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No. I.

ART. I.—OUR CHURCH AND OUR REVIEW.

It is said that a western preacher, from the text, "Adam, where art thou?" inferred first, "that every man is *somewhere*." The establishment of a new periodical with responsibilities like ours, creates a relationship between us and our readers, and invests with interest the inquiry, What may we assume to be the present position of our branch of the Presbyterian church?

In defining our own position, it is necessary first to give our impressions as to the position and prospects of our denomination.

It may be regarded as a "fixed fact," *that our church is to be and remain a distinct, independent, and permanent ecclesiastical denomination.* With whatever reluctance our brethren found the ties which bound them to the other branch of the church severed—whatever violence may have been done to their fraternal sympathies, as well as to their sense of justice, in their separation from institutions which they had aided to build, and brethren with whom they had taken sweet counsel, and gone to the house of God in company, yet, as the separation has been made by no suffrage of ours, and widened by the resolute refusal, in many cases, of our brethren even to hold Christian communion with us at the Lord's table, or to exchange pulpits with us; the question is to be regarded as settled, that we are

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to continue a distinct body. We know of no one in our communion so void of self-respect as to advocate a renewal of overtures of union, which have been coldly repulsed. And we are constrained to add, that while there are among our separated brethren, delightful specimens of individual courtesy and fraternal bearing, we yet recognize in their general temper, in their religious periodicals, and in their ecclesiastical acts, not the slightest evidence that they have receded a hair's-breadth from their original position. We meet every where among them, a disposition to re-endorse their acts of disruption, and a tendency to justify those acts by perpetuating suspicion, as to the orthodoxy of our denomination.

We say this, not to blame our separated brethren. Having revolutionized a church under the forms of ecclesiastical law, from a plea of necessity, then seized its charter and its funds, by the force of a mere majority, they cannot satisfy their own consciences, or the sense of justice in the world at large, but by striving to believe, and constantly repeating the charges in which their acts of violence first found apology. The old maxim, somewhat softened we hope by piety, has its application here: "those whom men have deeply injured they will hate." Who believes that they will alter?

The causes still exist which occasioned the separation. On the part of our separated brethren, there is no abatement of their claims; and on our part certainly, there is no disposition to surrender our honest interpretation of the Bible, and the standards of our church. We are as unwilling as ever, to have excavated for us by ecclesiastical authority, the precise and only channel by which the charities of our churches are to be permitted to find their way to the prairies of the West, or the banks of the Ganges. We have tasted the sweets of theological freedom and ecclesiastical liberality. We are satisfied with our ecclesiastical relations and prospects. We ask no change, and least of all, such change as would strangle free investigation, and dam up the streams of Christian charity.

In this connection, it may be proper to congratulate each other on the fact, that like our brethren in the free church of Scotland, we have met, and safely passed a most fearful and trying crisis in our church. Like that noble body of men, we were forced by principle to give up rights in the church which we loved. Like them, we relinquished to other hands, the Seminaries we had aided to endow. Not alone our Presbyterian fidelity, but our honesty as men, our soundness as theolo-

gians was denounced by church authority, echoed by the approbation of church institutions fed by our charity, and periodicals conducted by professors, elevated by our votes.

The famous Assembly of 1837, like the civil courts of Scotland, counted on the vis inertie of human nature. They hoped not in vain, that venerable professors, who had always protested against the necessity of division, would acquiesce and apologize for it when the deed was done; and that timid, time-serving, moderate men, who had always professed to stand neutral, would remain with the majority. The result, to some extent, justified their expectations. Many, who abhorred their injustice, were overawed when the new basis of 1838 was presented, and many more contented themselves with a newspaper protest, and finding it easier to acquiesce than strive and suffer for principle, hushed down their conscientious misgivings, and sunk their responsibility in quiet apathy. Those who have studied man, will understand how it is that he who will not act up to his moral judgment, learns to coax his moral judgment into acquiescence with his conduct.

But it is with us a proud consideration, that almost a moiety of the Presbyterian ministry—some thirteen or fourteen hundreds—in that storm of obloquy, and summary and wholesale excisions, stood firm by their principles. Among these men living and dead, we delight to record such names as those of Richards, Hillyer, Fisher, Beecher, Mason, Cleland, Blackburn, Cathcart, Nelson, Hill and Anderson. Some of these are historic names, and they are all worthy to be placed by the side of the Chalmerses, the Cunninghams, the Welshes, and the Candlishes, of the exiled Church of Scotland.

It was asserted by those who rent the Presbyterian church, that the excised portion was radically unsound in theology, and without any fixed attachment to church order. It was predicted, that without the cohesive attraction of their more orthodox brethren, their union would be a rope of sand; that while they came in "one way, they would go out seven ways." Each successive General Assembly was pronounced the last that could be held. But these modern prophets, consulted their hopes rather than the signs of the times. It was not likely that men who had suffered so much for principle, would hold lightly by either truth or the order of the church; and hence after fifteen years, in the body with which we are connected, no man has moved to alter a tittle of the Confession of Faith, or an essential principle of Presbyterian church government.

It is true, that bleeding under wounds inflicted by an accidental majority in the General Assembly of 1837, the church limited appeals to Synods, and made less frequent the meetings of its General Assembly; but subsequent reflection led to the belief, that the evil was not in the old system, but in its mal-administration; and hence, a return was had to the old Book; so that it is now true, that our church not only represents, but is the *only* body that does in all respects represent the real form and spirit of old fashioned American Presbyterianism.

Our organization has had its perils. Deprived of the possession of its chartered rights, left to the responsibility of perpetuating pure American Presbyterianism, which the excscinding body had striven to annihilate, it certainly had difficulties to overcome. Pledged to respect liberty of conscience on all subjects, determined to employ no gags to check free discussion, with the bigotry of ecclesiastical domination on one side, and the radicalism of a proselyting independence on the other; exposed to cross-fires, because it would neither advocate a *jure divino* Presbyterianism, nor submit to the aggressions of a rabid religious democracy, our church has stood inflexibly firm. True, we have had some defections. Ultra conservatives, for whom we moved too fast; and impatient radicals, for whom our march was too slow; have left us. Now and then also a solitary church, under an outside party influence, has left our communion. At periods "few and far between," among better men, some Diotrephes perhaps, whom we could not conscientiously make *great*, or some young theologian, who thought erroneously that he was not "appreciated among us," has been suddenly seized with spasms of "orthodoxy and order," and fled our ranks. But the great mass of both ministers and members have felt, and developed an unyielding attachment to our communion; an attachment which obloquy without, and treason within, have only made more sensitive and cohering. Never since our separation have our ecclesiastical prospects been more cheering.

Uneasy, discontented and aspiring spirits have withdrawn from us. Agitating questions have been nearly put to rest. Our ministers and members have learned to confide in each other, and to be satisfied with their position. In opinion, Presbyterian, and Calvinistic, after the general type of Edwards, Dwight and Richards, there is a delightful homogeneity among us, north, south, east and west. We have no crude

theological "novelties to disturb our peace," and no "dead orthodoxy" to groan its fears over all attempts at progress.

It has been a habit of our ecclesiastical opponents, to profess a good degree of confidence in our brethren, who happened to be their neighbours. Sometimes these commendations, if there were any hope of proselyting, have reached even flattery; but they have been balanced by a wise shake of the head, and a lamentation over some distant portion of our church, where heresy or disorder was represented as rampant. "You are a very good Calvinistic Presbyterian, but away off in some part of New York, Ohio, Tennessee, or somewhere else, your brethren are terrible heretics." These wailings over unsoundness in some "terra incognita" of our body, have had also a faint echo, from a few aged and easily alarmed theologians of New England.

We will not now pretend to argue the question, but meet assertion by the affirmation, that among our sixteen hundred clergy, and our elders and church members, there is as general and delightful a homogeneousness as has ever existed, based on intelligent conviction, among the same number of men in theological opinions, and that these opinions are in doctrinal harmony with the soundest and most orthodox churches of New England. So far as we are informed, there is not a minister of our body who does not love and cherish the Westminster Confession of Faith as the best human delineation of biblical theology; while all are prepared to bow implicitly and finally and fearlessly, before the only infallible standard, the word of God. "*Our church standards as symbols for union, but the Bible for authority,*" is the motto of our denomination.

In western New York, which has been so often represented as desolated by fanaticism, and needing "orthodox" missionary effort, there will be found a higher standard of ministerial qualification, a more thorough pulpit-instruction in Calvinistic theology, a larger attendance upon the means of grace, a more thorough examination for admission to church privileges, a more effective discipline, as well as more regard to Sabbath keeping and temperance, than in the best districts, cultivated by our separated brethren. In the lips of our staid New England fathers, "*new measures*" meant something, and hence complaints from that quarter might be expected; but after having often witnessed the high pressure excitements of our sepa-

rated brethren in some parts of the country; with their anxious seats, their conversions over night, and admissions to the church in the morning, their lax discipline and low moral standard, we are amazed to hear THEM echo the cry of "new measures and disorder." But we forbear.

We have with us the confidence of other Christian communions; we have in our body the grand and essential elements of truth, order, liberality and the spirit of progress; *we have no stain of injustice on our history*; we have our ancient cherished communion and co-operation as had our fathers, with the churches of New England; we have our noble and well manned collegiate and theological institutions; we have under our special influence, the northern belt of this glorious land, with its rapid advance in a free population; we have near sixteen hundred educated ministers, and nearly one hundred and fifty thousand church members, representing a population of some six hundred thousand souls; we have wealth, enterprise, and it is to be hoped the blessing of God. Well may we congratulate ourselves on our prospects. We can afford to love our branch of the church, and consecrate our labours and charities and prayers to its prosperity.

These are thoughts not new, but so grateful, that we desire to commend them to our brethren. "We would walk about our Zion, and mark her bulwarks," and thank God that they are "*strong*." We may well assume, that such an organization is destined to have perpetuity and expansion. It cannot be absorbed into a cold, formal element, with which in spirit it can have no affinity. It will not surrender its ecclesiastical life to gratify even its friends.

Associated with this idea of permanence, independence, integrity, and enlargement, is the plain principle, *that as a denomination, we have the obligation and the privilege to originate and employ the means essential to our prosperity*. The whole country is before us, and we claim the right common to all other denominations, subject to the law of Christian charity, to seek to mould the population of this land into the image of Christ, developed externally and ecclesiastically, in the form of liberal Presbyterianism. We are not to be denied fellowship, as heretics, and then asked as brethren, not to plant churches in cities and villages occupied by our separated brethren; while at the same time, it would be folly and guilt recklessly to disturb their order, or divide and scatter their congregations. We are not to lay a hand of violence on our great national socie-

ties, or cease to love and co-operate with them, while yet we claim the right to originate such Boards and Committees as will best develop our resources, and strengthen the power for good of our own church. We yield to our orthodox Congregational brethren the right to organize, when people prefer it, Congregational churches any where, or to any extent; but insist on our right to do the same, under our own preferences; stipulating also, that while we act in common for Foreign and Domestic Missions, that both parties shall exorcise a selfish, partisan, and proselyting spirit. While we subordinate the church to Christianity, and elevate its interior spiritual life over all outward ecclesiastical manifestations, yet other things being equal, we claim the right to give a practical preference to our own creed, and our own institutions. If a religious denomination be worthy of an independent existence, it is bound to employ the specific means essential to give that existence vitality, power and enlargement. For this purpose, we seek the aid of the press; that ubiquitous agency which concentrates talent, learning and piety, and radiates truth upon the world. In this respect, our denomination is behind the claims of the age. We have been unjust to ourselves. We have left it to others to do our thinking and writing for us, to inundate our churches with periodicals, either indifferent to our interests, or inimical to our doctrines and institutions. Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists, and the Presbyterians separated from us, have their Quarterlies, which invigorate and develop the intellectual power of their members, and advocate their doctrines. Has our denomination less genius, learning, pecuniary resources, literary cultivation and taste? On the prairies of the mighty west, in the savannas of the "sunny south," on the lakes of the north, and in the great emporiums of the east; have we no genius undeveloped, no original burning thought, no scientific advances, no exegetical enthusiasm, no perception of a needed influence to mould the spirit and body of the times, no errors to combat, nor moral evils to reform, that we should be compelled to surrender the most efficient agencies of the press to other denominations? Is science making no progress among us to be chronicled? Do the issues of the press require no criticism, selection or commendation? In the political horizon, are there no signs boding weal or woe to Protestant Christianity? Are there no influences abroad tending to skepticism or papal superstition, to religious anarchy or despotism? Is it not then a marvel, that in

the higher range of religious and literary discussion, the intellect, learning and piety of our church have to this hour, no natural and accessible channel to the public mind, save through the weekly press? If any exception were here demanded, it would be in favour of the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, of Andover, and the *New Englander*, of New Haven.

The "*New Englander*" is a valuable work, interesting for its piquancy, sprightliness and popular cast, as well as its general ability and fearlessness; but its locality and its ecclesiastical affinities, preclude its adaptation to the wants of the Presbyterian church. The "*Bibliotheca*," of Andover, is a work of profound learning, comprehensive range of thought and most liberal spirit.* It has our entire approbation and cordial sympathies; but it is a work designed for clergymen and scholars of the church at large. It is not designed for the mass of society, and its plan and purposes will not allow the discussion of questions, in which as Presbyterians, our people have an abiding interest. We hope our readers, who can appreciate it, will retain it on the shelf, with the "*Presbyterian Quarterly Review*;" but we cannot afford to rely upon it alone to meet the wants of our denomination.

We hardly think it necessary to name, in this connection, the "*Biblical Repertory*," of Princeton. Under the admonition "to love our enemies," and free to admire talent, learning, tact, industry, shrewdness, and occasional wit, any where, we can afford duly to estimate the "*Biblical Repertory*." So far as it advocates principles in common with us, so far as it promotes intelligent, spiritual, old fashioned, Catholic, American Presbyterianism, we regard it as a fellow-labourer. But we cannot forget, that while it always deprecated the necessity for the division of the church previous to 1837, it was converted suddenly, and in convenient time to be the apologist and advocate of the wholesale excision of Dr. Richards, Auburn Seminary, and some four or five hundred ministers without charge or trial, from the Presbyterian church. Since then, it has been compelled to see nothing to excite its approbation, sympathy, kindness or hope in our branch of the church. It has "snuffed up" heresy in every "east wind," and felt chills of Presbyterial apprehension at every northwest breeze from the infected, ta-

* While these pages are passing through the press, it is with deep regret we hear that Professor Edwards, to whom the *Bibliotheca Sacra* owes more probably than to any other man, is numbered with the dead. It is a great loss to New England, to America, to the entire Church.

hood and excinded districts of Western New York. Philip of Macedon employed a man to tell him that he was *mortal*. Our denomination may require a standing committee to spy out its defects, and a tongue to rebuke its short-comings; and for this they can rely on the *Biblical Repertory*, of Princeton. But as a church we cannot rely upon it for "bread," lest we should get a "stone." Indeed, a petrified sneer, best represents the aspect of the *Biblical Repertory* towards American Presbyterianism.

We have alluded to these publications simply to show that as they do not occupy our field, nor meet our wants, a new "*Presbyterian Quarterly Review*" is needed by us. No such work exists in the denomination, from New York to San Francisco. The demand for such a work has been most earnest and unequivocal from all quarters, so that before the publication of this first number, nearly one thousand names of subscribers have been enrolled on our list. A revived and more resolute attachment to our form of Presbyterianism, has demanded an organ for its expression. It is not ushered into being to give prominence to any shibboleth of theological opinion peculiar to the editors, nor to ride any hobby of utopian reform. It is designed to give voice to the intellect, and piety of a great religious communion; to vindicate not only the doctrines of our faith, but those doctrines made symmetrical, transparent and consistent by earnest and thorough investigation and philosophic arrangement, under the best lights of science, ecclesiastical history, and the word of God. It is designed to increase the moral power of our ministry and members, by widening their scope of mental vision to the comprehension of those scientific, philosophical, literary, and political facts, by which God in His Providence is illustrating God in the Bible.

This Review is "set for the defence of the gospel" against all assailants, especially those who professing to abjure philosophy, yet philosophize the Almighty into a tyrant, and man into a victim; who represent a holy God as creating sin in a human soul, anterior to all moral acts, and then punishing that soul for being as he made it; who teach that man has no ability to do his duty whatever, but is worthy of eternal punishment for not enacting natural impossibilities; who limit the atonement offered for a race to the elect alone, and then consign to a deeper damnation, souls for rejecting an atonement, which in no sense was ever provided for them. These excrescences on sound Calvinism, these parasites which

antinomian metaphysics have engrafted on the glorious doctrines of grace, we shall deem it our duty to lop off. We shall advocate the Bible as the only infallible rule of faith, over all "inward lights," traditional creeds or ghostly authority. We shall insist, that wherever Jesus is by his Spirit on earth, there is the true, heaven-blessed church of God; and that wherever the brotherhood of regenerated men have chosen and set apart a minister, with whatsoever rite or ceremony, he is a minister of Christ. We shall claim for parents the privileges of the covenant, and insist that all whom Christ has received, have a right to a seat at Christ's table. As we love the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Catechisms, we shall stand ready to vindicate them from Arminian, Socinian, and infidel assaults on the one side, as well as Antinomian glosses on the other.

Our reviews of current literature we shall design to make intelligent and conscientious; kind to authors, but just to the community. Literary presumption, ambitious pretence, and arrogant ignorance we shall not spare; but we hope in this department to have a heart of kindness for all, even while we lay "a rod on the fool's back." An honest inquiry after truth, an honest avowal of conscientious convictions, from any quarter will be treated with respect; and all well meant and effective efforts of authors to do good, on any scale, may be assured of our sincere sympathy.

We shall aim to be rather the exponents of our fathers and brethren than their teachers; to develop our common christianity, rather than claim to speak *ex-cathedra*, "as those having authority." Still, for opinions expressed in this review, as we alone control its pages, none can be held legally and logically responsible but the editors. As we "take the responsibility" of this work, we shall receive or reject articles as our conscientious judgments shall dictate. Of course what we regard as dangerous error, in fact or doctrines, cannot have a channel to the public mind through our Review.

It is proper here to indicate the kind of articles deemed appropriate for this work. By weight and worth of matter, and power and beauty of style we should be happy to make it worthy of an intelligent denomination, and honourable to the religious literature of the United States. More than this, we could wish to give it a moral power to press its way to the extremes of our land, marking its track by the broad train of light radiated by its influence. For this we must command the best thoughts of our best and ablest men. Such, north,

south, east, and west, on the Hudson, the Ohio, the Mississippi, or the Potomac; in the city or on the prairie, we invite to our aid.

This "Review" not only demands articles that are truthful,—truisms can be picked up any where,—our articles must be weighty and appropriate. The worth of an article is not settled by the question whether people *ought* to read it, but whether they *will read* it. Our great societies measure their usefulness by pages *printed*. A better test would be their pages *read*. We have no design to task our printers with profound stupidity, learned dullness, elevated verbosity, rhetorical vapidity, or pious common-place. We want heart, directness, tact, freshness, and power, in our pages.

Every article must have at least one of three qualities, or it will be worthless and unreadable. (1.) It must have a *great subject*, whose announcement at once arrests and sustains attention. To this class belong many of the facts and doctrines of the Bible. Their intrinsic worth, their mystery, sublimity, or practical appeal to man's fears or hopes, his danger or safety, secures interest. It is easy to invest with attraction an article on Napoleon or Walter Scott. Perhaps few ever criticised the style in which Champollion deciphered the hieroglyphics of Egypt, or Layard narrated the exhuming of Nineveh. Or (2.) An article should have a subject of *relative* interest in some attraction of the public mind. It is easy at present to get a reading for a paragraph on the search for Sir John Franklin, or the last metempsychosis of the French Republic. It is a science to study the direction of the public gaze, and an art to elevate at the right moment some valuable truth which will rivet attention. Or (3.) an article if it lack intrinsic and relative attraction of subject, should invest minor and common truths with interest by the felicity and fascination of its style. What is the poetry of the Bible but flowers strown to tempt man along the paths of truth and holiness? A crude, prosy, verbose and vapid style, is the sepulchre of many noble thoughts, destined to no resurrection. Truisms in trite language are hardly endurable in a morning call. In a learned "Review" they are an outrage on the public. The less interest in the subject, if it be important to the reader, the more necessary are animation and skill in the writer to wake up attention. Cowper's delineation of the gambols of his pets, and Washington Irving's Legend of Sleepy Hollow, show the power of style in giving life to minor subjects.

If any be disposed to weigh our present article by the Balances we have given, and find it "wanting," it will not be the first time the "beau ideal" has surpassed the execution of the artist, or "the vigor of a war fallen short of the sounding title of the manifesto."

We have spoken frankly, fearlessly, and we hope, kindly. It is no affected modesty, to admit our self-distrust and our willingness to take the counsel of our fathers and brethren in respect to the responsibility we have assumed. We rely on the indulgence of our friends, but more especially on their prayers for us to Almighty God that "his grace may be sufficient for us." Beseeching the aid of Him "from whom every good and perfect gift cometh," we consecrate this "Presbyterian Quarterly Review" to Truth, to The Church, and to God.

ART. II.—THE MISSION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

ANY organization, secular or religious, which embodies in itself principles or blessings important to mankind, or indispensable to the developement of God's purposes, has a mission, in accomplishing which, the protecting and assisting power of the Almighty may be confidently expected, whatever influences may be arrayed against it, or whatever perils it may be called to endure. This great truth applies to all the more important secular organizations in past history; to Egypt, Greece, and Rome, and to many in modern times, especially England and our own country. But it applies more emphatically to church organizations in every age. For example, to the Primitive Church, explaining the marvel and mystery of her perpetuity amidst her long and bloody persecutions, ordeals by which early "faith was tried so as by fire, and was found unto praise, and honour, and glory." So also, to the Catholic Church, which perished not amidst repeated barbaric irruptions, and notwithstanding nameless perversions and abominations, all the blessings she bore in her bosom became the heritage of man. And so also, is the principle applicable to the Church in her Protestant, Puritan and Presbyterian organization.

In the permissive Providence of God, and by agencies, not