a great missionary work springing from the bosom of every family, and the cabins of every plantation. The Assembly would solemnly exhort all its ministers, office bearers, and Church-members, to gird themselves afresh for the accomplishment of a work which none but they can do. [Narrative of 1862, p. 24.]

On motion, the orders of the day were reversed, and the Assembly proceeded to consider the second order, viz., hearing the report of the Committee appointed by the first Assembly to prepare an Address to the Churches on the subject of slavery. The Chairman, the Rev. Dr. James A. Lyon, read said report, which was received, and, on motion of Dr. J. Leighton Wilson, it was

Resolved, That this paper be referred to a Committee of at least one commissioner from each Synod, to consider its subject-matter, to suggest what disposal should be made of it, and to report, at the same time, some plan by which the religious and moral improvement of our slaves may be more effectually secured.

This Committee consists of Dr. J. L. Wilson, Rev. W. Baird, Dr. Jno. N. Waddel, Dr. B. M. Palmer, Rev. A. Baker, Rev. J. M. Atkinson, Rev. T. E. Peck, Judge Whitner, D. A. Davis, Jas. F. King, Col. Preston, G. S. Cecil, W. A. Bartlett, and Col. Walker. [Minutes of 1863, p. 126.]

The Rev. Dr. J. Leighton Wilson, from the Committee to whom was referred the paper presented by the Rev. James A. Lyon, D. D., read the following report, which was adopted:

The Committee to whom was referred the address of Dr. Lyon, respectfully report, that in view of the great length of the address, the variety and importance of the topics involved in it, and the difficulty of examining it thoroughly in manuscript form, they would embody their recommendation in the following resolution, viz:

Resolved, That this address be recommitted to the

Rev. Dr. Lyon, Dr. J. Leighton Wilson, Dr. Palmer, Mr. D. A. Davis, Mr. G. J. S. Walker, and Judge J. N. Whitner, to consider the subject-matter of the same, and report at the next General Assembly; and that in the mean time they are authorized to publish the address of Dr. Lyon, in any way they may think best; and further, that the report they may propose to submit to the next Assembly be printed in advance of the meeting, for the use of the members. [Minutes, p. 138.]

In conclusion, we are glad to note a growing interest in *the religious instruction of our colored population*. We believe that more is done for their spiritual interests now than at any former period. Our ministers generally regard them as a portion of their flocks. There are few Churches in the South wholly destitute of this interesting class of worshippers; and most of our larger Churches embrace a considerable number of our slaves among their members. We would commend to the special attention of all our ministers the religious instruction of the colored race; and confidently trust that Christian masters will not only facilitate the attendance of their servants on the religious instructions to which they have access, but incur expense in order to afford their servants the means of grace. The best vindication of our system of domestic servitude is the generous provision of masters for the temporal and spiritual well-being of their servants, and the faithful, affectionate, and grateful service of those who enjoy their protection and care. [Narrative of 1863, p. 158.]

In accordance with the views expressed by the General Assembly, as to increased efforts in behalf of the colored population, the Secretary, in his communications with the missionaries, has called their attention to this department of their work, and it is believed that most of them are appropriating a part of their time in this way. The Committee had also hoped to be able to secure an admirably qualified young minister as an evangelist to the negroes, but previous engagements precluded for the time his compliance with our proposals. We

still indulge the hope that this arrangement may be carried into effect.

The promise for the future of this interesting and important field for Southern missionary labour is full of encouragement. When our independence shall have been established, we shall no longer be subject to suspicion and hindrance, because of the fanaticism of the North, and shall be left free to gather the fruits from this vast and inviting field. There are undoubted indications that the mind of the South, out of the Church as well as in it, is impressed with the obligation to provide more effectually for the spiritual wants of this large population of the ignorant and the needy, who have been providentially placed among us and under our control. As we receive of their carnal things, they would also seem to have a special claim to receive freely, in return, of our spiritual things. God has permitted them to be brought from their own dark land, to be placed upon our soil and under our roof-trees, and to labour for our sustenance and our wealth, and the obligation is obvious and imperative to do all that in us lies to illumine their minds with the light of the blessed gospel. The Foreign Mission problem is here reversed. Instead of having to send missionaries to the heathen, the heathen are brought to us; thus affording the opportunity of doing a foreign missionary work on a gigantic scale, and under the most favourable auspices—a work altogether unique, and a work which the Church in any other part of the world might well covet. The Lord, in this particular, hath set before us an open door; let us not fail to enter. [Annual Report on Domestic Missions, p. 162.]

The second order of the day, viz., to hear the report of the Committee on the Religious Instruction, etc., of the Negroes—was called up, when the Rev. Dr. Lyon, Chairman of said Committee, proceeded to read said report, which was discussed.

Pending this discussion, on motion of W. L. Mitchell, the Assembly heard, in connection with Dr. Lyon's report, a minority report, which was presented and read

by the Rev. J. Leighton Wilson, D. D., a member of the above-named Committee.

On motion of W. L. Mitchell, these reports were both referred to a Committee, of which Dr. Dabney shall be Chairman, to report action with reference to them to this Assembly, if practicable, and if not, to the next Assembly. The other members of this Committee were announced by the Moderator as follows: the Rev. R. McInnis, Rev. Dr. Kirkpatrick, W. L. Mitchell, and Samuel Barnett. [Minutes of 1864, p. 283.]

The Rev. Dr. Lyon, from the Committee on Bills and Overtures, reported Overture No. 2, with its answer, which was adopted, as follows:

The Presbytery of Hopewell respectfully overtures the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America to make a deliverance on the subject of licensing colored exhorters and preachers to labour among our colored population; and, if deemed advisable, to take some action, prescribing a mode of licensure for such labourers, and defining their *status* when thus licensed.

A true extract from the Minutes of the sessions of Hopewell Presbytery, held at Sparta, Ga., March, 1864.

C. W. LANE,

Stated Clerk pro tem.

Overture No. 2.—The Assembly would refer the subject of authorizing colored men to exhort, and teach, and labour among the colored population, to the wisdom and discretion of Church Sessions, until some suitable plan for the religious instruction of colored people can be devised by the Assembly. [Minutes, p. 286.]

5. The reports of all the Presbyteries indicate an increasing interest in the spiritual welfare of our colored population. The long-continued agitations of our adversaries have wrought within us a deeper conviction of the divine appointment of domestic servitude, and have led to a clearer comprehension of the duties we owe to the African race. We hesitate not to affirm that it is the peculiar mission of the Southern Church to conserve the

institution of slavery, and to make it a blessing both to master and slave. We could not, if we would, yield up these four millions of immortal beings to the dictates of fanaticism and to the menaces of military power. We distinctly recognize the inscrutable Providence which brought this benighted people into our midst, and we shall feel that we have not discharged our solemn trust until we have used every effort to bring them under the saving influences of the gospel of Christ. [Narrative of 1864, p. 293.]

MINUTE OF 1865

ON OUR

RELATION TO THE OLD SCHOOL CHURCH.

Overture No. 4.—An inquiry from an Elder of one of our Churches as to what is the duty and Christian course of a Church Session, when a minister or agent of the Old School General Assembly (North) presents himself amongst us, with a request to labour in our churches, or occupy one of our vacant houses of worship.

The committee recommend that this overture be answered by the adoption of the following resolutions, viz:

Resolved, 1st. That the Presbyterian Church of the North, (Old School) is to be looked upon simply as a separate and distinct ecclesiastical body; and that the ministers and agents of that Church have no further or higher claims on our courtesy than those of any other Churches of the same section of the country which hold to the same symbols of faith and order with ourselves.

Resolved, 2nd. That this Assembly has no reason for

recommending any other usages or rules in respect to our fellowship with other ecclesiastical bodies, than those that have long been familiar in all our Sessions and Presbyteries; and will not attempt to define afresh in what cases and in what degree errors in belief and practice shall exclude from our pulpits, or suspend ecclesiastical communion.

Resolved, 3d. That our ministers and churches be, and hereby are warned against all ministers, or other agents who may come among us to sow the seeds of division and strife in our congregations or to create schism in our beloved Zion. And owing to the peculiar reasons for prudence which now exist we enjoin it upon our ministers and Sessions to exercise special caution as to whom they admit to their pulpits; and in cases of doubt, to refer to the judgment of the Presbyteries the whole question of the nature and extent of the courtesy or countenance they may extend.

Resolved, 4th. That the Assembly would remind Sessions that in no case is it proper for them to invite ministers of other denominations stately to occupy any of our pulpits without the consent of the Presbyteries, and the known purpose of such ministers, at the earliest suitable opportunity, to unite with us in ecclesiastical relations. [P. 359.]

A PASTORAL LETTER

FROM THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO THE CHURCHES UNDER
THEIR CARE.

Beloved Brethren in the Lord:—Such were the convulsions of the country and interruptions of travel last spring, that a meeting of the General Assembly of our Church at the time appointed was impracticable. It has been now convened under circumstances of peculiar interest, involving the gravest responsibility. From this fact arises the special duty of addressing a Pastoral Letter to the Churches under our care, by which they may be the more comfortably re-assured concerning various points of great importance connected with our position, and be counselled in faithful love concerning the so em n obligations resting upon them.

That these weighty matters may be the more distinctly set in order before you, let the following points, concisely presented, be brought under your prayerful consideration :

I. *Our Relation to the Civil Governments of the Country*.—The storm of war has, during the four years past, swept over nearly every part of our bounds; a war so vast in its proportions, so bitter in its animosities, so desolating in its effects, as to make it an astonishment to the nations. Its sacrifices in treasure and in blood, its public losses and private griefs, swell beyond all calculation. As to its particular causes, or upon which party rests the blame, chiefly or wholly—these are questions which the Church of Christ has no commission to decide. Beyond a doubt, however, its great root is to be found in those lusts which war in the mem-

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bers. Of these it becomes us to own our full share, and because of them to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God.

During the prevalence of this war, "the higher powers" actually bearing rule over most of our bounds, and to which under the word of God we were required to be "subject," were the government of the Confederate States, and those of the several States constituting it. By the event of the war, the first has been overthrown, and the second, as constituents thereof, are changed. The "higher powers," now bearing rule over us, are confessedly the government of the United States, and those existing in the States wherein we reside. The rightfulness of these several authorities, or to which of them the allegiance of our people, as citizens, was, or is primarily due, are matters upon which a judicatory of the Church has no right to pronounce judgment. The relation of the Church of Christ to civil governments is not one *de jure*, but *de facto*. As right and good, or wrong and wicked, they rise and fall by the agency or permission of God's Providence. In either case, the attitude of the Church towards them is essentially the same. As long as they stand and are acknowledged, obedience is to be enjoined as a duty, factious resistance condemned as a sin. But in regard to conflicts between existing governments, or as to movements in society, peaceful or otherwise, to effect political changes, the Church as such has no more control over them, than it has over the polls of the country. If it has authority to uphold on the one side, it has equal power to condemn on the other; if to suppress a political movement, then also to instigate it. In truth it has neither; and to assert the contrary is to corrupt the Church in its principles, forever embroil it with the strifes of the world and plunge it headlong into ruin.

Under these views, and considering the extraordinary conflict through which the country has passed, as well as the extraordinary circumstances in which it is now placed, it is incumbent upon us to exhort you, brethren, "to obey them that have the rule over you,

and submit yourselves." Fulfil with scrupulous fidelity all your obligations to the governments of the land; remembering the duty of this compliance, "not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake:" "For so is the will of God, that with well-doing you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men."

II. *Our Relation to the Church.*—It is not necessary we should here minutely define the nature of the Church. It is enough to say that it is a kingdom, which, though in this world, is yet not of it; that it is a body of which Christ is the sole Head; purchased by His blood, to the exclusion of all other merit, and renewed by His Spirit to the exclusion of all other power; and that it is united to Him by the bond of faith. From this living Head the members receive all their vitality, control and protection. It is therefore a spiritual body. Its sole commission is to preach the Gospel to every creature, and it is called to that holy living which the Gospel enforces.

It follows from this, according to the admirable statement of our Confession of Faith, chap. 31, sec. 4, that— "Synods and Councils are to handle or conclude nothing but that which is ecclesiastical; and are not to intermeddle with civil affairs which concern the Commonwealth, unless by way of humble petition in cases extraordinary, or by way of advice, for satisfaction of conscience, if they be thereunto required by the civil magistrate."

It is equally clear from this and from what has been before observed, that the civil magistrate or military ruler has not the shadow of a right to restrain the freedom of the Church, by excluding its own chosen pastors and imposing others, or closing its houses of worship, or visiting pains and penalties upon its ministers and members for using the privilege of worship.

How often both of these great principles have been trampled into the dust within a few years past, melancholy facts most fully attest. Of all such utter confusion of the things of Cæsar with the things

of God, it becomes our people to beware, and against it faithfully to bear witness. The events passing before us bring up with fresh power the importance of keeping in mind this very point, this vital truth, that the Church of Christ is indeed a *spiritual* kingdom, and is *therefore* like Mount Zion that abideth forever. The Church is safe through the deluge, but only in her own ark, not in the ark of the State. It is owing to this fact and to this only, that she can ride out the storms that leave the shores of this world strewn with the wreck of everything which the hand of man has constructed.

But it is our desire, brethren, to counsel you at present concerning the special relation you sustain to this part of the Church with which you are more immediately connected. Four years ago we were constrained to organize a separate General Assembly. This was done because of an attempt by a part of the Church to impose a yoke upon our consciences "which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear." Our testimony upon this and other points of great interest is before the Christian Churches of the world, in the address made to them by the General Assembly of 1861; and if any schism exists, we are willing the impartial judgment of men should be passed upon the question as to where the sin of it lies. This organization was formed out of elements among the oldest in the history of the Presbyterian Church in this country. It carries with it nearly one-third of the whole original Church. It includes a territory of twelve States. It embraces ten Synods, forty-six Presbyteries, nearly one thousand ministers, about fourteen hundred churches, and about seventy thousand church members, and was affected, and has been continued with a unanimity which has hardly a parallel in the history of such movements. It was not made to subserve any political or secular interest whatsoever. The reasons for its continuance not only remain as conclusive as at first, but have been exceedingly strengthened by events of public notoriety occurring each succeeding year.

It may be proper at this point to declare concerning

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other churches in the most explicit manner, that, in the true idea of "the communion of saints," we would willingly hold fellowship with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity; and especially do we signify to all bodies, ministers and people of the Presbyterian Church, struggling to maintain the true principles of the same time honoured Confession, our desire to establish the most intimate relations with them which may be found mutually edifying and for the glory of God.

But, while earnestly exhorting you to walk in love towards all your fellow-Christians, peculiar circumstances, well known, make it our plain duty to put you on your guard against attempts to disturb and divide your congregations. We are a branch of the Church as complete in our organization, as thoroughly distinct and harmonious, and as secure in our prospects as any other in the land. Appreciating this fact, we are sure common self-respect, to say nothing of a jealous care for the honour of your Church, will repel all unworthy attempts of men who may lie in wait to deceive, and to cause you to fall from your own steadfastness.

III *Our relations to the negro population.*—The extraordinary circumstances in which, by recent events, this people are now placed, and our relations to them is a subject too immense to be passed over in silence. The former relation between our citizens and most of this population, was that of master and servant. The address of our General Assembly before referred to, contains the only full, unambiguous, deliberate, and authoritative exposition of our views in regard to this matter. We here re-affirm its whole doctrine to be that of Scripture and reason. It is the old doctrine of the Church, and the only one which keeps its foundations secure. That address contains, among other statements, the following:

"We would have it distinctly understood that in our ecclesiastical capacity, we are neither the friends nor the foes of slavery; that is to say, we have no commission either to propagate or abolish it. The policy of its ex

istence, or non-existence, is a question which exclusively belongs to the State. We have no right, as a Church, to enjoin it as a duty or condemn it as a sin. Our business is with the duties which spring from the relation: the duties of the masters on the one hand, and of their slaves on the other. These duties we are to proclaim and enforce with spiritual sanctions. The social, civil, political problems connected with this great subject transcend our sphere, as God has not entrusted to His Church the organization of Society, the construction of government, nor the allotment of individuals to their various stations. The Church has as much right to preach to the monarchies of Europe, and the despotisms of Asia, the doctrines of Republican equality, as to preach to the governments of the South the extirpation of slavery."

This relation is now overthrown, suddenly and violently; whether justly or unjustly, in wrath or in mercy, for weal or for woe, let history and the Judge of all the earth decide. But there are two considerations of vital interest which still remain.

One is that while the existence of slavery may, in its civil aspects, be regarded as a settled question, an issue now gone, yet the lawfulness of the relation as a question of social morality, and of Scriptural truth, has lost nothing of its importance. When we solemnly declare to you, brethren, that the dogma which asserts the inherent sinfulness of this relation is unscriptural and fanatical; that it is condemned not only by the word of God, but by the voice of the Church in all ages; that it is one of the most pernicious heresies of modern times; that its countenance by any Church, is a just cause of separation from it, (1 Tim. 6: 1-5) we have surely said enough to warn you away from this insidious error, as from a fatal shore.

Whatever, therefore, we may have to lament before God, either for neglect of duty or for actual wrong towards our servants, while the relation lasted, we are not called, now that it has been abolished, to bow the head in humiliation before men, or admit that the mem-

ory of many of our dear kindred is to be covered with shame because, like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, they had bond-servants born in their house, or bought with their money; and who now, redeemed by the same precious blood, sit down together in the kingdom of God.

The other consideration connected with this subject is *the present condition of this people*. We may righteously protest, that with their wretchedness already incalculably great, that with their prospects, to human view, dismal as the grave, our Church is not chargeable; that it may hold up its hands before heaven and earth, washed of the tremendous responsibility involved in this change in the condition of nearly four million bond-servants, and for which it has hitherto been generally conceded they were unprepared.

But in this dispensation of Providence which has befallen the negroes of the Southern States, and mainly without their agency, your obligations to promote their welfare, though diminished, have not ceased. Debtors before to them when bound, you are still debtors to them when free. You are bound to them not only by the ties of a common nature, a common sin, but a common redemption also. They have grown up around and in your households, have toiled for your benefit, ministered to your comforts and wants, and have often tenderly, faithfully nursed you in sickness. They are still around your doors, in the bosom of your community. Many of them are your fellow-heirs of salvation. Together with you, they all need it; greatly need it for time—for eternity. We are persuaded you will not turn away from them in this day of their imagined millennium—we fear of terrible calamity. Do all you can for their best welfare and do it quickly, for they already begin to pass rapidly away. “By pureness, by knowledge, by long suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honour and by dishonour by evil report and good report,” let it be shown to all men that nothing shall withdraw the sym-

pathy of your heart or the labour of your hand from a work which must of necessity and ever rest chiefly upon those who dwell in the land, not upon the strangers who visit it. If their condition is made better, if souls are plucked as brands from the burning, you will have the comfort of knowing that you were, under God, instrumental in such happy results. Should our worst fears be realized, and their doom be sealed, you will have a pure conscience at the bar of the final Judge.

We have thought it important to re-state the general principles here presented, not because your faithful devotion to them is doubted, but because as those who watch for souls, we "would not be negligent, putting you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth," and because to the reproach of religion in many places they have sunk out of view, and the Church of God has been thereby brought into perilous times.

Bear with us now while we would, in faithful love, counsel you concerning the solemn responsibilities resting upon you.

Think of the *magnitude of the work thrown upon our hands.*

We find ourselves with our two theological seminaries much shattered in their resources. Most of our colleges are financially disabled, many almost ruined. Many of our houses of worship are despoiled or laid in ashes, our people impoverished, our ministers scantily supported. We are indeed deeply afflicted. But shall we therefore draw back, sink down into despair, leave our beloved Church to sit in sackcloth, and gross darkness to cover the people? Every heart cries out 'this must never be.' On the contrary, our Church must invigorate and extend all its present schemes of action, as well as embrace new ones as they offer themselves. If so, then it must address itself to this work with an energy it has never yet known. But how shall it be strengthened for it? Allow us in a few words, to remind you of old, well-tried principles; for our rules and plans need keeping, rather than mending, and there is ample room pre-

pared within the scope of our cherished schemes, for bringing out of the grave an untold treasure of buried talent, and making it useful in the Master's cause. To effect this,

We must have a supreme consecration to God. "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price," must be engraven more deeply upon our hearts. The great practical drawback in the Church is not that the consecration of its members is insincere, but that it is not habitually supreme. It does not subordinate everything else to the cause of Christ. Is it any wonder then, that the aim of life is so earthly, and the work of life so feebly grasped? If ever our Zion shall arise and shine it will be under the light of a people intensely, constantly devoted to doing the will of God. "Wherefore we beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

Remember that there is Work for All.—One infallible sign of a redeemed heart is a desire to know and obey God. Its very birth-cry is: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" When you became members of the Church, from the very nature of the transaction, some of its interest was transferred to your keeping; you assumed a part of its responsibility. In your profession you identified yourself with the Lord Jesus, with His cause and kingdom.

Is this, however, a deep, or a very general impression? Is it not manifest that multitudes come into the Church with the feeblest conviction of duty in view? They seem hardly to know or to care whether the Master has done such a thing as to give to "every man his own work." We entreat you to remember that He has omitted none of His servants in the great command, "occupy till I come." And it is only when in Him the whole body is fitly framed together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the ef-

fectual working in the measure of every part, that it maketh increase to the edifying of itself in love.

If, then, contemplating the magnitude of our work, we shall consecrate ourselves supremely to Him who gave Himself for us, and then remember that there is a work for all to do, what will be the result?

The treasury of the Lord will be full. There will be such an outpouring by our people as has never been known in our history. "All experience shows that the Church has never been replenished in her operations by the ample bounty of a few men, so much as by the collected mites of her innumerable poor disciples." In this, as in other respects, the history of the Free Church of Scotland is full of instruction for us. Are we poor? So were they. But nobly did they bear out with them, not only their grand testimony to the supreme Headship of Christ as King in Zion, but the burden also of sustaining every scheme of benevolence necessary to the complete equipment of their organization. Are we afflicted as well as poor? So were the Churches in Macedonia; yet, "in a great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality." Let but this spirit thoroughly pervade our people, and what shall we soon witness? You will educate your ministry, and then amply support them. And to do this, you will give a generous support to your colleges and theological seminaries. You will supply your people with the printed truth in every proper form of it; and therefore you will give them the Bible, the tract, and the religious volume. You will plant Churches where they are needed; you will push Church enterprise into every accessible part of the land. The Holy Spirit will be poured out from on high. Our desolations will be repaired, until "streams shall break out in the desert, and the wilderness shall blossom as the rose."

And now, brethren, "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely,

whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." "Consider what we say, and the Lord give you understanding in all things." Strive to "stand complete in all the will of God." Strive to be "living epistles known and read of all men." Serve the Lord in cheerfulness. Refrain from murmuring; pray for a meek and submissive spirit. Desire more that your trials should be sanctified than removed. So forgive your enemies that you may be able to "lift up holy hands without wrath or doubting." Be humble, watchful, prayerful and useful. Do all in your power to minister to the comfort of those who minister to you in holy things. Try to do good in a Saviour's Church and a world of sin. Let piety be shown at home; let the holy Sabbath be indeed a day for God; and let your children be trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Live daily near to the Cross of the Saviour, and then will all these fruits of righteousness abound through Jesus Christ, to the praise and glory of His grace.

You have been called to pass through deep waters; you have had sorrow upon sorrow. It was the path your Saviour trod, and He will grant you in it the comfort of His love, and the fellowship of His Spirit. Some of our dear brethren in Christ, and some of them in the ministry, have had cruel mockings and scourgings, have suffered stripes and imprisonments, and the loss of all things. Our prayer has been with you in your calamity. Cast your burden on the Lord, and He will sustain you. Remember that the Church of God has often passed through the heated furnace, but the form of the Son of God has been seen with her, and she is still unconsumed. "The bush," said Rutherford, that great light of the Church of Scotland, "the bush has been burning these four thousand years, but no man hath seen the ashes of that fire to this day." Be faithful unto death. Very soon will all these troubles end, and your home be reached, into which no enemy shall ever enter, and from which no friend shall ever depart.

We desire to tell you, dear brethren, and with thankful, joyful hearts, how good we have felt it to be here. We have taken sweet counsel together, and gone to the house of God in company. We are in peace and love one with another. No strife distracts our beloved Zion. We depart to our homes thanking God and taking courage, resolved to stand in our lot and labour with a more unreserved devotion for the upbuilding of that only Kingdom which cannot be moved.

Receive these words of instruction and exhortation, which, in the fulness of our hearts, we send to you, greeting.

“And now, brethren, we commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified.”

“The God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Jesus Christ, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle you.”

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen.

GEORGE HOWE,
Moderator.

MACON, GA., December 19th, 1865.

[*Extracts from the Minutes of 1865.*]

On motion of Dr. Brown the following resolutions were adopted:

Resolved, 1. That it is proper that a Pastoral Letter shall be addressed by this General Assembly to the several churches under their care, that they may be the more fully re-assured concerning various points of great importance connected with our position, and be counselled in faithful love concerning the solemn obligations resting upon them.

2. That, for this purpose, a committee, consisting of one member from each Synod, shall be appointed, whose duty it shall be to prepare the Letter, and make report as soon as practicable. (Page 349.)

The Moderator also announced the following committee to prepare a Pastoral Letter to the Churches, in accordance with the resolutions of yesterday: Rev. Wm. Brown, D. D., C. A. Stillman, D. D., J. H. Gillespie, F. A. Ross, D. D., J. L. Kirkpatrick, D. D., J. L. Wilson, D. D., W. L. Mitchell, and Henry T. Bartlett. (Page 352.)

The Pastoral Letter * * * * * was then read and unanimously adopted. (Page 371.)

ACTION OF 1866,
ON THE
SPIRITUALITY OF THE CHURCH AND ITS
RELATION TO THE STATE.

The Rev. Dr. George Howe, from the Committee of Bills and Overtures, reported.

Overture 8. An overture sent by Tuskegee church to the Presbytery of East Alabama, and referred by said Presbytery to this General Assembly.

This overture has reference to the relation between the Church and the State, and especially in respect to the observance of those days designated by the civil magistrate as days of fasting, prayer or thanksgiving.

On these points, the Assembly would declare anew the doctrine of our time-honoured Confession, that Christ alone is King and Head of His Church, and that all ordinances of worship binding on us are ordained by Him alone; that there are two commonwealths, equally appointed by God, the civil, whose object is to protect the persons and property, and promote the well-being of men as they are members of civil society; and the religious, the commonwealth of Israel, whose object it is to train men, as they are sinners, for glory and immortality. Although these exist together in this world, each is independent of the other in its own sphere. The Church of Christ, as it is visible in any country, is divided among many denominations, who act in their appointments for religious observance without reference to each other, each being responsible to Christ their Head. In the civil commonwealth, there is one and the same civil authority, ruling in its own sphere over all. On occasions of national calamities and sorrows, or of prosperity and joy, it is the dictate of that religious nature with which God has endowed us, and accordant

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with the teachings of His holy word, that we should humble ourselves, as a people, with prayer and fasting, or offer to Him, thanksgiving and praise. The people that truly abases itself before God, or offers to Him thanksgiving, performs an act well pleasing in His sight. And when the civil power which alone can reach us all, invites to these acts, and so furnishes the occasion for their performance, it is right for those who bear rule in the visible Church to consider whether Christ their Head, who, as Mediatorial King, rules over the nations of the earth as well as over His Church, does not Himself invite them to these acts of worship. He is their Lord. And to their own Master they stand or fall. The act of the civil power does but secure that concert of prayer, praise and worship, that would be wanting without it. And we cannot condemn the civil magistrate who thus furnishes the opportunity of united religious acts, so consonant to the dictates of the hearts of a Christian people and to the religion they profess.

We do not enjoin the observance of such days in all cases, nor would we dissuade from such observance, but remit the determination of the question in each case to our Church sessions. [Minutes, pp. 13, 14.]

The Rev. Dr. Palmer from the Committee on Foreign Correspondence, presented a report, which was adopted, and is as follows :

The Committee on Foreign Correspondence would respectfully submit to the Assembly the following minute for its adoption: * * * * * *

This argument, of visibly realizing the spiritual unity of the Lord's people, is enforced by the peculiar circumstances of the times in which we live, and by the nature of the controversies which now agitate the Church. The old conflict for the spirituality and independence of the Church is, to the amazement of many, renewed in our day and upon our own continent. The battle fought generations ago by the Melvilles, Gillespies, and Hendersons of Scotland, is reopened with singular violence; and the old banner is again

floating over us with its historic inscription, "For Christ's covenant and crown." Upon no one subject is the mind of this Assembly more clearly ascertained, upon no one doctrine is there a more solid or perfect agreement amongst those whom this Assembly represents, than the non-secular and non-political character of the Church of Jesus Christ. Whatever ambiguous or indiscreet expressions may have been extorted, under the pressure of extraordinary excitement, from individuals amongst us, the Assembly of this Church deliberately re-affirms the testimony given in the solemn Address to the Churches of Jesus Christ throughout the earth, issued in 1861, during its first sessions in the city of Augusta, and which was pronounced in these words: "The provinces of Church and State are perfectly distinct, and the one has no right to usurp the jurisdiction of the other. The state is a natural institute, founded in the constitution of man as moral and social, and designed to realise the idea of justice. The Church is a supernatural institute, founded in the facts of redemption, and is designed to realise the idea of grace. It is the society of the redeemed. The State aims at social order, the Church at spiritual holiness. The State looks to the visible and outward, the Church is concerned for the invisible and inward. The badge of the State's authority is the sword, by which it becomes a terror to evil doers and a praise to them that do well. The badge, of the Church's authority is the keys by which it opens and shuts the kingdom of Heaven, according as men are believing or impenitent. The power of the Church is exclusively spiritual, that of the State includes the exercise of force. The constitution of the Church is a divine revelation, the constitution of the State must be determined by human reason and the course of providential events. The Church has no right to construct a government for the State, and the State has no right to frame a creed or polity for the Church. They are as planets moving in different orbits, and unless each is confined to its own track, the consequences may be as

disastrous in the moral world as the collision of different spheres in the world of matter." The early assertion of this radical distinction, at the very opening of our history, commits us to the maintenance and defence of the crown rights of the Redeemer, whether on the one hand they be usurped by the State, or whether, on the other, they be renounced by any portion of God's professing people. Summoned thus in the providence of God to contend for the same principles for which our martyr fathers of the Scottish Reformation testified even to the death, and which the fathers of the Southern Presbyterian Church labored so earnestly to secure and rejoiced in having obtained their full recognition by the civil government in America, it would be most happy if all those in the different branches of the Presbyterian family who are called to renew the protest, could be united in one homogeneous body for the reassertion of Christ's royal supremacy in and over His spiritual kingdom, the Church. The scattered testimony of separate and individual witnesses would deepen in intensity if gathered into one volume and rolled against those who would place the crown of Jesus upon the head of Cæsar. In view of all which, this Assembly would tender the hand to all who are of like mind with us as to the doctrines of grace and as to the order and discipline of God's house: that as one compacted Church, we may oppose a breakwater against the current which is sweeping from its moorings our common Protestantism, until the doctrine of the Church as a free spiritual commonwealth shall regain its ascendancy not only over the Presbyterian but over the whole American Protestant mind. [Minutes, pp. 30, 31.]

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ACTION OF 1867,

ON

THE LETTER OF THE SYNOD OF KENTUCKY TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

This letter was referred to a committee, of which Dr. J. A. Lyon was chairman, whose report was adopted, the main portion of which is as follows, viz :

The desire of the Synod, as we apprehend it, is the very natural and proper desire—to be assured that we are in such substantial agreement with them in the principles and doctrines for which they have been contending, that they will not be likely to have a recurrence of the difficulties from which they have already suffered so much. This agreement the Assembly can declare without any difficulty, since the whole existence of our Church as a separate organization has been an assertion of these principles, and a protest against those acts and doctrines that tend to subvert them. In the first official announcement at Augusta, of our ecclesiastical existence, in the pastoral letter issued by the Assembly at Macon, and in the action of the last Assembly at Memphis, these great principles have been declared in the most solemn and emphatic manner, as among the fundamental principles of our ecclesiastical organization. And we have looked on the struggles of our brethren in Kentucky with a deeper sympathy and a livelier interest because we felt that they were contending substantially for the grand principles which have ever been the rallying cry of our Presbyterian ancestry in the best days of the Church's history—the supremacy of Christ's Crown and Covenant. And we are sure that should our brethren see fit to enter into organic relations with us, they will find that substantial agreement in all these great doctrines and principles which is necessary

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to a cordial and happy union. We therefore recommend the adoption of the following resolutions, viz :

Resolved, 1. That this Assembly expresses its deep sympathy with our brethren in Kentucky in the troubles through which they have been passing during the last seven years, and its admiration of the firm stand which they have taken for the spiritual independence of the Church of Christ.

2. That this General Assembly declines now, as heretofore, to make any utterance concerning the acts of the body against which the Synod protests. Yet the Assembly feels free solemnly to assure the Synod of Kentucky not only of our cordial approval of, and sincere concurrence substantially in the Synod's statement of doctrine and constitutional principles, as contained under the four heads of the third division of their letter, but of our sincere joy to find our brethren of Kentucky so ready to unite with us in solemn covenant, with a view, among other things, to the advancement and maintenance of these doctrines and principles as against the apparent Erastian tendencies of our American Protestantism.

3. That the Letter of the Synod of Kentucky be admitted to record as they suggest, as a part of the historical acts and monuments of the Church, by publishing it in the Appendix to the Minutes of this Assembly. [Minutes p. 144.]

EXTRACTS FROM THE LETTER OF THE SYNOD OF KENTUCKY.

[The following extracts are given from the third part of the Letter, which contains a "Statement of doctrines and principles, for which the Synod of Kentucky and its Presbyteries have contended in the controversies with the General Assembly, as adopted by the Synod, Oct. 11, 1870." The parts omitted, where asterisks occur, are quotations from the standards of our church and of ancient churches, fortifying the positions taken, or

criticisms of the proceedings of the Northern Assembly.]

II. Still further to the end that the testimony of this Synod and its Presbyteries may be more clearly understood, and to guard it from the perversions and misrepresentations of their adversaries, it is hereby declared, once for all, that * * * the Synods and Presbyteries of Kentucky have not meant "as they be slanderously reported," to deny any of the following propositions :

Either, First—To deny that civil government is the ordinance of God, and the magistrate God's minister, in the natural order, as are the church officers in the spiritual order, for the protection of the good and the repressing of the lawless and wicked.

Or, Second—To deny that the Church may not properly enjoin obedience in the discharge of their duties, as citizens and subjects, to the civil government within its sphere.

Or, Third—To deny that the State, as a *natural institute*, should acknowledge "God the King and Ruler," as He makes Himself known to the State in the natural order, and to man as His creature, "showing the work of the law written in his heart, his conscience also bearing witness, and who may clearly see His eternal power and Godhead by the things that are made."

Or Fourth—That the State may enforce the law of God, as made known in the natural order through the impressions of man's moral nature, and the ethical truths clearly deducible from the acknowledged existence of God the Creator, and the relations to Him of man the creature; whom the "light of nature sheweth that there is a God who hath lordship and sovereignty over all."

Or, Fifth—That the Church should have cognizance of crimes against the law of the State, as they may be sins against God, which affect, spiritually, the subjects of her spiritual discipline: the Church having in view to restore such a one in the spirit of meekness.

Or, Sixth—To deny that the Church may properly appeal to the civil courts—whose business it is to protect life, liberty and property—for the protection, against the lawless and unjust, of property given in trust to her, as they protect any other property; or that the Church should protest against any intrusion of the civil government into the sphere of the spiritual, which has been assigned by her Head to her jurisdiction.

Neither, again, in respect to the interpretation of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, have this Synod and its Presbyteries intended to deny any of the following propositions :

Either, First—To deny that the power of the supreme court, representing the power of the whole Church, is, within the limits of Christ's laws, over the power of the lower courts representing a part.

Or, Second—To deny that individual members and lower courts should "receive with reverence and submission" the decrees and determinations of superior councils, "*if consonant to the word of God,*" "not only for their agreement with the word, but also for the power whereby they are made, as being an ordinance of God, appointed thereunto in His word."

Or, Third—To deny that the power of the General Assembly, as the power of all other courts and office-bearers, is primarily from Jesus Christ, the head of the Church, and only in a secondary sense derived from the constitution; and that only as it is a delegated body are the Presbyteries the fountain of power to the General Assembly. * * * * *

As against what they deem to be latitudinarian, or, at least, inadequate views of the nature of church power, which rests directly upon the doctrine that Jesus Christ is now actually ruling in His visible Church, and acting through His appointed office-bearers, they have maintained :

I. CONCERNING THE DOCTRINE OF THE KINGSHIP OF CHRIST, AND THE MANNER IN WHICH CHRIST EXECUTETH THE OFFICE A KING IN HIS VISIBLE CHURCH.

That our standards declare in accordance with the word of God :

“Christ executeth the office of a king in calling out of the world a people to Himself, and giving them *officers, laws and censures*, by which He visibly governs them.” [Larger Catechism, Q. 45.]

And, that this is very clear and explicit statement of the *jure divino* character of all that essentially pertains to the government and discipline of the Church is the true key to all the more detailed statements of our standards concerning church government, viz :

That “the Lord Jesus, as King and Head of His Church, hath therein appointed a government in the hand of church officers, distinct from the civil magistrate.” And “to these officers the keys of the kingdom of heaven are committed.” [Conf. ch. 30: 1, 2.]

* * * * *

In the light of these doctrinal statements, and as necessary inferences from them—this Synod and its Presbyteries have maintained :

That the doctrine of the kingly office of Christ is no abstract theory of theology, but of the very first practical importance in the gospel system ; since to His office as a king, His prophetic and priestly offices stand related as means to an end. He is a teaching prophet and an atoning priest that He may be a reigning king. And His kingly office stands related to the government and discipline of the Church as His prophetic and priestly offices to the ordinances of the word and sacraments. While, indeed, the acceptance of the doctrine of His kingly office is not essential to the faith that is unto salvation in the sense in which the acceptance of the doctrine of His priestly office as exhibiting our justifying righteousness is essential, yet the obligation to present truly the doctrine of Christ's kingly

office in the government and discipline of the Church to the faith of His people, is of like force with the obligation to present truly the doctrine of His prophetic and priestly offices in the word and sacraments.

That, therefore, the avoidance of all admixture of human maxims, policies, and expediencies in the administration of the government and discipline of the Church, is a duty of the same obligation as to avoid the admixture of human philosophies and theories with the dispensation of the word, or of human fancies with the dispensation of the sacraments.

That it is therefore not only incompetent to the Church courts, but positively a perversion of the truth, that they shall assume to consider and determine any other questions than those which relate to the government, order and discipline of Christ's visible kingdom, or to determine these on grounds aside from the word of God; or to speak in Christ's name and by His authority, otherwise than to the faith and conscience of His people, concerning things to be obeyed as enjoined by the law of Christ. Since, according to our standards, even though "there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God and government of the Church common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence;" yet even these must "be ordered according to the general rules of the word, *which are always to be observed.*" [Conf. chap. 1: 6.]

That, therefore, the attempt on the part of the tribunals of the Church to exercise the authority thus delegated to them by Christ in determining questions merely secular, concerning which His word makes no such determination, is, "to usurp the prerogatives of the Church's Divine Master;" and, practically, to obscure to the faith of His people, the doctrine of His kingly office; just as the attempt to determine by the spiritual authority questions of Christian faith and practice on the ground of human opinions and theories of human expediency, is practically to obscure to the faith of His people Christ's propetic office. For, pre-

cisely in harmony with their view of His kingly office in the Church, our standards declare: "Christ executeth the office of a prophet in revealing to the Church in all ages, by His Spirit and word, *in divers ways of administration, the whole will of God* in all things concerning their edification and salvation." [Larger Cat. Q. 43.]

In full accordance with these views of the doctrine of Christ's kingly office in His Church, this Synod and its Presbyteries have maintained:

II. CONCERNING THE ORIGIN, NATURE AND FUNCTIONS OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT, AS CONTRASTED WITH, AND RELATED TO, THE CIVIL GOVERNMENT. * * * *

That the subject of church government is man contemplated as a sinner; whereas the subject of civil government is man contemplated as a creature.

That the constituent elements of the spiritual commonwealth are the elect of God, the families that call upon the name of the Lord, whom Christ covenants to redeem; whereas the constituent elements of the civil commonwealth are the families of men as citizens indiscriminately, which it aims to protect in their rights by repressing the lawless and wicked.

That the efficient power of the Church is the power of the keys, the ministry of the word and ordinances aiming to gain a voluntary obedience by moral suasion; whereas the efficient power of the State is the power of the sword to enforce a compulsory obedience, having special reference to the repression of the lawless.

That the laws and ordinances of the Church deal with the wrong actions of men as sins against God; whereas the laws and ordinances of the State deal with the wrong actions of men as misdemeanors and crimes against men.

That the laws and ordinances of the Church are in their nature disciplinary—a means of grace, and designed to realise the idea of grace; whereas the laws of the State

are in their nature vindicatory for the suppression of wickedness by an appeal to fear, and are designed to realise the idea of justice.

That, therefore, the Church has manifestly no commission either to discharge any functions of the State, or to direct, advise, or assist the State; nor has the Church any light in regard to the affairs of the State which the State has not already: nor, since her authority is spiritual, and resting on moral suasion only, has it any adaptation to the purposes of a government of force. Neither can the State have any commission from God to discharge the functions of the Church, nor the ability to do so; since—aside from the fact that its compulsory power is inapplicable to things of religion—even though the State may have the advantage of the inspired word of God current among its citizens, to give additional clearness and force to the teachings of nature and reason; yet the State has not the special illumination of the Holy Spirit, which alone can interpret the word for the purposes of the Church. Nor is anything plainer from experience than that the unconverted statesman, accepting the word of God intellectually merely, however he may thereby be made wiser as to natural things, is not made more competent to legislate for the Church, than though he were merely a refined and enlightened Pagan. Nor has anything more certainly tended to enfeeble the spiritual life of the Church, than the mistake of courting the favor and seeking the alliance of rulers and statesmen, who merely accept intellectually, and therefore treat respectfully, the word of Christ and His ordinances, as though thereby the kingdom of Christ can be strengthened.

Hence this Synod and its Presbyteries have steadfastly protested against and resisted the assumption of authority by the church courts, to advise, direct, and assist the civil government in its policy by the exercise of their spiritual authority, or to interpose the power of the spiritual sword for enforcing any theories of social organization, or theories of labor, or political

theories, or to direct men as citizens in the choice of their civil policy.

And, on the other hand, they have protested against and resisted every invitation by the church courts to the State to assume and every assumption by the State to direct the ordinances of worship in God's house, or to interfere with the conscientious convictions of men, so long as those convictions did not develop themselves in overt acts. For our great civil "Act establishing Religious Freedom," nobly declares, as defining the limits of the civil power: "It is time enough for the rightful purposes of civil government for its officers to interfere, when principles break out into *overt acts* against peace and good order."

In full accordance also with the foregoing views of the doctrine concerning the kingly office of Christ in His Church, this Synod and its Presbyteries have maintained:

III. CONCERNING THE POWERS OF THE SEVERAL COURTS OF THE CHURCH; THEIR RELATIONS TO EACH OTHER AND TO THE OFFICE-BEARERS AND PEOPLE. * * * * *

First—That any acts and deliverances of the Assembly which involve a usurpation of powers by that body not assigned to the General Assembly in the constitution—which constitution we hold to be consonant to the word of God, and, therefore, that to transcend the constitution is to do also what is contrary to the word of God—or any acts and deliverances of the Assembly concerning questions of national or other civil policy—these being questions in the natural order which "God the Supreme Ruler" hath appointed to be determined by the civil magistrate, and questions which the Lord Christ, as King and Prophet of the Church, hath not determined in His word, except as questions of sin and of duty that concern the conscience—all such acts and deliverances are not only in themselves errors as transcending the powers of the Assembly and the sphere of the Church, but also as tending to obscure the great

doctrine of the kingly and prophetic offices of Christ, as still executed in His visible Church.

That, therefore, while it is a duty to receive with reverence and submission all such decrees as are consonant to the word, yet such dangerous errors are not only to be silently disregarded as "mere commandments of men, to obey which would be to betray liberty of conscience," but are to be testified against; and all claim of authority resting upon them is to be resisted, and this for the following considerations, to wit:

That "the Supreme Judge by which all controversies of religion are to be decided, and in whose decision we are to rest;" is not the supreme court, but "the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture."

That it is the duty, more especially of every office-bearer and court of the church alike, to bear witness to the truth as against error, since to this obligation every office-bearer is held by his ordination vow to study the *purity* as well as the peace of the Church.

That it is expressly enjoined upon the Presbyteries, in the constitution itself, thus to bear witness for the truth; being required to "resolve questions of doctrine and discipline, and to condemn erroneous opinions." Nor is there any limitation to the requirement, excluding from consideration any erroneous opinions because uttered by the General Assembly. On the contrary, they must for that very reason condemn the errors, since errors of the General Assembly more directly affect the purity and peace of their churches than the errors of any other.

That not only does the constitution enjoin it, but the Lord Christ, as we have seen, gives His special promise to be present with the lower court in its act not less than to be present "always" with those representing the whole Church. And there is every reason to hope that the Holy Spirit will use the faithful testimony of the lower court as the means whereby to extend in the Church a revival of love for the truth, and thereby restore it from error.

That, therefore, nothing is more absurd and danger-

ous to Christian liberty than the conception, by an utterly false analogy, that the office-bearers and lower courts are bound to obey as a law, until repealed, an act that is unconstitutional, and, therefore, not consonant to the word of God, as citizens obey civil acts until repealed. Such a conception could occur only by reason of utter forgetfulness of all that our standards teach concerning liberty of conscience, and the non-obligatory character of decrees of councils that are not according to the word.

That it is an argument of no real force which urges, to the contrary of these views, that they open the door to constant acts of disobedience, resistance, and schism in the Church, and make church government impossible. Since, on the one hand, Christ the King reigns still in His visible Church, though His representatives may be unfaithful, and by His Spirit enlightening the minds of His people, He will, in His own way and time, heal the declensions and dissensions of His Church. And, on the other hand, still more is it true in ecclesiastical than in political governments, that "all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer while evils are sufferable than to right themselves by abolishing forms of government to which they have long been accustomed." * * * * *

IV. CONCERNING THE INTERPRETATION OF OUR FORM OF GOVERNMENT AND DISCIPLINE WITH REFERENCE TO THE FUNCTIONS, POWERS, AND MUTUAL RELATIONS OF THE COURTS OF THE CHURCH.

First—As to the functions and sphere of the General Assembly and other courts, they have maintained, and desire to have it recognized as the accepted interpretation, that the constitution of the Church assigns to the General Assembly no function to the end that it may counsel, direct, or assist the civil government.

That neither does the constitution assign to the Assembly any authority to consider and determine * * either :

Questions of the policy of the State touching its citizens, or of the duties of citizens, as such, in respect of the policy of the State ;

Or, Questions between different interpretations of the Federal Constitution ;

Or, Questions, not of duties towards the recognized Cæsar, but of deciding between rival Cæsars ;

Or, Questions as between different theories of allegiance to the civil government ;

Or, Questions concerning the social structure of different political communities, and their systems of labour ;

Or, Questions touching the military duties and policy of the national Government, and the duties of citizens to uphold the Government in its policy.

Nor can they regard the pretence set up as a reason for considering and determining such questions, viz., "That certain civil acts rise up into the region of morals," otherwise than as an utter denial, in the face of our standards, that the State is competent to determine concerning the moral acts of its citizens, and a denial that the State has, in the natural order, any code of morals given of God, the Supreme Ruler, through reason and the light of nature, for the judgment of the moral acts of its citizens. * * * * *

In like manner, this Synod and its Presbyteries have maintained that all theories of power by prerogative or otherwise descending by grant from the General Assembly to the lower courts, as well as all theories of the spiritual, like the civil power, being granted by the people, are utterly inconsistent with the great truth, that the source of all spiritual power is in the Lord Christ, who visibly rules in the Church, and therefore in the tribunals, in which, both inferior and supreme, He hath vested the power by that promise, made alike to the church session and the Assembly—His promise, "I am with you."

This Synod and its Presbyteries have maintained, however, that while the source of power in all the courts alike is Jesus, the King, who rules in them and through them ; yet, the constitution of the Presbyterian

Church, in accordance with the word of God, assigns to the courts respectively their several powers and duties, and prescribes the mode in which these powers are to be exercised. In this respect it is a solemn covenant before God between the people, the office-bearers, and the courts. The claim, by any court, to exercise powers not assigned to it, is a breach of the covenant.

In its human aspect, this constitution is a charter covenant, under which franchises are enjoyed and property vested for the maintenance of a certain system of doctrine and order. The claim to exercise powers not assigned involves also a breach of contract and dishonest dealing in temporal things with those who have joint interest under the charter. * * * * *

Such are substantially the general doctrines concerning the Church, and the principles of the constitution for which this Synod and its Presbyteries have testified during the recent struggle with the General Assrmbly. They are manifestly doctrines and principles fundamental in the system of Presbyterianism. And the fact that they should have been so little regarded under the first exposure of our system to the storms of national revolution would seem to be a providential indication, pointing to the necessity of a re-statement of them—perhaps in a manner fuller, clearer, and more forcible than here presented—to stand as a guide in the future among the historical intepretations of our constitution.

This Synod feels unwilling to enter into organic union with any large and powerful organization again without some such guarantee to its Churches and people against troubles in future, similar to those just passed through, from want of a clear understanding that the Church shall have no political alliance; that the constitution is supreme—not the accidental majority of an Assembly; and that this constitution not only assigns their powers to the courts, but prescribes the mode of their exercise, and thus fully protects the great Protestant doctrine of private judgment and liberty of conscience.

J. T. HENDRICK,
Moderator.

PROCEEDINGS OF 1870,

ON

CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE NORTHERN ASSEMBLY.

In the General Assembly at Louisville, May 21, 1870, the Stated Clerk presented the following resolutions from the General Assembly, Old School, of 1869; which paper was referred to the Committee on Foreign Correspondence, viz :

WHEREAS, The last General Assembly acknowledged the separate and independent existence of the Presbyterian Church in the Southern States, and enjoined upon all subordinate courts so to treat it; thus according to its ministers and members the privilege of admission to our body upon the same terms which are extended to ministers and members of other branches of the Presbyterian Church in this country; therefore,

Resolved, That this General Assembly hereby conveys its Christian salutations to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the Southern States, and gives expression to its sentiments of Christian fraternity and fellowship towards the ministers and members of that body. And as we inherit and hold with them the same ancient symbols of faith, the same forms of government and of worship, thus presenting before the world the same sacred principles to which our common ancestors witnessed, and which we have maintained together in the past; and especially since we occupy adjacent, and, in many places, common territory, we deem it due to our one Lord, and to the best interests of His kingdom on earth, to express the desire that the day may not be distant when we may again be united in one great organization that shall cover our whole land, and embrace all branches of the Presbyterian Church.

Resolved, That the Stated Clerk be directed to forward a copy of these resolutions to the Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church in the Southern States. [Minutes, p. 502.]

On Tuesday, May 24, the Rev. Drs. J. C. Backus and H. J. Van Dyke and Hon. Wm. E. Dodge appeared as
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delegates from the reunited "General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America," and presented the following minute, unanimously adopted by that body, then in session in Philadelphia, viz:

WHEREAS, This General Assembly believes that the interest of the kingdom of our Lord throughout our entire country would be greatly promoted by healing all unnecessary divisions; and,

WHEREAS, This General Assembly desires the speedy establishment of cordial fraternal relations with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, commonly known as the Southern Presbyterian Church, upon terms of mutual confidence, respect, Christian honour and love; and,

WHEREAS, We believe that the terms of re-union between the two branches of the Presbyterian Church at the North, now so happily consummated, present an auspicious opportunity for the adjustment of such relations; therefore, be it

Resolved, That a committee of five Ministers and four Elders be appointed by this Assembly to confer with a similar committee, if it shall be appointed by the Assembly now in session in the city of Louisville, in respect to opening a friendly correspondence between the Northern and Southern Presbyterian Churches, and that the result of such conference be reported to the General Assembly of 1871.

Resolved, That with a view to the furtherance of the object contemplated in the appointment of said committee, this Assembly hereby re-affirms the concurrent declaration of the two Assemblies which met in the city of New York last year, viz: "That no rule or precedent which does not stand approved by both bodies shall be of any authority in the re-united body except in so far as such rule or precedent may affect the rights of property founded thereon."

Resolved, That two Ministers and one Elder of the committee appointed by this Assembly be designated as delegates to convey to the Assembly, now in session at Louisville, Ky., a copy of these resolutions, with our Christian salutations.

J. TRUMBULL BACKUS, *Moderator*.

CYRUS DICKSON, *Permanent Clerk*.

After the delegates had been heard, on motion of Dr. Stuart Robinson,

Resolved, That this Assembly, duly appreciating the marked courtesy and kindness of the General Assembly, now sitting in Philadelphia, in commissioning brethren so peculiarly acceptable to us, to be the bearers of its resolutions to this

body, will take into careful consideration the proposition presented by them; and that, in order to proper deliberation and care in so important a matter, these resolutions, together with the message and exposition of the delegation, be referred to the Committee on Foreign Correspondence, with instructions to report at the earliest possible time, recommending an answer to the proposition. [Minutes, pp. 516, 517.]

On Friday, May 27, the following report, presented by Dr. B. M. Palmer, from the Committee on Foreign Correspondence, was adopted, by 83 to 17:

The Committee on Foreign Correspondence, to whom were referred the overture for reünion from the Old School General Assembly, North, of 1869, at its sessions in the city of New York; and also the proposition from the United Assembly of the Northern Presbyterian Church, now sitting in Philadelphia, conveyed to us by a special delegation, respectfully report:

That the former of these documents is virtually superseded by the latter; because the body by whom it was adopted, has since been merged into the united Assembly, from which emanates a new and fresh proposal reflecting the views of the larger constituency. To this proposition, then, "that a committee of five Ministers and four Elders be appointed by this Assembly to confer with a similar committee of their Assembly in respect to opening a friendly correspondence between the Northern and Southern Presbyterian Church," your committee recommend the following answer to be returned:

Whatever obstructions may exist in the way of cordial intercourse between the two bodies above named, are entirely of a public nature, and involve grave and fundamental principles. The Southern Presbyterian Church can confidently appeal to all the acts and declarations of all their Assemblies, that no attitude of aggression or hostility has been, or is now, assumed by it towards the Northern Church. And this General Assembly distinctly avows, (as it has always believed and declared,) that no grievances experienced by us, however real, would justify us in acts of aggression or a spirit

of malice or retaliation against any branch of Christ's visible kingdom. We are prepared, therefore, in advance of all discussion, to exercise towards the General Assembly North, and the Churches represented therein, such amity as fidelity to our principles could, under any possible circumstances, permit. Under this view, the appointment of a committee of conference might seem wholly unnecessary; but, in order to exhibit before the Christian world the spirit of conciliation and kindness to the last degree, this Assembly agrees to appoint a committee of Conference to meet a similar committee already appointed by the Northern Assembly, with instructions to the same, that the difficulties which lie in the way of cordial correspondence between the two bodies must be distinctly met and removed, and which may be comprehensively stated in the following particulars:

1. Both the wings of the now united Assembly, during their separate existence before the fusion, did fatally complicate themselves with the State, in political utterances deliberately pronounced year after year; and which, in our judgment, were a sad betrayal of the cause and kingdom of our common Lord and Head. We believe it to be solemnly incumbent upon the Northern Presbyterian Church, not with reference to us, but before the Christian world, and before our Divine Master and King, to purge itself of this error, and by public proclamation of the truth to place the crown once more upon the head of Jesus Christ, as the alone King in Zion. In default of which the Southern Presbyterian Church, which has already suffered much in maintaining the independence and spirituality of the Redeemer's kingdom upon earth, feels constrained to bear public testimony against this defection of our late associates from the truth. Nor can we, by official correspondence even, consent to blunt the edge of this, our testimony, concerning the very nature and mission of the Church as a purely spiritual body among men.

2. The union now consummated between the Old and New School Assemblies, North, was accomplished by

methods which, in our judgment, involve a total surrender of all the great testimonies of the Church for the fundamental doctrines of grace, at a time when the victory of truth over error hung long in the balance. The united Assembly stands, of necessity, upon an allowed latitude of interpretation of the standards, and must come at length to embrace nearly all shades of doctrinal belief. Of those falling testimonies we are now the sole surviving heir, which we must lift from the dust and bear to the generations after us. It would be a serious compromise of this sacred trust to enter into public and official fellowship with those repudiating these testimonies: and to do this expressly upon the ground, as stated in the preamble to the overture before us, "that the terms of reünion between the two branches of the Presbyterian Church at the North, now happily consummated, present an auspicious opportunity for the adjustment of such relations." To found a correspondence professedly upon this idea would be to endorse that which we thoroughly disapprove.

3. Some of the members of our own body were, but a short time since, violently and unconstitutionally expelled from the communion of one branch of the now united Northern Assembly, under ecclesiastical charges, which, if true, render them utterly infamous before the Church and the world. It is to the last degree unsatisfactory to construe this offensive legislation obsolete by the mere fusion of that body with another, or through the operation of a faint declaration which was not intended, originally, to cover this case. This is no mere "rule" or "precedent," but a solemn sentence of outlawry against what is now an important and constituent part of our own body. Every principle of honour and of good faith compels us to say that an unequivocal repudiation of that interpretation of the law under which these men were condemned must be a condition precedent to any official correspondence on our part.

4. It is well known that similar injurious accusations were preferred against the whole Southern Presbyterian Church, with which the ear of the whole world has been

filled. Extending, as these charges do, to heresy and blasphemy, they cannot be quietly ignored by an indirection of any sort. If true, we are not worthy of the "confidence, respect, Christian honour and love," which are tendered to us in this overture. If untrue, "Christian honour and love," manliness and truth, require them to be openly and squarely withdrawn. So long as they remain upon record they are an impassible barrier to official intercourse. [Minutes, 529-30.]

The Committee on Foreign Correspondence was instructed to prepare a Pastoral Letter to our Churches, in explanation of the above action.

On Monday, May 30, Dr. Palmer, on behalf of the Committee, presented the draft of a Pastoral Letter, which after a single verbal amendment was adopted, with but one dissenting voice, viz.: the Rev. Dr. Ross, who dissents from the doctrine of the paper on the subject of the relation of the Church to the State.

The Pastoral Letter (Minutes, pp. 537-42) is as follows :

PASTORAL LETTER OF 1870.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States to all the Churches under its care sendeth greeting :

BELOVED BRETHREN,—It is alike the privilege and duty of all the courts of the Church, and especially of the General Assembly, as looking forth upon the whole field from the point of highest elevation, occasionally to address the Churches under its care upon topics which vitally affect the interests of the entire body. In the discharge of this episcopal function, this General Assembly now addresses you upon a matter of fundamental importance, which has supremely engaged its own attention during its present sessions in the city of Louisville.

You have been aware, for a twelvemonth past, of an overture from the Old School Assembly North, adopted at its sessions in 1869, tendering salutations to us, and expressing the desire of our union with them at no distant day. This overture was virtually superseded by the fusion which subsequently took place between the two great Presbyterian branches North, into one organization. This united body, sitting contemporaneously with ourselves, in Philadelphia, has passed a resolution appointing a committee of conference to act with a similar committee which they invite us to appoint, who shall jointly discuss the difficulties existing between the two bodies, and prepare the way for a permanent and fraternal correspondence. This proposition was conveyed to us by a special delegation, consisting of Rev. Drs. J. C. Backus and H. J. Van Dyke

and the Hon. W. E. Dodge, gentlemen of the highest character, and personally most acceptable to us, who discharged their delicate mission in a spirit and manner which made the most pleasant impression of their courtesy as well as ability.

In response to this proposition, this General Assembly has agreed, in the spirit of conciliation and Christian kindness, to appoint the committee of conference which was desired; and then, in the form of instructions to the same, has laid down the principles which should control the whole matter, and upon which alone any correspondence on our part would be possible. It may perhaps appear to you, and it will doubtless be so represented by others, that a proposition so simple as that of conference for the adjustment of difficulties might have been left unembarrassed by any antecedent enunciation of what the Assembly regards as the obstructions to fraternal and official correspondence. It is precisely this which we desire you to understand, as well as the reasons which impelled us to the course we have pursued. The reflective and thoughtful amongst you will at once recognize that, in diplomatic intercourse, the first step is always the most important. It is this that determines all the future and dependent negotiations; and, however unobtrusive the initiatory measure may appear to be, it is often pregnant with concealed results of vast magnitude. This is pre-eminently true in the case before us. It was incumbent upon us to watch narrowly, lest, in the very opening of negotiations, we might incautiously surrender the principles we hold, which, slipping from our grasp, we might never be able to recover.

The overture from the Northern Assembly was based upon the fatal assumption that mutual grievances existed, in reference to which it became necessary to arbitrate. This assumption is precisely what we cannot truthfully concede. Our records may be searched in vain for a single act of aggression, or a single unfriendly declaration against the Northern Church. We have assumed no attitude of hostility toward it. In

not a single case has there been an attempt to wrest from them their church property. In not a single case has there been hesitation in receiving their members into our communion upon the face of their credentials, amongst the hundreds who have come to make their home with us since the war. In not one instance has there been exhibited a spirit of retaliation in regard to any of those very measures instituted against ourselves by the Assembly of 1865, and by subsequent Assemblies.

Whatever obstructions may be in the way of ecclesiastical fellowship were not created by us, and we could not allow ourselves to be placed in the false position before the world of parties who had been guilty of wrong to the Northern Church. Having placed nothing in the way of Christian fraternity, there was nothing for us to remove. Whilst, therefore, in Christian courtesy, we were willing to appoint a committee of conference, it was necessary to guard against all misconstruction and misrepresentation, by instructing our commissioners to remember this fact, and restricting them to the duty of simply reporting and expounding what we considered indispensable to an honest correspondence, which should not, by its insincerity and hollowness, be an offense to our Divine Master.

Inasmuch as we had never been aggressors against the peace, security and prosperity of the Northern Church, and had not undertaken to approach them with proposals of any sort, Christian candor required us, as the party approached, to state exactly the difficulties which did embarrass this question of correspondence. Without going into much detail or multiplying the specifications, these were summed up under four heads; the significance and importance of which we would have you to appreciate.

It must be remembered then, that in 1861 the organization of the Southern Church was compelled by what are known as the "Spring Resolutions," which committed the Old School Assembly, with which we were at that time connected, to a particular political theory, and complicated the Church at once with the State.

The necessary effect of this political legislation by the Assembly of 1861 was to force the entire Southern constituency out of that connection, who were compelled in their disorganized condition at once to integrate in the Southern Assembly, which was soon afterward formed. The earliest deliverance of this, our own body, was the assertion of the non-secular and non-political character of the Church, as the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, spiritual in its nature and mission, and entirely separate from and independent of the State. And in subsequent deliverances—as those of the Assembly of 1865, at Macon, and the two utterances of the Assembly of 1866, at Memphis, and the formal acceptance of “The Statement of Doctrines and Principles of the Synod of Kentucky” on this subject, by the Assembly of 1867, at Nashville—the supreme court of the Southern Church, has, with singular steadfastness, testified for the same great truth. Upon this very issue we became an organized Church, as distinct from that out of whose bosom we had been thrust by the assertion and operation of the contrary and Erastian doctrine that the Church might rightfully intermingle her jurisdiction with that of the commonwealth. Through several consecutive years, both branches of the now united Assemblies persisted in the utterance of political dogmas, which, whether true or false, they were inhibited by the word of God, and by their own statute law, from pronouncing in their ecclesiastical chambers. These unlawful utterances remain uncanceled upon the records of both the courts now amalgamated into one. No disavowal of them has been made, as of words inconsiderately uttered in times of high excitement. No counter declaration has been filed, gathering up the sacred truth of God in a new proclamation of the spirituality and independence of that Kingdom which is not of this world. The attempt, we are aware, has been made to relieve the pressure of these melancholy facts by faintly retorting the accusation against our own body. But we challenge the world to place the two records side by side, in the severity of contrast.

No ingenuity of sophistry can transmute into political dogmas the scant allusions to the historical reality of a great struggle then pending; or the thankful recognition, in the middle of a paragraph, of the unanimity with which an invaded people rose to the defense of their hearthstones and the graves of their dead; or the pastoral counsels addressed to the members and youth of our own churches, passing through the temptations and perils of the camp and field; or the half hour spent in prayer for a land bleeding under the iron heel of war; or even the incidental declaration in a narrative, to stand by an institution of the country, a traditional inheritance from our fathers. Even though, from the ambiguity of human language, these chance references may not have been always discreetly expressed, the most that a just criticism could pronounce is, that they are inconsistent with the judicially pronounced principle upon which the Southern Assembly entered upon its troubled career. And when exaggerated to their largest proportions by all the prejudice of bitter partizanship, they dwindle into motes and specks by the side of those elaborate and colossal deliverances, repeated each year through formal committees, and exalted into solemn testimonies co-ordinate with the doctrines of religion and of faith, which disfigure the legislation of both the Northern Assemblies through successive years.

It will thus be seen that, in the providence of God, the Southern Church has been made the special witness for the crown and kingdom of our Lord, when both were practically disowned; and that upon this very issue she was separated from her old associations. Brought now, through their overture, for the first time, face to face with this Northern Church, this mighty principle emerges at once into view. We were cast forth, nine years ago, for this testimony to one of the grand ideas of the gospel. We must go back with it still upon our lips, and ask those who desire official relations with us, do we form these relations with a spiritual or with a political church? We cannot do otherwise,

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without recanting our own words, and endorsing the very error which drove us into ecclesiastical exile. We declare, therefore, that we can hold no official correspondence with the Northern Church, unless the Saviour is reinstated in the full acknowledgment of His kingship in His own Church. Called to this testimony, for which we have already suffered the spoiling of our goods, we cannot lay it down at the very moment when that testimony becomes the most significant.

Again: The overture before us professedly founds upon the happy union just accomplished between the Old and New Schools, North. This is singularly unfortunate; for, in our judgment, the negotiations through which this union was consummated; betrayed those sacred testimonies of a former generation, for the most precious and vital of the doctrines of grace. Our difficulty is not the mere fusion of these two Assemblies into one. A similar fusion took place, six years ago, between ourselves and the United Synod of the South. But the difference between the two cases is wide as the poles. The Synod of the South united with us upon the first interchange of doctrinal views, upon a square acceptance of the standards, without any metaphysical hair-splitting, to find a sense in which to receive them, and without any expunging of whole chapters from the history of the past, with the sacred testimonies with which these are filled. It is not, therefore, the amalgamation of these bodies at the North, simply considered, which embarrasses us; but it is the *method* by which it was achieved—the acceptance of the standards in no comprehensible sense, by which the united Assembly becomes a sort of a broad church, giving shelter to every creed, lying between the extremes of Arminianism and Pelagianism on the one hand, and of Antinomianism and Fatalism upon the other. If correspondence with such a body could be allowed at all, it can not be based upon a preamble which constructively endorses a recession from the safe land-marks, which is, to all the lovers of sound Christianity, the occasion of grief. We have been constrained, therefore, to fence our commis-

sioners with a caution not to commit us in any degree to that diplomacy by which the union was accomplished, and so to rob us of our birth-right in those testimonies, which is all that we brought out with us from that grand old historic Church of the past.

Again: We require, as an indispensable condition to all correspondence, a renunciation of that theory of Church government which practically obliterates the lower courts, and destroys the appellate character of the General Assembly, under which that unrighteous decision was reached against the Synods of Kentucky and Missouri. The former of these two bodies, being now a constituent portion of this Assembly, has a just claim upon us for the protection of their good name from the defamation they have experienced as witnesses to the principles which are common to us and them. Not only does good faith require us to keep covenant with those who have entered into union with us, but they are we, and we are they, bound together as witnesses in a common testimony. Fidelity to this testimony demands that those who have been martyrs to our common faith shall be reinstated in their good name, before we can fraternally embrace those by whom they are maligned. Upon the principle that the interpretation of the law is the law, it is a simple requisition that this interpretation be disallowed, under which true and faithful men were unconstitutionally condemned.

The fourth and last condition of this correspondence was the unequivocal retraction of the imputations against ourselves, industriously circulated throughout Christendom. This we would have clearly discriminated from personal resentment, or an unforgiving spirit. It is compelled by a proper sense of self-respect, and a due regard to the honour of our own Church. It is the homage which we are constrained to pay to truth and history. We cannot accept, even by implication, the charges with which the records of both wings of the united Assembly are filled. Extending, as they do, to heresy and blasphemy, they are of the nature of judi-

cial accusations, which must either be sustained or withdrawn. The "respect and honour and Christian love" with which we are approached in this overture, are certainly inconsistent with the belief of these grave imputations. If not believed to be true, they should be cancelled, much more for the sake of those who have pronounced them than of ourselves, who have so long borne the reproach. However this may be, any form of intercourse, while they remain upon record, would be a tacit acquiescence in the same, and a submission to the dishonour which has been cast upon the name of our people and of our Church.

The differences betwixt us and the Northern Church are too vast and solemn to allow this question to be determined by any of the baser and meaner passions of human nature. If we know our own hearts, this course is not prompted by feelings of malice or revenge, or that peevish resentment engendered by the irritation of controversy. We trust that Christian magnanimity would enable us to rise above all private wrongs and petty issues, transient as the hour which gives them birth. Our hearts are penetrated with the majesty of the principles which we are called to maintain; and we desire that you should feel yourselves consecrated by the high purpose to assert them with us before the world.

All the great truths of Christianity have had an historical outworking in the midst of human conflict and debate, and by this means they become potential and operative principles wrought into the very frame and texture of the human soul. In the first centuries of the Christian Church all the great controversies revolved around the relations of the persons of the Godhead, through which the Church wrought out what may be technically called her *theology*. In the age of Augustine and his opposers, the field of conflict was transferred to the nature of man and the condition to which sin had reduced it, through which the Church wrought out what is scientifically termed her *anthropology*. In the great Reformation, when the Church broke

away from the bondage of Romish superstition, discussion turned upon the method of grace, and the Gospel as a *plan of salvation* was wrought into the life and consciousness of the Church. But confusion and error still reigned over the minds of men with regard to the true mission and relations of the Church, in her corporate character, as the spiritual kingdom of the Redeemer upon earth. The historical development, of this is probably the work and the conflict of the present age: and the Protestants of our day are to hold up in the face of derision and of scorn, the true idea of the Church as the Kingdom of the Redeemed among men. In the adorable providence of God, our peeled and desolated Church is pushed to the front in this conflict. In the face of those ancient Churches which, in Europe, are still entangled with State alliances, the very foremost of which seem to be slow in grasping the grand conception which the Redeemer's discipline has been so clearly teaching them, and in the face of the Christianity of the Northern section of our own land, which, in a temporary frenzy, as we hope and pray, has resiled from the truth we thought it understood, this suffering Church of ours is called to testify. The pure white banner borne by the Melvilles, the Gillespies, and the Hendersons, those noble witnesses of another age, for a pure spiritual church, has fallen into our hands to uphold. Floating from our walls the superb inscription, "Christ's Crown and Covenant," rings out the battle-cry of that sacramental host which, by protest and reproach, by testimony and suffering, will yet conquer the earth, and bring it in submission to the Saviour's feet. It is upon the assertion of this great and germinal principle, out of which a true *ecclesiology* is yet to spring, this Assembly desires to place herself and you. The royalty of the thought will render you too kingly in all your purposes and desires ever to debase this testimony, by yielding to the lower resentments of an unsanctified heart in the proclamation of your testimony.

These are the convictions which rule our decision in relation to correspondence with the Northern Church.

Their offense with us is that we would not yield to the mistaken conscience which permitted them to bind the Church of our divine Lord to the wheels of Cæsar's chariot. We cannot surrender this testimony for the privilege of sitting within their halls. Regarding them as still parts of the visible Catholic Church, notwithstanding their defection on this point, we place them where we place all other denominations whom we recognize, though differing from us. Wishing them prosperity and peace, so far as they labour to win souls to Christ, we feel it a higher duty and a grander privilege to testify for our Master's kingship in His Church, than to enjoy all the ecclesiastical fellowship which is to be purchased at the expense of conscience and of truth.

It may seem to some of you that any hesitancy on our part to enter into correspondence with any Church, is out of accord with the spirit of the times, which finds expression in formal protestations of amity and unity between all evangelical Christians. But a little reflection will make it manifest that this want of accord is only apparent, not real, so far as relates to any unity which is founded on a common reverence for the truth of Christ. For, in every case of separation between brethren of the same Church, on account of errors held, or supposed to be held, on the one side; and the purpose to testify against the same on the other, a formal recognition of each other may be incompatible with the very end held in view in the separation. It may involve an utter obscuration of the testimony of the witnesses. Thus it will be remembered, there was no official correspondence between the two bodies into which our Church divided in 1837-'8 for the space of twenty-five years; though each held official correspondence with other bodies even less near to them in doctrine and order. Nor, indeed, was such correspondence even proposed, until it was suggested as a preliminary to organic re-union. The Christian instincts of both bodies suggested that such correspondence must involve the inconsistency, on the part of each, of standing apart from the other, while under not only the same

articles of faith, but the same constitution—each bearing witness against the other, while affecting relations of unity.

In the spirit, therefore, of these counsels, we commend you, Brethren in the Lord, to Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to comfort you with all the joys of His salvation.

Signed by order of the Assembly,

R. L. DABNEY, *Moderator.*

JOSEPH R. WILSON, *Stated Clerk.*

WILLIAM BROWN, *Permanent Clerk.*

LOUISVILLE, KY., May 30, 1870.

After the adoption of the preceding letter, it was, on motion of Rev. J. Henry Smith,

Resolved, That the Pastoral Letter prepared by the Committee on Foreign Correspondence, for the information of our Churches touching the overture from the Northern General Assembly and in explanation and vindication of this Assembly's reply to the same, be also put into the hands of the Committee of Conference just appointed, as a further and fuller statement of the feelings and views of this Church.

On motion of Rev. J. E. Spillman, it was ordered that five thousand copies of this letter be printed by the Committee of Publication for gratuitous distribution; and that a sufficient number of copies be sent to the Stated Clerk of each Presbytery to furnish every minister and every Ruling Elder with a copy:

On motion of Dr. Stuart Robinson, as amended on the motion of Rev. J. Henry Smith, it was resolved that the Committee of Publication be instructed to publish in tract form, the public official utterances of our Assemblies in relation to the spirituality and independence of the Church, including the letter of the Assembly of 1861 to the Churches of Jesus Christ throughout the world, and the Pastoral Letter now to be issued from this Assembly, and such other papers as the Committee may deem needful to explain the references in said letter.

EXTRACTS

FROM

PROCEEDINGS OF THE OLD SCHOOL GENERAL ASSEMBLY, FROM 1861-1867.

—
ON THE WAR, ETC.

Gratefully acknowledging the distinguished bounty and care of Almighty God toward this favoured land, and also recognizing our obligations to submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, this General Assembly adopt the following resolutions :

Resolved, 1. That in view of the present agitated and unhappy condition of this country, the first day of July next be hereby set apart as a day of prayer throughout our bounds; and that on this day ministers and people are called on humbly to confess and bewail our national sins; to offer our thanks to the Father of light for His abundant and undeserved goodness towards us as a nation; to seek His guidance and blessing upon our rulers, and their counsels, as well as on the Congress of the United States, about to assemble; and to implore Him, in the name of Jesus Christ, the great High Priest of the Christian profession, to turn away His anger from us, and speedily restore to us the blessings of an honourable peace.

Resolved, 2. That this General Assembly, in the spirit of that Christian patriotism which the Scriptures enjoin, and which has always characterized this Church, do hereby acknowledge and declare our obligations to promote and perpetuate, so far as in us lies, the integrity of these United States, and to strengthen, uphold, and encourage, the Federal Government in the exercise of all its functions under our noble Constitution: and

to this Constitution in all its provisions, requirements and principles, we profess our unabated loyalty.

And to avoid all misconception, the Assembly declare that by the terms "Federal Government," here used, is not meant any particular administration, or the peculiar opinions of any particular party, but that central administration, which being at any time appointed and inaugurated according to the forms prescribed in the Constitution of the United States, is the visible representative of our national existence. [Minutes of 1861, p. 329.]

It is the clear and solemn duty of the National Government to preserve, at whatever cost, the national Union and Constitution, to maintain the laws in their supremacy, to crush force by force, and to restore the reign of public order and peace to the entire nation, by whatever lawful means that are necessary thereunto. And it is the bounden duty of the people who compose this great nation, each one in his several place and degree, to uphold the Federal Government, and every State Government, and all persons in authority, whether civil or military, in all their lawful and proper acts, unto the end herein before set forth. [Minutes of 1862, p. 625.]

No causes now exist to vindicate the disloyalty of American citizens towards the United States Government. [Minutes of 1863, p. 58.]

SLAVERY.

Whilst we do not believe that the present judgments of our Heavenly Father, and Almighty and Righteous Governor, have been inflicted solely in punishment for our continuance in this sin; yet it is our judgment that the recent events of our history, and the present condition of our Church and country, furnish manifest tokens that *the time has at length come, in the providence of God, when it is His will that every vestige of human slavery among us should be effaced, and that every Christian man*

should address himself with industry and earnestness to his appropriate part in the performance of this great duty.

* * * Under the influence of the most incomprehensible infatuation of wickedness, those who were most interested in the perpetuation of slavery *have taken away every motive for its further toleration.* * *

It is the President's declared policy not to consent to the reorganization of civil government within the seceded States upon any other basis than that of emancipation. In the loyal States where slavery has not been abolished, measures of emancipation, in different stages of progress, have been set on foot, and are near their consummation; and propositions for an amendment to the Federal Constitution, prohibiting slavery in all the States and Territories, are now pending in the national Congress. So that, in our present situation, the interests of peace and of social order are identified with the success of the cause of emancipation. [Minutes of 1864, pp. 298, 299.]

SOUTHERN MINISTERS AND THE SOUTHERN CHURCH.

Do these Protestants, who so anxiously avoid political entanglements, desire the General Assembly to anticipate the dread decision of impending battle, the action of our own government, the determination of foreign powers, and even the ultimate arbitration of Heaven? Would they have us recognize, as good Presbyterians, men whom our own government, with the approval of Christendom, may soon execute as traitors? [Minutes of 1861, p. 342.]

Whereas, During the existence of the great rebellion which has disturbed the peace and threatened the life of the nation, a large number of Presbyteries and Synods in the Southern States, whose names are on the roll of the General Assembly as constituent parts of this body, have organized an Assembly denominated, "The Gene-

ral Assembly of the Confederate States of America," in order to render their aid in the attempt to establish, by means of the rebellion, a separate national existence, and "to conserve and perpetuate the system of slavery,"* therefore,

Resolved, 1. That this Assembly regards the civil rebellion for the perpetuation of negro slavery as a great crime, both against our National Government and against God, and the secession of those Presbyteries and Synods from the Presbyterian Church, under such circumstances and for such reasons, as unwarranted, schismatical, and unconstitutional.

Resolved, 2. That the General Assembly does not intend to abandon the territory in which these churches are found, or to compromise the rights of any of the church courts, or ministers, ruling elders, and private members belonging to them, who are loyal to the government of the United States, and to the Presbyterian Church. On the contrary, this Assembly will recognize such loyal persons as constituting the churches, Presbyteries and Synods, in all the bounds of the schism, and will use earnest endeavours to restore and revive all such churches and church courts.

Resolved, 3. The Assembly hereby declares that it will recognize as the Church, the members of any church within the bounds of the schism, who are loyal to the government of the United States of America, and whose views are in harmony with the doctrines of the Confession of Faith, and with the several testimonies of the Presbyterian Church on the subject of domestic slavery. And where any three ministers, who entertain the views above mentioned, belong to the same Presbytery, such ministers are hereby authorized and directed to continue their organization as a Presbytery; or any two such ministers are authorized to receive any minister of the same views, regularly dismissed to them, and thus continue their organizations with the churches above described in the same bounds, in connection with this

* A mis-quotation. E. T. B. Sect'y, etc.

Assembly. But if a sufficient number are not found in one Presbytery, they are authorized to unite with the loyal ministers and churches of one or more adjacent Presbyteries, retaining the name of one or both such united Presbyteries as shall be deemed expedient. A similar course is also authorized with regard to Synods. [Minutes of 1865, p. 560.]

[Against this action a protest was entered by Dr. S. R. Wilson and others, from which the following extract is taken :]

III. In the third place, we protest against this action of the Assembly, because it seems to us to tend to destruction, rather than to edification. It puts it into the power of any two ministers, in any particular district, with the aid of any other whom they may choose to select, to claim to themselves all the power, rights and immunities, ecclesiastical and civil, belonging to the Presbytery or Presbyteries, of which they may be members; and in like manner it recognizes any two or three members of a particular Church as constituting the Church, and, as far as lies in the power of this Assembly, invests such members with all the rights, religious and secular, belonging to the whole Church. This measure, therefore, whatever its intent, in its practical workings, is calculated, as we are constrained to think, to promote strife and discord amongst the brethren in the South themselves, and to widen and perpetuate the breach already existing to so sad an extent between the Northern and Southern portions of the Presbyterian Church. [p. 583.]

[From the answer to the above protest, as adopted by the Assembly, the following extract is taken :]

The last two points of the protest logically proceed upon the assumption that treason, such as has existed in the Southern States, is not a sin, and that the doctrine that *Southern slavery is a divine institution, to be conserved and perpetuated*, is not a heresy. These topics,

in view of their past deliverances, and in the light of history, the Assembly deems it needless to discuss. In reference to the last point of the protestants, the Assembly fully recognize the facts that the directions given by them will involve much personal affliction—and perhaps, in some instances, temporary hardships—for this they are not responsible. Those who have sown the wind, must expect to reap the whirlwind. Duty to the great Head of the Church forbids that the Assembly should compromise with heresy and sin; nor can they walk in any way as “more excellent,” because apparently more peaceful, which involves such compromise. They know no Scriptural way by which those who have gone out from us, proclaiming heresy, can be restored to the bosom of the Church, until after recantation, or those who have fallen into the grievous sin of treason, but upon confession and repentance. [Minutes of 1865, p. 586.]

[After asserting the right of examination, the Assembly proceed:]

II. The exercise of this right becomes an imperative duty, in the present circumstances of our country, when, after the crushing by military force of an atrocious rebellion against the government of the United States, for the perpetuation of slavery, many ministers who have aided and abetted this revolt, may seek admission into Presbyteries located in the loyal States. Therefore,

III. It is hereby ordered that all our Presbyteries examine every minister applying for admission from any Presbytery or other ecclesiastical body in the Southern States, on the following points:

1. Whether he has in any way, directly or indirectly, of his own free will and consent, or without external constraint, been concerned at any time in aiding or countenancing the rebellion and the war which has been waged against the United States; and if it be found by his own confession, or from sufficient testimony, that he has been so concerned, that he be required to con-

fess and forsake his sin in this regard before he shall be received.

2. Whether he holds that the system of negro slavery in the South is a Divine institution, and that it is "the peculiar mission of the Southern Church to conserve the institution of slavery as there maintained,"* and if it be found that he holds either of these doctrines, that he be not received without renouncing and forsaking these errors.

IV. This injunction to Presbyteries is in like manner applicable to Synods; and it is hereby ordered that upon the application of any Presbytery to be received into any Synod where such Presbytery is, or has been connected, with the Southern General Assembly, such Synod shall examine all the members of said Presbytery on the points above named, and the reception of such Presbytery, or any of the ministers thereof, by such Synod, shall depend upon their compliance with the conditions before mentioned.

V. Church sessions are also ordered to examine all applicants for church membership by persons from the Southern States, or who have been living in the South since the rebellion, concerning their conduct and principles on the points above specified; and if it be found, that of their own free will, they have taken up arms against the United States, or that they hold slavery to be an ordinance of God, as above stated, such person shall not be admitted to the communion of the Church till they give evidence of repentance for their sin, and renounce their error.

VI. The General Assembly gives counsel to the several Church courts, specified in these orders, that in discharging the duties enjoined therein, due regard be paid to the circumstances of the case, and that justice be tempered with mercy. Especially is this counsel given to churches in the border States, where many impulsive and ardent young men, without due consideration, have been led away by their superiors, or seduced

* A mis-quotation. E. T. B. Sect'y, etc.

form their loyalty by their erroneous interpretation of the doctrine of State rights. [p. 562-3.]

And in regard to those who have voluntarily aided and countenanced the said rebellion and separation, this Assembly disclaims all vindictive feelings, and all disposition to exercise an undue severity, and reiterates its readiness to receive them back whenever they shall have complied with the conditions laid down by the last General Assembly on page 563 of its printed Minutes. [Minutes of 1866, p. 79.]

THE DECLARATION AND TESTIMONY.

Dr. D. V. McLean offered the following resolution:

Whereas, It is understood that the Presbytery of Louisville, has openly defied the General Assembly, and refused to submit to its orders, in a pamphlet adopted by it, of which the following is a specimen, viz: "We will not sustain or execute, or in any manner assist in the execution of the orders passed at the last two Assemblies, on the subject of slavery and loyalty, and with reference to the conducting of missions in the Southern States, and with regard to the ministers, members, and churches in the seceded and border States;" and

Whereas, Said Presbytery has commissioned, and sent to this Assembly, at least one Commissioner, who, if the order of the last Assembly had been faithfully executed by said Presbytery, there is the strongest ground for believing would have been suspended from the functions of the gospel ministry: Therefore,

Resolved, That until the Assembly shall have examined and decided upon the conduct of said Presbytery, the Commissioners therefrom shall not be entitled to seats in this body. [Minutes of 1866, p. 12.]

Dr. D. V. McLean moved the following:

Resolved, That a committee of seven be appointed, to be composed of four ministers and three ruling el-

ders, to examine into the facts connected with the alleged acts and proceedings of the Louisville Presbytery; and whether it is entitled to representation in this General Assembly: and to recommend what action, if any, this Assembly should take in regard to said Presbytery. [p. 16.]

1. *Resolved*, That this General Assembly does hereby condemn the Declaration and Testimony as a slander against the Church, schismatical in its character and aims, and its adoption by any of our Church courts as an act of rebellion against the authority of the General Assembly.

2. *Resolved*, That the whole subject contemplated in this report, including the report itself, be referred to the next General Assembly.

3. *Resolved*, That the signers of the "Declaration and Testimony," and the members of the Presbytery of Louisville who voted to adopt that paper, be summoned, and they are hereby summoned, to appear before the next General Assembly, to answer for what they have done in this matter, and that until their case is decided, they shall not be permitted to sit as members of any Church court, higher than the Session.

4. *Resolved*, That if any Presbytery shall disregard this action of the General Assembly, and at any meeting shall enroll, as entitled to a seat or seats in the body, one or more of the persons designated in the preceding resolution and summoned to appear before the next General Assembly, then that Presbytery shall *ipso facto* be dissolved, and its ministers and elders who adhere to this action of the Assembly, are hereby authorized and directed, in such cases, to take charge of the Presbyterial Records, to retain the name, and exercise all the authority and functions of the original Presbytery, until the next meeting of the General Assembly.

5. *Resolved*, That Synods, at their next stated meetings, in making up their rolls, shall be guided and governed by this action of the General Assembly. [p. 60.]

2. Upon the application of any minister or ministers who signed the aforesaid "Declaration and Testimony," before, during, or since, the meeting of the last General Assembly, the Presbyteries shall require, as a condition of their enrollment, that they subscribe, upon the records of the respective Presbyteries to which they make application, a declaration to the following effect, viz:

"I, A. B., hereby declare my desire to adhere to the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and do now promise to render due obedience in the Lord to the authority of all its courts, embracing the Presbytery, the Synod, and the General Assembly; and, to this end, inasmuch as the last General Assembly pronounced the aforesaid 'Declaration and Testimony' to be 'a slander against the Church, schismatical in its character and aims, and its adoption by any of our Church courts an act of rebellion against the authority of the General Assembly'—I do hereby disclaim that I had any intention to rebel against or renounce the authority of the General Assembly in signing the 'Declaration and Testimony,' and I hereby withdraw all language deemed by the General Assembly offensive or disrespectful, in which its sentiments are expressed." [Minutes of 1867, p. 337.]

EXTRACTS FROM THE PASTORAL LETTER OF 1866.

It thus appears that six General Assemblies in succession, including the present, have, with remarkable unanimity, maintained the same position concerning the rebellion, and concerning those engaged in it. After carefully reviewing the whole course of these years of strife and alienation, we find nothing to recall or modify in the deliverances which have been made. We have taken our position upon the clearest principles of the word of God, as set forth in our standards. We have aimed to reclaim offenders by demanding only what Christ requires of us as rulers in His house. We have

repeatedly expressed our solemn judgment regarding their offenses, but we have uniformly done it in faithfulness and kindness only, as our duty required. While to these our brethren, who have thus offended against the law of Christ, we would reiterate the language of the Assembly of 1862, and "earnestly address words of exhortation and rebuke," we still extend to them the hand of kindness, and desire that our former ecclesiastical fellowship may be restored, whenever it can be done upon those principles which six General Assemblies have announced. To form a union upon any other basis, would only serve to bring together those who could not act in harmony, and to perpetuate strife and alienation. [p. 85.]

When the Assembly of 1865 convened, actual war indeed was over, but slavery still existed in some parts of the country; and as nothing but the military power had effected the system in the rebellious States, many persons, both North and South, believed that its legal existence throughout the South was as secure as ever, and some believed that it would be re-instated in all its power and extent.

This was the hope and prayer, and with many the expectation, among Presbyterians in some of the Border and in the Southern States, while it was well known that the leading men of the Presbyterian Church in the South still cherish the same views under which the people had been led into rebellion, that the system of Southern negro slavery was a "divine institution," as truly as was the Mosaic system of servitude, and was "an ordinance of God" in the "same category with marriage and civil government." Even as late as the year 1865, a person commissioned to this Assembly from the Presbytery of Louisville, published a work which has been extensively circulated and commended, both North and South, designed to justify and shelter the system of Southern slavery, "slave codes," and all, under the Scriptural sanction of the Mosaic system of servitude. * * *

The main points of its action upon slavery—indeed the only points referring to those who may apply for reception into our Church from the churches of the South—are, that such applicants shall renounce the errors, which assert, “that the system of negro slavery in the South is a divine institution,” that it is “an ordinance of God” in the sense above stated, and that “it is the peculiar mission of the Southern churches to *conserve* the institution of slavery” as it was maintained in the South. That these doctrines are not only heresy, but blasphemy, is plainly seen from the word of God. [p. 87.]

The tenets which that action condemned, and a renunciation of which it demanded, are both heretical and blasphemous. It is essential to the honour of our common Christianity that they should be renounced, in those coming to us from the South who hold them, both for the truth's sake, and for the sake of the evil they have wrought in the land. Their renunciation should also be required by reason of their possible influence hereafter. What that influence may be no mortal can tell. When men embrace and hold such doctrines with the tenacity of religious convictions, and when they illustrate their sincerity in holding them during four years upon a hundred hard-fought battle-fields, it need surprise no one who is acquainted with human nature and human history, if similar illustrations of sincerity and valour shall be again exhibited upon a fitting opportunity. These opinions have once enkindled the fires of revolution, to the surprise of all mankind, under the best popular government of the world. Whether they will ever do it again, none but God can tell. All this is worthy of the more grave consideration, in the light of the Pastoral Letter put forth by the General Assembly of the Southern Presbyterian Church, sitting in Macon, Georgia, in December last. That Letter says of the Southern system of slavery, that “the lawfulness of the relation, as a question of social morality, and of Scriptural truth, *has lost nothing of its impor-*

tance;” and that Assembly fervently thanks God, as set forth in that Pastoral Letter, that it had nothing to do with the emancipation of the slaves, saying, “that it may hold up its hands before heaven and earth, washed of the tremendous responsibility involved in this change in the condition of four millions of bond-servants, and for which it has hitherto been generally conceded they were unprepared.” When such sentiments are put forth by the General Assembly of the Southern Presbyterian Church, at this time of day, after the tremendous judgments of God have overthrown the system, it is too clear to admit of argument, that we have no occasion at present to abate one jot or tittle of the action of the last General Assembly touching its demands upon slavery.

Upon both branches of the deliverances of the last Assembly—loyalty and freedom—we therefore arrive at the same conclusion, that they should be maintained in their integrity. [pp. 87–8.]

Dr Krebs offered the following as an addition to the Pastoral Letter, which was adopted:

In regard to the deliverances of the last and five preceding Assemblies, as well as this, and especially the requisitions to examine applicants from the South touching their views of slavery and rebellion, the Assembly would observe, that although the war is over, secession effectively quashed, and slavery abolished,—yet, in view of the spirit of these dead issues, which, it must be admitted, still survives, rampant and rebellious, perhaps more virulently in the religious form than elsewhere, it was necessary to guard the Church from being disturbed by this element, which has asserted itself so rebelliously, and continues to be so vehemently proclaimed, and therefore to require satisfactory evidence of the practical repudiation of these heresies. [p. 89.]

Dr. Gurley offered the following addition, which was also adopted:

It having come to the knowledge of this body that some of the ministers under our care are not able to

subscribe to the recent testimonies of the General Assembly on the subjects of loyalty and freedom, and that some who have not signed or formally approved the Declaration and Testimony, do nevertheless hesitate to comply with the requirements of the last Assembly touching the reception of members from the South, known or supposed to have been in sympathy with the rebellion; therefore,

Resolved, That while we would treat such ministers with kindness and forbearance, and would by no means interfere with the full and free discussion on their part of the testimonies and requirements referred to, we deem it a solemn duty, which we owe to them and to the Church, to guard them against giving countenance in any way to declarations and movements which are defiant of the Assembly's authority, and schismatical in their tendency and aim, and we do earnestly exhort them in the name and for the sake of our common Lord and Master, to study and pursue the things which make for peace. [p. 90.]

MEMORIAL OF THE ST. LOUIS CONVENTION.

The Committee recommended the adoption of the following minute, viz:

That the Memorial of the Convention be approved, and printed in the Appendix to the Minutes of the General Assembly. [p. 80.]

The report was adopted. [p. 81.]

[The following is an extract from this memorial.]

The General Assembly must be fully aware that, even amongst those who cordially approve of its past deliverances, and those who will stand by the Church of their fathers, although they may not approve all those deliverances, there is some diversity of judgment as to the course which ought to be pursued by the Church henceforth toward the schismatical sect of united Old School and New School Presbyterians which has been organized in the wide region covered by the lately rebellious States; fully aware also, that to a large extent the Church, in a state of opinion which

may be called immature, awaits some clear deliverance of the General Assembly touching the relations which are to exist on our part to that sect. Besides this, it is notorious that all the past deliverances of the Church condemning the schism in the Church South, and the conduct of those ministers who produced and organized that schism, and used it to sustain the rebellion and the civil war, and now use it, not only to prevent the restoration and spread of our Church in the Southern half of the nation, but to extend the schism into all parts of the Church, have been, and continue to be, openly denounced and intentionally disobeyed by all such members and office-bearers of our Church as approve the wicked conduct of the authors of that schism, and repeat its sinful revilings of the Presbyterian Church and its acts. While this Convention has earnestly besought the General Assembly not to take back, nor modify, nor explain away, under rebellious menaces and heretical expositions and intrigues and conspiracies, in the interest of slavery and disloyalty and schism, any portion of its past deliverances touching the state of the Church and country, we suppose that a fresh deliverance, founded on the actual condition of affairs, more especially as they affect the Church, and embracing amongst other things the vital subjects contained in this petition and memorial, would be of very high importance at the present time. It needs to be kept in perpetual remembrance that the frightful civil war was encouraged and eagerly supported, from the beginning, by those who organized this sinful schism, as soon as possible after bloodshed began, mainly (as openly avowed by themselves) upon the two atrocious ideas of the perpetuity of negro slavery, and, to that end, the creation of a new nation, out of a part of this nation, through its destruction by treason and carnage. It must be farther kept in mind that after the lapse of four years of ceaseless activity in this sinful course, during which all the horrors and miseries of civil war fell upon the land, with a violence seldom exceeded in extent or bitterness

and after the new nation had expired, and the perpetual slavery had perished under an act of sublime national retribution, those same schismatics deliberately resolve to perpetuate the sectarian organization they had created, in such circumstances for such objects, accompanying this last act with formal statements, identifying their past conduct and principles with the future career marked out for themselves, and striving in particular to make mutual confidence and fraternity, much less mutual fellowship, and least of all, organic unity with the Church, which the great mass of them had betrayed, forsaken, and traduced, forever impossible.

The Presbyterian Church has no alternative consistent with safety, with self-respect, with the righteousness or its own past conduct, with fidelity to divine truth of Christian duty, or with obedience to God, but to accept the renunciation of these deluded men, to testify against their sinful acts, and to keep her skirts clear of their miserable doings. Three great duties remain to her, connected with this subject; upon the right performance of which, a great reward awaits her; and upon the neglect of which, trouble and confusion. The first is, to purify herself from the widely-diffused poison of the times, which, in a form more or less virulent, is diffused through all the churches; and to do this, as remembering that the discipline of the Church is of God, is an ordinance of mercy to backsliders, and stands related to the threatenings of God's word in some manner, as the sacraments thereof do to the promises of God. The second is, to hold out and wide open the arms of her love to every child of God in the Southern country, who has been a victim, not the willing partaker of the sins against God, against His Church, and against their country; against which Divine Providence has testified by such severe and most righteous judgments. The third is, to proceed at once, and with a zeal proportioned to the urgency of the necessity, to redeem the solemn promise made by the first Assembly, after the schism organized in 1861, that she would wholly disregard its

existence, and, as God might enable her, would strive to recover all she might lose by it, and to extend and establish, more and more, throughout the whole South, the precious system of Divine truth, unto the liberty and power of which God has called her by His grace [Minutes of 1866, p. 116.]

ENDORSEMENT BY THE ASSEMBLY OF 1867 OF THE
DECLARATIONS OF PRECEDING ASSEMBLIES.

Overture No. 14, being a resolution of the Presbytery of West Jersey, expressing an understanding "that an effort is now making to bring about the repeal of the utterances of the General Assembly in relation to national affairs," and declaring that the Paesbytery "heartily approves the acts and deliverances of that body touching the relations of the Church to the State, and the ecclesiastical questions arising therefrom, from 1861 to 1866, inclusive."

The Committee recommend that the Presbytery be answered, that the General Assembly is not aware of any such effort being made, and therefore that no action is called for. [Minutes of 1867, p. 333.]

EXTRACTS

FROM

PROCEEDINGS OF THE NEW SCHOOL ASSEMBLY,
FROM 1861-66.

REBELLION, LOYALTY AND SLAVERY.

WHEREAS, A portion of the people of the United States of America have risen up against the rightful authority of the Government; have instituted what they call the "Confederate States of America," in the name and defence of which they have made war against the United States; have seized the property of the Federal Government; have assailed and overpowered its troops engaged in the discharge of their duty; are now in armed rebellion against it,—the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America cannot forbear to express their amazement at the wickedness of such proceedings and at the bold advocacy and defence thereof, not only in those States in which ordinances of "secession" have been passed, but in several others.

6. That in the countenance which many ministers of the gospel and other professing Christians are now giving to treason and rebellion against the Government, we have great occasion to mourn for the injury thus done to the kingdom of the Redeemer; and that, though we have nothing to add to our former significant and explicit testimonials on the subject of slavery, we yet recommend our people to pray more fervently than ever for the removal of this evil and all others, both social and political, which lie at the foundation of our present national difficulties.

7. That a copy of these resolutions, signed by the officers of the General Assembly, be forwarded to his Excellency,

Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States. [Minutes, 1861.*]

Resolved, 4. That while we have been utterly shocked at the deep depravity of the men who have planned and matured this rebellion, and who are now clad in arms, manifested in words and deeds, there is another class found in the loyal States who have excited a still deeper loathing—some in Congress, some high in civil life, and some in the ordinary walks of business—who never utter a manly thought or opinion in favor of the Government but they follow it, by way of comment, with two or three smooth apologies for Southern insurrectionists, presenting the difference between an open and avowed enemy in the field and a secret and insidious foe in the bosom of his own family.

Resolved, 5. That, in our opinion, this whole insurrectionary movement can be traced to one primordial root, and to one only—AFRICAN SLAVERY, and the love of it, and a determination to make it perpetual; and, while we look upon this war as having one grand end in view—the restoration of the Union—by crushing out the last living and manifested fibre of rebellion, we hold that everything, the institution of Slavery, if need be, must be made to bend to this one great purpose; and while under the influence of humanity and Christian benevolence we may commiserate the condition of the ruined rebels once in fraternity with ourselves, but now—should the case occur—despoiled of all that makes the world dear to them, we must be at the same time constrained to feel that the retribution has been self-inflicted, and must add, “*Fiat justitia, ruat cœlum.*” [Minutes, 1862.]

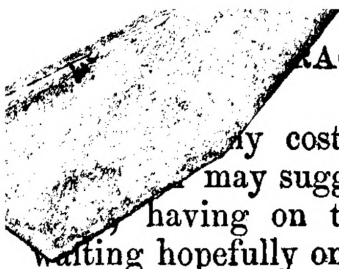
IV. That the Government of these United States, as provided for by the Constitution, is not only founded upon the great doctrine of human rights as vested by God in the individual man, but is also expressly declared to be the supreme civil authority in the land, for ever excluding the modern doctrine of secession as a civil or political right;

* Our quotations are from the Presbyterian Historical Almanac, as we found it impossible to get copies of the printed Minutes of this Assembly. In sending out our first edition, we were unable to get either the Minutes or the Almanac.

that, since the existing rebellion finds no justification in the facts of the case or the Constitution of the United States, in any law human or divine, the Assembly can regard it only as treason against the nation, and a most offensive sin in the sight of God, justly exposing its authors to the retributive vengeance of earth and heaven; that this rebellion, in its origin, history and measures, has been distinguished by those qualities which most sadly evince the depravity of our nature, especially in seeking to establish a new nationality on this continent based on the perpetual enslavement and oppression of a weak and long-injured race; that the national forces are, in the view of this Assembly, called out, not to wage war against another government, but to suppress insurrection, preserve the supremacy of law and order and save the country from anarchy and ruin.

V. That, in such a contest, with such principles and interests at stake, not only affecting the peace, prosperity and happiness of this our beloved country for all future time, but involving the cause of human liberty throughout the world, *loyalty*, unreserved and unconditional, to the constitutionally-elected Government of the United States, not as the transient passion of the hour, but as the intelligent and permanent state of the public conscience, rising above all questions of party politics, rebuking and opposing the foul spirit of treason, whenever and in whatever form exhibited, speaking earnest words of truth and soberness alike through the pulpit, the press and in all the walks of domestic and social life, making devout supplications to God, and giving the most cordial support to those who are providentially entrusted with the enactment and execution of the laws, is not only a sacred Christian obligation, but is indispensable, if we would save the nation and perpetuate the glorious inheritance that we possess to future generations.

IX. That this General Assembly exhorts all the churches and ministers connected with this branch of the Presbyterian Church, and all our countrymen, to stand by their country; to pray for it; to discountenance all forms of complicity with treason; to sustain those who are placed in civil or military authority over them; and to adopt every



FACTS FROM PROCEEDINGS

any cost, which an enlightened, self-sacrificing may suggest, as appropriate to the wants of the having on this subject one heart and one mind; waiting hopefully on Providence; patient amid delays; undaunted by reverses; persistent and untiring in effort, until, by the blessing of God, the glorious motto, "ONE COUNTRY, ONE CONSTITUTION AND ONE DESTINY," shall be enthroned as the sublime fact of the present and the more sublime harbinger of the future. [Minutes, 1863.]

WHEREAS, The iniquitous rebellion, prompted by reckless ambition in the defence and furtherance of human slavery, continues to lift itself against the liberal and legitimate Government of the United States,

Resolved, 6. That we cordially uphold the Government with our sympathies and prayers in its energetic efforts for the suppression of this most causeless and cruel rebellion, and urge all Christians to refrain from weakening the authority of the Administration by ill-timed complaints and unnecessary criticisms, fully believing that, in such a crisis, all speech and action which tends to difference should be studiously avoided for the sake of the common weal.

Resolved, 7. That a copy of these resolutions, duly authenticated, be transmitted to the President of the United States. [Minutes, 1864.]

At the commencement of this Rebellion the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States took its position decidedly and strongly in support of the Government. Regarding the forcible secession of the Southern aristocracy as treason against a most beneficent Government; as treason aggravated by the fact that not a single right of the South had been invaded; and as treason rendered peculiarly malignant and wicked by the fact that it was committed with the avowed purpose of sustaining and perpetuating the system of Slavery—a system in direct opposition to the Gospel and the principles of religious liberty—the Assembly condemned it in the name of God, and pledged to the Government a hearty support in the effort to crush it. Each succeeding Assembly reiterated this action. Our churches with entire unanimity responded, by word and

OF THE NEW SCHOOL ASSEMBLY.

deed, to these sentiments. Our record as a Church we commit to the calm judgment of posterity, in the full assurance that there is neither a line nor a word the Christian patriotism of the future will desire to erase; not a single sentiment befitting our relation to this great conflict it will find unexpressed. [Minutes, 1865.]

SOUTHERN MINISTERS AND CHURCHES.

That the ministers of the Gospel resident in what have been designated as the Rebel States—men professing to believe in the Bible and to honor its principles—should have shared in the guilt of this treason, making themselves parties thereto, giving to it their public influence, aiding and abetting the same, seems to the Assembly one of the most astonishing moral perversions to be found in the history of this fallen world. And yet that such has been the fact in the States hitherto in rebellion is too obvious to admit of reasonable doubt or denial. These ministers the Assembly can view only as, in this thing, most grievous sinners against the God of heaven.

In view of the principles and opinions thus expressed, the Assembly most earnestly exhorts all the Presbyteries under its care to consider this subject and take such action thereupon as shall accord with the word of God. In the event that any of the ministers referred to in the above Overture shall apply for admission into these Presbyteries, the Assembly advises the Presbyteries not to admit them, or in any way recognize them as ambassadors of the Cross of Christ, until they have given satisfactory evidence that they have sincerely repented of this sin. The details of this advice, the manner and ways of giving it practical effect, the Assembly must, for the present, leave with the discretion and wisdom of the Presbyteries; yet the Assembly cannot forbear to express the hope that the Presbyteries, in the spirit of true loyalty to their country and their God, will so act in the premises as to convey the clearest and most undoubted condemnation of the treason which has clothed this land with the habiliments of sorrow. Let the religious sense of the Church, in her pulpit ministrations and through the action

FACTS FROM PROCEEDINGS

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OF THE NEW SCHOOL ASSEMBLY.

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EXTRACTS FROM PROCEEDINGS

of her judicatories, mark this sin as of the deepest dye.
[Minutes, 1865.]

NEGRO SUFFRAGE AND RECONSTRUCTION.

That the colored man should in this country enjoy the right of suffrage in common with all other men, is but a simple dictate of justice. The Assembly cannot perceive any good reason why he should be deprived of this right on the ground of his color or his race. Why, then, should not the black man "in the revolted States," who is and "has been true to the country and the flag," thousands and tens of thousands of whom have fought for that country and flag, be at once included among the loyal persons upon whom shall devolve the task of reconstructing Southern society? This the Assembly thinks to be the shortest and safest method of solving the problem, most certain to gain the result and prevent future evil. So large a population cannot, in the state of freedom, be long kept contented without the enjoyment of common and civil political rights. Possessing these rights they will be in a position to be their own protectors. The enjoyment thereof will give them respectability, dignify their labor, elevate their desires, quicken their moral consciousness, and waken in their minds those hopes and high aspirations upon which the proper development of humanity depends. Possession of these rights is the quickest method of preparing them for their proper use. There can be no doubt of their loyalty. They are, and they have been, the friends of the Government, and in this they have shown more wisdom than most of their former masters. If these men are fit for the duties of the camp and the garrison as soldiers, the presumption is that they are not less competent for the duties of citizenship. To this result the country must come at last; and in the judgment of this Assembly more will be lost than gained by any effort to postpone it. It is better to meet the question at once, and settle it in accordance with the rights of man, the principles of our political system and the clear indications of Divine Providence. Any proper efforts of those in authority looking toward this result will receive the warm sympathies of this Assembly; nor can the

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Assembly doubt that they will be ultimately sustained by the great majority of the American people. It is not the purpose of the Assembly in this deliverance to argue this question at length, but simply to indicate its conviction in respect to the point intended in the memorial, and if possible to say a word that may encourage the Government in the discharge of its difficult duties. The prayer of the Assembly is that the Government may be guided by wisdom and justice, applying these cardinal qualities to all classes and men; and that all the people, disciplined by Providence and instructed by the trials of the past, may learn to practice that "righteousness" which "exalteth a nation." [Minutes, 1865.]

1. Our most solemn national trust concerns that patient race so long held in unrighteous bondage. Only as we are just to them can we live in peace and safety. Freed by the national arms, they must be protected in all their civil rights by the national power. And, as promoting this end, which far transcends any mere political or party object, we rejoice that the active functions of the Freedman's Bureau are still continued, and especially that the Civil Rights Bill has become the law of the land. In respect to the concession of the right of suffrage to the colored race, this Assembly adheres to the resolution passed by our Assembly of 1865 (*Minutes*, p. 42): "That the colored man should in this country enjoy the right of suffrage in common with all other men is but a simple dictate of justice. The Assembly cannot perceive any good reason why he should be deprived of this right on the ground of his color or his race." Even if suffrage may not be universal, let it at least be impartial.

2. In case such impartial suffrage is not conceded, that we may still reap the legitimate fruits of our national victory over secession and slavery, and that treason and rebellion may not enure to the direct political advantage of the guilty, we judge it to be a simple act of justice that the constitutional basis of representation in Congress should be so far altered as to meet the exigencies growing out of the abolition of slavery; and we likewise hold it to be the solemn duty of our National Executive and Congress to adopt only such

ACTION OF 1870

BY THE

RE-UNITED GENERAL ASSEMBLY WITHDRAWING
THEIR COMMITTEE OF CONFERENCE WITH THE
SOUTHERN ASSEMBLY.

WHEREAS, this General Assembly, at an early period of its sessions, declared its desire to establish cordial fraternal relations with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, commonly known as the Southern Assembly, upon the basis of Christian honour, confidence and love; and with a view to the attainment of this end appointed a committee of five ministers and four elders to confer with a similar committee, if it should be appointed by the Assembly then at session at Louisville, "in regard to the amicable settlement of all existing difficulties,* and the opening of a friendly correspondence between the Northern and Southern Churches," and for the furtherance of the objects contemplated in the appointment of said committee, and with a view to remove the obstacles which might prevent the acceptance of our proposals by our Southern brethren, re-affirmed the concurrent declaration of the two Assemblies which met in New York last year, to the effect that "no rule or precedent which does not stand approved by both the bodies shall be of any authority in the re-united body, except so far as such rule or precedent may affect the rights of property founded thereon;" and, as a further pledge of our sincerity in this movement, sent a copy of our resolutions, together with our

* This is a misquotation. See page 92 of this pamphlet. No such language is there found. E. T. B.

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Christian salutation, to the Assembly at Louisville, hands of delegates chosen for that purpose.

AND WHEREAS, the Southern Assembly, while receiving our delegates with marked courtesy and formally complying with our proposition for the appointment of a committee of conference, has nevertheless accompanied that appointment with declarations and conditions which we cannot consistently accept, because they involve a virtual prejudgment of the very difficulties concerning which we invited the conference; therefore

Resolved, That the further consideration of the subject be postponed, and the committee be discharged. At the same time we cannot forbear to express our profound regret that a measure designed, and, as we believe, eminently fitted, to promote the establishment of peace and the advancement of our Redeemer's kingdom in every part of our country, has apparently failed to accomplish its object. We earnestly hope that the negotiations thus suspended may soon be resumed under happier auspices, and hereby declare our readiness to renew our proposals for a friendly correspondence whenever our Southern brethren shall signify their readiness to accept it in the form and spirit in which it has been offered. [Minutes, June 1, 1870.]