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ART. I.—*Hints on Colonization and Abolition; with reference to the black race.*

THEY who are wise enough to place implicit confidence in the statements of the Bible, as to the origin of the human race, find no difficulty in tracing the three distinct races of men who inhabit this vast continent to the patriarch Noah, as the second head and progenitor of mankind. Nor is the difficulty great, to reach the assurance that the three sons of that patriarch were respectively the heads of three races which surround us: all things concurring to prove that the North American Indians are of Asiatic, that is of Shemitish origin, whilst the origin of the white and black races is not only matter of familiar knowledge and full experience, but is stamped upon the very aspects and lineaments of the beings themselves, in characters which time is not able to erase. Indeed we think we see in the very state of things which are passing before us, the evidence of the truth of God, in the exact fulfilment of a prophecy, which, from the distance of forty-two centuries, seem to point steadfastly to us. "God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his ser-

ART. III.—*Dangerous Innovations.*

WE are well aware of the misconstruction which may be put on the following remarks, and of the impeachment of motive to which the writer may be subjected. But there are crises in the Church when a candid and fearless expression of opinion may subserve the general interests of religion, although it may be attended with some personal inconvenience to him who will venture to resist the current of popular opinion. Such a crisis at present exists in the Presbyterian Church; and pregnant as it appears to be with desolating evils, it would be pusillanimous to decline a conflict with the causes which have brought on this crisis. To one particular class of these we propose, at present, to confine our attention. We refer to the novel proceedings which have been so currently adopted for the revival and extension of religion. The tendency of these we have with deep solicitude examined; and, from a sorrowful conviction of their deplorable effects, we are induced to assume the attitude of antagonists. That there are genuine revivals of religion, produced by the special agency of the Holy Ghost, with Christians in common, we have not a doubt; but that the revivals of the present time are *generally* of this character, is by no means conclusively demonstrated. Let not the reader be startled by the suggestion of such a doubt; facts of daily occurrence are giving a colourable pretence to it, if they are not positively verifying it. On this subject, rash and precipitate judgment should be avoided on the one hand, and that morbid sensitiveness which shrinks from examining and condemning, if necessary, what mistaken consciences regard as too sacred to be touched, should be equally avoided on the other. Religion never seeks auxiliaries in ignorance and concealment, but it authorizes us to bring every man and every measure to the test—"by their fruits ye shall know them." To do this candidly and boldly, is our present purpose; and in pursuing the subject, we will consider some of the popular measures which are relied upon for the promotion of revivals, and then advert to the evils which these measures are introducing into the Church. Here, however, we think it necessary to premise, that the blameworthiness of these objectionable measures, with their correspondent results, are not attributable to the people at large; they did not in the first instance conceive or broach them, but have in most instances adopted them with reluctance, through the force of persuasion, constantly plied by their religious instructors. Neither have these measures originated in any peculiar exigency in the Church, loudly demanding bold and adven-

turous experiments. Diseases of an anomalous character, and strangely modified, may indicate the necessity of bold experiment and deviation from the common rules of medical practice, but no parallel to this was observable in the Church, which could justify means of questionable propriety, and unsanctioned by precedent practice. How then have they originated? Ministers of the Gospel, the spiritual guides of the people, with indiscreet zeal have ushered them to the light, and nurtured them to their maturity. Now we wish it to be distinctly understood, that we question neither the piety nor the integrity of those who first introduced, or who still abet, these practices, but we feel persuaded, that they have given impetus to a machinery which, in its wild and frantic movements, will soon defy the control of any adjusting or regulating force. Human passions are much more easily aroused than allayed; they are to be appealed to cautiously, and with much judgment, in religious, as well as political matters; and a single indiscretion in their management may loosen the avalanche which, in its headlong career, may sweep all before it.

But there is another preliminary remark of some importance, and it is this:—The resistance of these measures cannot fairly be construed into hostility to revivals. The Spirit of God, giving efficacy to the word of truth, may convert a hundred souls as readily as one, and the dews of grace may be distilled upon a large community, with as much ease as upon a single family. There may be, and there have been revivals, genuine in their character and extensive in their benefits. But these are separable from new measures; they are things totally different in their nature, and should be distinguished. Revivals are from heaven, new measures are of the earth; God is the agent in the first, man the contriver of the latter. But it may be said, have not revivals of late resulted in connexion with these measures? Suppose this should be admitted, it is at least equally certain that revivals of an undoubted character have occurred without the intervention of these measures, and hence revivals are not so identified with these measures, that an objection against the latter implies discredit to the former. Upon this just distinction we would insist, because we are persuaded that many would openly condemn these objectionable novelties, but from the fear of being regarded as hostile to revivals. And this fear is not without foundation, for the spirit of the times has rendered it hazardous to separate what God has never put together.

At length we come to consider what these objectionable measures are. They do not consist in “praying without ceasing” for the outpouring of the Spirit of God; nor in the faithful,

earnest, and unwearied preaching of the Gospel, in which the doctrines of Christ are expounded, the danger of the sinner exposed, his duty fully unfolded, and his obligations earnestly pressed. These are scriptural measures. But, on the contrary, it seems to have become the settled conviction of many, that few or no conversions can be expected under the ordinary administration of these means of grace, and that a necessity exists for the adoption of certain plans, which are not found in the common routine. This suggestion has been eagerly embraced by many, and it has now, in a great measure, become the criterion of ministerial zeal and fidelity, to practise upon it by the introduction of novelties without limit. It has given rise to a class of ministers in the church who, by way of preeminence, are styled *revival men*, inasmuch as they are particularly successful in producing extraordinary excitement among an audience. These are generally itinerating in their habits, and are prepared to go where their services are solicited. They do not, as far as we have seen, occupy even a second rank as intellectual men or as judicious theologians, nor are they much distinguished for their prudence or their discrimination of character. On the other hand, their address is popular, earnest, impassioned, and even inflamed, directed principally to arouse the feelings, and tending but little to convince the judgment through the illumination of the understanding. Their discourses teem with all that is terrible and affrighting in language, and too exclusively regard man as a sensitive, rather than as an intellectual and reasonable being, whose feelings, to be right, must be regulated by an enlightened judgment. The point of doctrine upon which their chief reliance is placed, is, that every sinner has inherent ability to make for himself a new heart, and that he can, at any moment, become a Christian, if he wills it. The exclusive agency of the Holy Ghost in converting, is a topic which is frittered away, or studiously kept out of view, lest it should lull the sinner to sleep and prevent him from exerting his self-converting power. It may be said in addition, that these men, both in private and public discourse, secure a prominence for themselves, by rebuking the alleged formality, and calling in question the piety, of such ministers as will not keep an even pace with them in their measures. But to delineate a picture which may be taken in at a glance, we would describe one or more of these men in their efforts to revive a particular church. All the particulars enumerated may not be found in connexion on any one occasion, but on every occasion some, or most of them, may be detected.

Thus, then, notice is previously given to a congregation that

a *four days, or protracted meeting*, will commence on a given day, and that certain ministers, who have signalized themselves in many remarkable revivals, will be present to conduct the meeting. At the same time they are led to believe that great results must necessarily flow from the premeditated effort, and their curiosity is sharpened by the promise of remarkable preaching.\* If the meeting is to be held in a city, *hand bills* are sometimes extensively distributed, and every other means employed, to secure a full attendance.

The long expected day at length arrives; gossip is busy; the people are upon the *qui vive*, and their exercises commence under the most auspicious circumstances. But what now appears to be the great aim of the leaders? Is it to enlighten the mind and to affect the heart by an intelligent and impressive exposition of Gospel truth? No; but their addresses, their hymns, and their tunes, are all adapted to work upon the feelings of the nervous and sanguine, until animal excitability is brought into full play. Other means are employed for the same end; as, for instance, they are told that Christians are assembled at a particular place to pray for them by name; the accounts of other revivals, highly coloured, are emphatically dwelt upon; notes from persons of various characters are read, requesting the prayers of the church; some one is called upon, or spontaneously arises to give an account of his or her recent conversion; the officiating minister is sometimes called upon to make a public confession of his unfaithfulness before his congregation, or even to acknowledge his long practised hypocrisy, by taking a seat among the newly awakened; prayer meetings are held in places which are rendered gloomy for the sake of effect, by a careful exclusion of the light; sinners are often told, that if they do not repent before they leave the house they will certainly be damned; sometimes their pride is appealed to, by being informed that men of high public standing, and great professional distinction have, at other places, been found on the *anxious seats*, and that it would be *honourable* to follow their example; and still further, meetings are multiplied and carried far into the night, and sometimes prolonged all night, until the powers of nature are wasted, and nervousness is superinduced, which is not infrequently so extreme, as to produce incurable alienation of mind. Such are some of those methods which are employed to awaken feeling in the first instance, and if they succeed, as they generally do for a time, then what may be called a second course of action is commenced.

\* We have known a minister to express himself thus: that he would *insure* a revival in a particular place if a certain revival brother were invited to attend!

The leader calls upon Christians and sinners to separate and occupy different parts of the house; or Christians are directed to leave the house in a body and repair to some convenient place to pray for sinners; or those who are determined from the moment to become Christians, are required to rise in the face of the congregation, and their number is often ostentatiously counted and publicly announced; or, as a more usual plan, those who are anxious and wish the prayers of the church, are invited to come forward and occupy the *anxious seats* which are specially reserved for them. Here prayer is offered, often most irreverent in its style, hymns of an exciting character are sung, and the anxious are stunned with the perpetual reiteration of the command, *submit or be damned!* The mind by this time is often so powerfully excited, as not to admit calm instruction, and indeed, such instruction is seldom offered. The conversation consists in ringing changes upon cant phrases, it is frequently wild and fanatical, and is generally addressed to weak minds, which are not conversant with the elements of the Christian religion. The effect of all this preparation, and public display, and contagious enthusiasm, may easily be conceived. Many profess to submit, without any definite conception of the meaning of the term, and they are forthwith considered as candidates for the communion of the church. After the lapse of a day or two, and while their feelings are yet artificially heated, the Lord's Supper is celebrated, and members are precipitately admitted by fifties and hundreds.\*

In the blind enthusiasm of such moments, we have known a general invitation to be given to all who wished to be baptized to present themselves and receive the ordinance, without previous question or examination. And we have heard of one who was an atheist on Friday, and who, presenting himself on the Sabbath, was admitted to the Lord's table without examination, and with the concurrence of the officiating minister. Such proceedings have been dignified with the name of revivals, and the accounts of them have been blazoned through the land, that the spirit of them might be diffused, and the example prove contagious.

\* To induce sinners to commit themselves by some public act or promise, is considered as a point of great importance. It has even been avowed by some of these clerical innovators, that they would not hesitate to admit to the full communion of the church, those whose conversion was questionable, under the expectation, that the recollection of the awful vows they had thus hastily taken, would subsequently render them uneasy, and lead to their conversion. As we do not admit the justness of the maxim that "the end sanctifies the means," we must be permitted to indulge the opinion, that all such committals have but one uniform tendency, and that is, to encourage simulation and curse the church with hypocrites.

But we would next advert to the native tendencies of these measures, which we call *new*, not because they are so in fact, but because they have been recently revived. And,

1st. They tend to deceive people on the unspeakably interesting subject of personal religion. How this results is sufficiently obvious. Where they are practised, we have already seen, that neither time nor suitable opportunity is afforded, for ascertaining the nature of regeneration, and the evidences by which it is accompanied. Every thing is done hurriedly, and no time is allowed for the storm of feeling to subside. The assumed converts have been scarcely permitted to think, much less to deliberate. They have felt apprehensive of hell, and have been induced to believe that they have submitted to God; and this is about the amount of their experience. In a few days, from a state of carelessness they find themselves committed before God and men, as members of the visible Church. At this stage some will take advantage of the calm which has ensued, and reflect upon the scenes through which they have passed, and will come to the conclusion that they have been deceived, and that their religion has passed away with the occasion which produced it. But others, who, in ignorance, were first deceived, will through ignorance remain deceived, and to the end will be able to furnish no better account of their conversion, than that they once occupied the anxious seat, and then united with the Church. The nature of personal piety has thus been obscured, and the standard of personal religion has thus been lowered; and although large additions have been made to the *numbers* of the Church, it is seriously to be apprehended that but little addition has been made to its *graces*. The religion produced by these measures, generally assumes the features of its parent; it is noisy, bustling, talkative, but it is not a "charity which thinketh no evil," neither is it a "growth in grace and an increase of knowledge."

2d. They create the necessity for an extensive and disastrous exercise of discipline. We do not say that a necessary discipline is always exercised, but a necessity for discipline always exists after the use of these measures. We have been told that in a Church where these revivals have been frequent, many have not once been seen in the church, after the communion season at which they were admitted. They run at large, and the only discipline which can be exercised upon them, is to expunge their names from the church register, and to reckon them among the *missing*. But there are others, who from their relative situation, are not thus able to abscond. They find that they are destitute of religion; they review the scene of their conversion as a farce; they entertain angry feeling towards those who have compelled them to commit themselves by a religious profession; they

become reckless, and at length divest themselves of the incumbering forms of godliness, and plunge again into the world with renovated zest, or become flagrantly immoral. The Church must now act, and alas! how frequently of late, have they been constrained to act, in pronouncing their censures. Individuals who have been received in mass are dismissed in detail, and as one expressed it, the time is fast approaching when the *back* door of the Church must be equally wide with the *front*. Discipline, when thus frequent, becomes disastrous; the Church and the religious profession become the mockery of the ungodly, and the unholy ambition which has too much to do in the rapid increase of the numbers of the Church, is made to recoil fatally upon itself.

3d. They react in the production of general scepticism. True religion is brought into question by indiscreet zeal in its advancement. Those who have been the subjects of spurious revivals, are apt to conclude that as their religion was temporary there is no religion which is permanent; that as they have experienced nothing more than an ebullition of animal feeling, all religion consists in such excitement; and, whether they avow it or not, the tendency of their minds is to infidelity. They measure religion by their own experience, and as their experience has not been of the most favourable kind, religion must consequently sink in their esteem.

But there are many others who are calm and shrewd observers of all these transactions; they are disposed to scepticism, but still halt between two opinions, until they witness such a revival, and scrutinize it in its details and effects, and then they eagerly adopt the unhappy conclusion that all religion is a farce. Now although the abuse of a thing is no reason against its use, there is too much ground for infidelity to stand upon in the measures to which we object.

4th. They create painful doubts in the minds of many of God's people. All Christians are not capable of a just discrimination, and where this is the case, the unhappy results to which we have referred, stagger and perplex them. They have, perhaps, engaged in promoting such revivals; their hopes have been excited; their praises to God have ascended; they have exclaimed this is the finger of God, but the subsequent fruits are not what they had anticipated; the new converts turn back to the world, or speedily relapse into fatal listlessness; their despondency of mind is then proportional to their former elation, and Satan, taking advantage of their situation, will harass their minds with doubt. If this be not religion, they will say, what is religion? How could ministers of the Gospel be so much deceived? If all these religious appearances may occur without any genuine

religion, can there be any certainty in religion at all? Thus some have been exercised until their feet have well nigh slipped. It may be replied that such must be weak Christians indeed; it may be so, but that is no reason why stumbling blocks should be thrown in their path.

5th. They generate a spirit of slander and abuse which are dishonouring to the cause of Christ. All are loudly and bitterly proscribed who will not concur with them. The most envenomed assaults are directed against ministers and churches who stand aloof. Their piety is questioned; their motives are impeached; they are represented as profoundly slumbering; as indifferent to the cause of Christ and the eternal welfare of souls; as formalists; as hypocrites; as the blind leading the blind; they are held up as objects to be avoided, and even to be abhorred; and if they are not brought into discredit, it is certainly not from any lack of zeal in the attempt to bring odium upon them. Innumerable facts could be adduced to substantiate this statement, and if such be one of the invariable results of new measures, are these measures from God? We judge not.

6th. They lead to the dismissal of ministers from their pastoral charges. The unsettlement of ministers, since these measures have been in vogue, has been unprecedented in respect to frequency. Let any one extensively acquainted with the state of the Church examine for himself and he will soon be satisfied of the fact. Their operation in this respect is obvious. Where these measures have been introduced, parties will be formed against the minister, first, from among those who have heartily disapproved of these devices from the beginning; second, from among those who, through the agency of these measures, have been hurried into the Church without true conversion, and who have conceived an unfriendly and even hostile feeling against him who has forced them into the unpleasant dilemma; and third, from among those of his charge, who, having espoused these measures, wish to run on with delirious excitement, into greater excesses than their minister is prepared to countenance; while the pastor is, on this account, often denounced by his former idolaters, and prayed for as one yet unconverted. The discontent of these several classes will soon be expressed in loud complaints, and result in open opposition. Besides, these ministers cannot, in the nature of things, always keep up the artificial excitement, which they have so indiscreetly promoted, and when this becomes apparent their efforts flag and their reputation for zeal suffers. And once more, they generally find their new converts intractable after their admission to the church. Like a military force hastily collected together, compounded

of raw and heterogenous materials, and destitute of a sincere love for the service, they are not easily reduced to order. Troubles multiply; peace is at an end; and the only prospect of future comfort is in retreat.

But ministers of another class are unsettled. Those we mean who withstand these measures. The infection spreads among their people although they may remain untouched, and because they will not glide with the current they must be overpowered by struggling against it. As in the great convulsions of nature, the righteous with the wicked are often involved in one common calamity, so in these religious storms, the innocent are not exempt from the disasters which they had no instrumentality in producing. Many of the most judicious and pious divines, it is believed, have been shut out of their pulpits, because, in resisting these measures, they have been stigmatized and condemned as opposers of revivals and even of vital godliness.

7th. They tend to render people unimpressible by the ordinary means of grace, and thus augur unfavourably for the future prosperity of the Church.

Facts bear out this assertion. Novelties lose their effect by repetition, and where these innovations have been employed for any length of time, it has become matter of public notoriety, that they have lost their magic virtue. It is true that sinners may rise at the word of command, and come to the anxious seats for the hundredth time, and they may do it with improved quickness, but then they learn to do it with such mechanical indifference as to evince their heartlessness and chill the spirit of their leader.\* Their feelings have been exercised even to callousness, and unless stronger measures of excitement be introduced they remain indifferent. Now if this be true, what hope is there, humanly speaking, of exciting an interest in their minds by the ordinary means of grace? Are they not, as it were, immove-

\* A clergyman who had eagerly practised all the novelties of the day, honestly remarked, that their frequent repetition had so entirely destroyed their effect, that his people evidently regarded them as a kind of drill through which it was expected they were to go, without any regard to accompanying feeling. If called upon to rise, they would all promptly rise; if invited to the anxious seats, they would without any further persuasion approach; but they would do this with a smile upon their countenances, and with such utter heartlessness as to shock his sense of propriety, and convert the whole scene into a farce. This led to a change in his views; and there is reason to believe that his experience is not singular in this respect, although his candour in the acknowledgment may be. Another effect has also been observed where these measures have long been in use, and that is, that no entreaty can secure a full attendance upon protracted meetings, or their accustomed obedience from the people to the plans and devices which have been considered so effectual in promoting revivals. The *smiling* obedience in the one case, and the incorrigible disobedience in the other, alike prove the unhappy tendency of these measures.

ably fixed? They want nothing that is common; their appetite has become vitiated by high seasoning, until their taste for common food, and indeed for any food, has ceased. This pitiable spectacle is exhibited by some of our churches already, but we as yet see only the beginning of evils.

8th. They tend to lower the standard of preaching. This is a result intimately connected with the preceding. The taste for instructive preaching is fast declining; the people are listless if the doctrines of Scripture are explained and defended, or if the precepts of Scripture are enforced; they do not wish to be directed to the duty of tranquil meditation or of sober self-examination; excitement is to them pleasureable, but the study and practice of Christian duty, is irksome; they want pungent addresses, not well digested discourses; knowledge is without value, feeling is every thing, and hence, if God avert not the consequence, it will soon be seen that ignorance of the great system of the Gospel, will become the principal feature of our Church.

9th. They create an enthusiasm which, if not arrested or controlled will, and necessarily must, terminate in downright fanaticism. If reason be constrained to succumb to feeling, the consequences must be deplorable. Human passions are much more easily excited than allayed; any one may apply the impetus which puts them in motion; but who can curb or arrest their course when once commenced? The friends of new measures may easily kindle a fire which they cannot quench; they may open the sluices, but they cannot say with effect to the torrent which they have caused, "thus far shalt thou come but no farther." Contemplate the extravagancies which new measures have already originated, such as women praying in public; ministers praying publicly for persons by name, and enumerating all their supposed bad qualities in their prayers; and laymen meeting to pray for the conversion of ministers who are concluded to be destitute of piety, because they regard these measures with an unfriendly eye: we say look at these fruits, look at the predominance of feeling which characterizes new measure revivals, and then decide, whether in the lawlessness of enthusiasm, it would be at all wonderful, if some should set up a pretension to the gift of tongues and to the spirit of prophecy. Such fanaticism has occurred elsewhere, and why should it not occur here? We question not but if an example were once set, it would soon become popular to react the scenes which now disgrace the chapel of Mr. Irving in London.

10th. They tend to disparage the offices and work of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is the exclusive agent in the conversion of the soul. So say the Scriptures; but what are the pre-

vailing impressions among the advocates of new measures? How seldom is the Spirit of God acknowledged! Protracted meetings, revival ministers, and the sinner's own act in making for himself a new heart, are the favourite agencies; these are principally depended upon; these are applauded, and sinners might long attend to the application of these measures, as they are usually employed, without so much as knowing "whether there be any Holy Ghost." But is it credible that where God the Spirit is not acknowledged as all in all, he will effect any of the great and peculiar works of his power? To us it is not credible.

Thus we have briefly and imperfectly characterized modern innovations upon church order, and adverted to their consequences,—consequences already evincing themselves, and in the rapid course of developement. And shall it now be said, where is the utility of this exposure? We reply, the truth must be told; error must be resisted; the cause of Christ is suffering; the cause of revivals is in danger of contempt; and the only hope under God, which is left, is that ministers of the Gospel, who are sentinels on the walls of Zion, and the responsible guardians of the Church of Christ, will, in full view of the impending danger, rise and bear their testimony against the encroachments of indiscreet zeal, and the devices of misjudging innovators.

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ART. IV.—*An apology for conforming to the Protestant Episcopal Church, contained in a series of Letters addressed to the Reverend Benjamin T. Onderdonk, D. D., Bishop of the Diocese of New York.* By Thomas S. Brittan. Second edition, with additions. New York. Swords, Stanford & Co. 12mo. pp. 134. 1833.

THIS is, in every sense of the word, a small affair. We never heard of Mr. Brittan until our attention was very recently drawn to the volume before us. And even now we have no information concerning him but that which he here gives of himself. From this source we learn, that he is a native of England; that he was educated in that country among the "Independents," or "Congregationalists;" that he was trained and regularly set apart to the work of the Gospel ministry in that denomination, in his native land; that he came, a few months before the publication of these "Letters," to the United States in the character of an Independent minister; that on his arrival he was kindly received, and respectfully treated by Presbyterians; that he continued to minister, for a short time, in Presbyterian churches;