

THE SOUTHERN  
PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

VOL. XI.—No. II.

---

JULY, MDCCCLVIII.

---

ARTICLE I.

ALEXANDER VON HUMBOLDT.

*Life of Alexander Von Humboldt, translated from the German of Professor Klencke.* By JULIETTE BAUER. London, 1852.  
*Works of Alexander Von Humboldt.* 1800-1858.

Among the counsellors near the person of Frederic the Great of Prussia, in the latter part of his reign, was the Baron Von Humboldt, an officer of high rank, possessing much of the confidence of his great master. The baroness was of the family of Colomb, which had fled from Burgundy upon the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, to take refuge in Protestant Prussia. The fruits of this union of the Prussian and Huguenot families were two sons, William and Alexander, (born in the years 1767 and 1769,) whose names will long reflect lustre on that noble race which, for conscience sake, left the sunny plains and vine-clad hills of their beloved France to seek new homes in foreign lands. Of Alexander Von Humboldt, his labors, his travels, and his researches, we propose to give a short sketch. Fontenelle, in his celebrated eulogy of Newton, makes little reference to his youth, but passes it by with the sentence: "It

## ARTICLE VII.

## THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF 1858.

The meeting of the highest judicatory of our American Presbyterian Church is worthy of being chronicled in our Theological journals, for the purpose of impressing its lessons more deeply on their readers, and adding haply to the perpetuation of its history.

The Assembly convened in the First Presbyterian Church, (of which the Rev. B. M. Palmer, D. D., is pastor,) in the city of New Orleans, on the 6th of May, 1858, and was opened with a sermon by the Rev. Cortland Van Rensselaer, D. D., the Moderator of the last Assembly. It met under favorable auspices. For months, almost throughout its entire extent, the Church had been visited, if not with the most unexampled, yet with unusual influences of the Divine Spirit, and these seemed in a measure to accompany the delegates as they journeyed on towards the place of their convocation. Wherever they met together in controlling numbers, on the steamboats of the Mississippi and the Alabama, they still engaged in those religious services in which they had been occupied for so many weeks at home,—to their own great enjoyment, and the manifest good of others. It is a pleasant reminiscence, for example, to that band, near a hundred in number, who passed down the Mississippi,—this year, asserting, by its overflowing floods, its right to the name “Father of Waters,”—that they enjoyed on the steamer *City of Memphis*, unusual religious services; that, by an arrangement with the Captain, remunerating him by a payment of \$500 for his loss of time and the increased expenses of his trip, they lay by over the Sabbath at Lake Providence, celebrating the Lord’s Supper with the little Church there, and inviting them to their own worship on board the steamer in the evening. Well might they “record,” as they did, with pro-

found gratitude to Divine Providence, the fact, that their voyage "has been one of unusual interest and agreeableness, and that all its incidents tend to awaken gratitude to God, pleasant memories of their Captain and his adjutants, and the sweetest recollections of one another, and of the delightful fellowship, religious and social, which they had enjoyed."

Great was the surprise of the Committee of Arrangements, who, bent on their hospitable errand, boarded the boat as it came into port at New Orleans, to find no one except the boat-hands on deck, a surprise pleasantly explained, when they found the passengers engaged in their last religious service below. That they came together in a state of mind so religious and tender, may, in part, account for the unusual harmony and enjoyment of so large a body of men, most of whom were strangers to each other.

OPENING SERMON.

The Moderator's sermon, from 2d Cor. 13: 11, "Be of one mind; live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you," and his subject, "Unity, Peace, and Blessedness;" "first unity, then peace, then blessedness," were well suited to heighten these feelings. Deeply touching was his allusion to the dead of the last eventful year:

"Fathers, and Brethren of the General Assembly, I claim your indulgence before closing this discourse, while I appeal, in behalf of unity and peace, in the name of the faithful dead in Jesus Christ, who have gone to sleep since our meeting last year in Lexington. They have done with all the labors, strifes, temptations, cares of earth. They have gone up to 'the General Assembly and Church of the first-born, whose names are written in Heaven.' The venerable form of Father Moody, saint-like and lamb-like, will never more bless his brethren among the springs of Pennsylvania. Auld, of Florida, gifted in mind and heart, and abundant in missionary labors, even to the overburdening of a frail frame; his body shall yet be full of vigor, and his crown wear the evergreen of Heaven. Shannon, of Ohio, earnest in life, was no less earnest to depart and to dwell beside the river that makes glad the city of our

God. Finley, of Alabama, logical, candid, open-hearted, was wasted by disease, until his noble intellect became impaired; but he recovered his reason in the very hour before his final departure, and soared away into fullness of light. Edmunds, of New Jersey, youthfully energetic, with all the clothing of aged humility, went away in the vigor of years into the land where work is no more toil. Dear Daniel Baker, of the Lone Star State, with his tongue of truth and heart of flame, shall no more preach Jesus on earth, either in the new or in the 'blessed old States;' but hundreds of stars shall flash the light of Christ's glory from his crown of rejoicing. Deruelle was struck down by the visitation of God in the woods of North Carolina, like a towering pine riven by a thunder-bolt. Wylie, of Tennessee, was wrapped away from these scenes of darkness in the holy mystery of a sorrowful and unsearchable Providence. Brown, descended from that noble spiritual ancestry of Virginia, which is loftier than the boast of worldly genealogy, has gone to the fellowship of 'the first-born of every creature.'

On Ganges' banks, 'where every prospect pleases, and only man is vile,' behold a company of beloved missionaries awaiting death with meek and undaunted spirit, before the double threatenings of Brahma's vengence, and the false prophet's curse. The serene dignity of the disciples of the Lord in the hour of danger, exacts, as with the authority of their king, forbearance from the wonted personal indignities. The last prayer is offered from submissive and exultant hearts, and, incense-like, it is wafted to heaven, while the dark smoke of murderous musketry palls the dead bodies of Freeman, and Campbell, and McMullin, and Johnson. Blessed followers of the martyred Stephen! Before ye 'fell asleep,' saw ye not 'the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God?'

All these ministers of the Church, with a score of others, not less faithful, who have died during the year, and whose memorials will survive the scrolling up of time, admonish all of us, who remain, of our duty and our doom—of the Divine contingencies, which, in another year, may make as strange se-

lections of death—unexpected always to the living, but, by God's grace, made welcome to the dying.

Fathers and brethren! Know we not, that these departed servants of Christ, could they return to earth, would 'seek peace and pursue it?' Oh! how the visions of heaven nurture unity and love! Soon our own earthly labors will end, and we be laid in the grave, with guarded repose, until the resurrection. For us, pastoral relations, church sessions, presbyteries, synods, and general assemblies, will very soon be no more. In the name of mortals ready to be transfigured into immortality, in the name of the spirits of just men made perfect, in the name of the Mediator of the new covenant, the Lord of all, 'whose blood speaks better things than the blood of Abel,' I beseech you to be united in the truth, and to love one another. 'Be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you.'"

ELECTION OF MODERATOR AND ATTENDANCE.

The Assembly was organized, and proceeded to the election of a Moderator. Dr. William A. Scott, of California, receiving 106 votes; Dr. George Howe, of South Carolina, 58 votes; and Dr. R. L. Stanton, of Ohio, 38 votes. Dr. Scott was declared elected, and, with a few appropriate remarks, entered upon the duties of his office. The Rev. D. X. Junkin, D. D., L. J. Halsey, D. D., and Revs. E. E. Seelye and E. Emerson, were nominated for the office of Temporary Clerk. The vote resulted in the election of Rev. Dr. Junkin to this office.

Two new Synods were reported by the Stated Clerk as having been organized during the year—the Synods of Upper Mississippi and Southern Iowa; and two Presbyteries—the Presbyteries of Highland and of Platte; making the whole number of Synods 33, and of Presbyteries 157. All the Synods were represented in this Assembly, and all the Presbyteries except 23—of these, 5 are in foreign countries, and 3 on the Pacific coast. The representation in the Assembly was general from all parts of the United States, consisting of 149 ministers and 99 elders—248 in all. The number of ministerial delegates was only one less than last year. The elders did not

equal in numbers the eldership of last year by 29 names. Yet, it was especially gratifying that so large a convocation should have assembled at so distant a point, and at a place respecting which there were some wholly unfounded fears as to its insalubrious climate at that season, notwithstanding the abundant testimony to the contrary. To this point, the brethren of the Assembly gathered from all parts of the Union, from New Hampshire, Wisconsin and California, as well as from the nearer Southern States, and it was a matter of interest that they were presided over by the distinguished brother from San Francisco, most of whose life has been spent in frontier cities, who, at home, looks upon Asia across the Pacific, who had travelled more than 5,000 miles to reach the place of meeting, and who was called upon to occupy the Moderator's chair, in the city and church of his former residence and labors,—a source of gratification doubtless to himself, and to the people of his former charge.

#### HONORARY TITLES.

On motion of Dr. R. J. Breckinridge, it was resolved, that no other titles except those of "minister and elder" should be used in the Minutes of this Assembly, a motion which also prevailed in the Assembly of 1854, at the suggestion of the same gentleman. Some discussion was afterwards had as to the question, whether the rule of the House in regard to titles is applicable to persons nominated for Directors of Theological Seminaries; and it seemed to be generally conceded, although no vote was taken, that it was, and that these persons be denuded of their titles on the Minutes of the Assembly.

#### PLACE OF NEXT MEETING.

Rev. Dr. McKinney nominated Pittsburg for the next meeting of the General Assembly; Rev. S. C. Logan, in behalf of the Seventh Presbyterian Church, of Cincinnati, nominated the latter city. Rev. David Stevenson nominated the Third Church, of Indianapolis; Rev. Dr. McIlvaine nominated Rochester, N. Y. An animated and good humored discussion arose between the advocates of these several cities, exhibiting

considerable skill and agility in "parry and thrust," on the part of these several gentlemen. Pittsburg was a great city, the seat of Presbyterianism of old time, by the side of an important Theological School, and if it was "smoky," as alleged, the smoke was a sign of superior enterprise and industry, and showed it to be the very place for the meeting of a working church, and was eminently healthy. Cincinnati was a greater city, the queen city of the West, exceedingly central, accessible by multitudinous railroads, able to accommodate, and free from smoke. The advocate for Indianapolis contended, that this city was still more free from smoke, was far more central even than Cincinnati, that railroads from every place centered there, that it was a beautiful little city and of great hospitality, that the members of the Assembly could be accommodated near the church, that this venerable body had already sat twice in Cincinnati, and that it would greatly advance the cause of Presbyterianism if it should next hold its sessions there. This brief tournament was soon finished, and whether from the ability and valor of the last combatant, or for the weightier reason that its meeting might now be justly claimed by that region of the Church, the Assembly resolved to hold its next annual sessions at Indianapolis—the vote being for Indianapolis, 142; for Cincinnati, 24; for Rochester, 22; for Pittsburg, 21.

#### FUND FOR DISABLED MINISTERS.

The Report of the Trustees, as to the "Fund for Disabled Ministers in need, and the needy Widows and Orphans of deceased Ministers," was referred to the Committee on Systematic Benevolence. The Report states, that from May 1, 1857, to May 1, 1858, relief had been granted to 8 ministers, 20 widows, and two families of orphans. The disbursements have been \$2,750, being rather more than \$90 to each person. Though many churches neglect giving to this charity, the receipts have been as large as in former years. At a subsequent period the following resolutions were presented by Dr. Junkin, Chairman of the Committee on Systematic Benevolence, and unanimously adopted: 1. "Resolved, That this General Assembly most earnestly requests the Presbyteries and

Church Sessions to see to it, that in every church a collection be made, every year, for this fund, and forwarded to the Treasurer of the General Assembly, at Philadelphia. 2. Resolved, That every minister in our connection be requested to present this cause to his charge at least once a year, and ask for the gifts of the people in aid of the fund."

This is a charity which ought to receive more largely than it has yet done, the bounties of the Church. Some Synods may have organizations of their own, for the relief of disabled ministers, or the widows and orphans of those who have fallen in the service of Christ. There are few persons who more truly deserve the kindness of the people of God, than he who has worn out his life in the work of preaching the Gospel upon a scanty pittance, and is left in sickness or age without any pecuniary resource. And the change which comes over the widow of a clergyman when he is removed, is often extremely sad. She moves away from the conspicuous place in the social circle which she has occupied, and gives room to another, going often into the deepest and most poverty-stricken retirement, without bread for her children, or clothing and sustenance for herself. If the State pensions its soldiers who have worn themselves out in her service, an equal obligation lies upon the Church. It is required by Him, who is the widow's God and Judge, and the Father of the fatherless.

#### BOARDS OF THE CHURCH.

An order of the day was made for the several Boards, and they were limited to two hours each, for their own advocacy of the interests committed to their supervision.

#### BOARD OF DOMESTIC MISSIONS.

Dr. Musgrave, the Secretary of the Board, gave the House the following brief summary of its action during the past year. "Notwithstanding," he said, "the extraordinary commercial and financial revulsion which had overtaken the country, producing, for a time, an almost total suspension of business of every kind, and bringing bankruptcy to thousands, the Board have been able to prosecute the work entrusted to them with

ordinary success. Indeed, no sooner had the general gloom begun to disperse, than the contributions to their treasury largely increased. In the month of February the receipts exceeded those of the corresponding period of the previous year by \$5,000. The Board have increased the number of missionaries by 20—making the total number now employed by them 610. The appropriations for the past year are slightly in advance of those made during the one preceding it, owing to the enlarged field of operation occupied. The total receipts for the year are, \$105,277 52; the entire disbursements for the same period are, \$104,153 67. The receipts of the Board are considerably above the record of any previous year, and this increase is not the result of individual bequests so much as of the contributions of the various churches. The excess of income the past year over any preceding one, is above \$8,000. An average reduction of \$3 had been made in the appropriation usually made to each missionary, in view of the embarrassments of business; but the churches, in which they had labored, increased the amount which they contributed to their salary, so that the salaries actually received by those engaged in missionary labor averaged \$500.

The reports from the Missionary churches indicate the most extraordinary success. There is a sensible manifestation of the influence of the Holy Spirit in a revival of the Church, and an awakening of the people in all parts of the missionary field. Although the fruits are not reported to this Assembly, it can be confidently stated, that such an extensive interest in the subject of religion has never been witnessed."

Dr. D. McKinney, on the part of the Committee on Domestic Missions, presented to the Assembly the following resolutions in relation to the above mentioned report:

1. *Resolved*, That the deepest gratitude of this Assembly is due to Almighty God for his goodness, that during a year of great financial embarrassment, he has disposed and enabled his people to supply the wants of this Board, making the annual period to close happily with an increase in funds and of laborers.

2. *Resolved*, That the Assembly rejoice in the increase of

contributing churches; and now cherish the hope that, by due effort, all may ultimately be induced to do their part in the work.

3. *Resolved*, That the Assembly give devout and hearty thanks to God, for the outpouring of his Spirit upon our Missionary churches, in common with the other portions of his beloved Zion.

4. *Resolved*, That while the Board have prudently made their appropriations, still the want of funds is such, and the demands so great and numerous, that there is a large amount of work which can scarcely be attempted, and that the Assembly regrets that a large portion of funds should still be absorbed by unproductive churches. Some that remain feeble from year to year, it is well known, are like hives, which send forth their annual swarms. But all are not such. Presbyteries should look into this and cease to recommend, or should unite two or more churches in one charge, thus husbanding both men and means for labor in productive regions.

5. *Resolved*, That the magnitude of the cause, the adaptation of the Presbyterian Church to useful labors in every part of the country, and the call for laborers increasing with the country's increase, demand of the Assembly vastly increased efforts to enlarge the funds and to multiply the laborers. The field is the world, but the part of the field specially entrusted to this Church's care, comprises the States and Territories where God has given her a being.

6. *Resolved*, That in view of the happy working and bright prospects of the scheme of systematic benevolence, the Assembly suggest to the Board the propriety of considering the question whether the services of an Associate Secretary might not be dispensed with, and the amount of the salary of the office be saved.

7. *Resolved*, That the Assembly is pleased with the effort of the Board to increase the number of itinerating laborers, believing that the system may be extended to the great advantage of sparsely settled districts.

8. *Resolved*, That the failure, on the part of nearly one-third of the missionaries, to send in a special report of their labors

for the use of the Assembly, is to be deeply regretted; and that in cases where such failure is the result of negligence, the Missionary has shown himself unworthy, and should not be re-appointed."

Dr. McKinney introduced his resolutions with some pertinent remarks: "So far," said he, "as we are successful in filling the whole land with ministers devoted to their work, will this nation and the world be blessed. The Missionary brethren who sow seed in our new settlements, give their future character to States."

The first, second and third resolutions were adopted without debate. The fourth resolution gave rise to some discussion.

Dr. Breckinridge moved to strike out the words which urge Presbyteries to cease to recommend unproductive churches, and to unite two or more churches under one pastor. He contended that they were virtually a discrimination against weak churches in the old States, which were poor by making many rich. "They were kept poor by the stream of valuable members they have all the while been sending out to new countries to form new churches." "There are two modes," said he, "of disposing of old and feeble people;—one is, that of Christianity, to provide for, and take care of them; the other, that of Paganism, to give them a gourd of water and some parched corn, and send them away to die. His experience taught him, that the hardest thing on earth to kill is a Presbyterian Church. He would cherish every one of our churches as long as there was one brick upon another, or one old woman to go there to worship God." Dr. Musgrave denied that the Board ever recommended the casting off churches because they are feeble. The point they had brought before the Assembly is, that there are many churches receiving aid that could do without it, and others receiving more than is necessary; that Presbyterian recommendations for aid are often inconsiderately and carelessly made, in many instances, private letters of members accompanying the recommendation, intimating to the Board the true state of facts. The Board were aiming to do a great aggressive work, but how could this be done when the old churches were absorbing so large a portion of the funds?

It is an injury to churches to help them when they could help themselves. It enervates them, and deprives them of true independence. Dr. McKinney mentioned the further fact, that when the Presbyteries appropriate funds where they are unproductive, it checks the liberality of our people.

There is force in these remarks. It may be *difficult* to destroy a Presbyterian Church, but it is not impossible that, in this changing and migrating country, Presbyterianism should die out in localities where it once existed, being in fact transferred by the migration of the chief part of the flock to the newer portions of our country. There are places in these older States where there was once a Presbyterian Church, and where it has long since disappeared, and others, where the house of worship yet stands, but the white congregation has removed. Our Presbyterian youth are often drawn away into other folds, and they should be followed in their migrations by the institutions of the Gospel, or they will be lost to the Presbyterian name, and, perhaps, to the Church of God. Our Board of Domestic Missions, while keeping its eye on the feeble churches of the old States, has its chief work to do in the new. It is right that their labors should be scrutinized, and not be allowed to fall into any unaccommodating routine. New and better modes of accomplishing the wants of the Church will often be suggested to them from without, but in their constant attention to this important subject, they are gaining a practical wisdom, in which we may well confide.

An overture from the Synods of Mississippi and Texas, for the establishment of a local committee of the Board of Missions at New Orleans, similar to that at Louisville, was taken up and discussed on the last day of the session. In reference to this, Dr. Palmer, who advocated the overture in behalf of the two Synods, "desired to make two preliminary remarks: 1st, That the measure now proposed did not originate in any feeling of dissatisfaction, or any want of confidence in the integrity and usefulness of the Board of Domestic Missions; 2d, That the friends of the measure have no desire to take what is termed a snap judgment, but that they are perfectly willing to refer it to the next General Assembly.

He supposed that the Presbyterian Church was entirely united in the principles upon which her operations are conducted; but that it might be necessary from time to time to review her policy, and improve her method of applying those principles.

He would lay down the proposition, that the Church should come as near as possible to the particular field she desires to overtake and evangelize. It was but lately that the Allegheny range frowned upon the Atlantic, and was the boundary beyond which we scarce looked. But yesterday, as it were, the Rocky Mountains were the *nil ultra* of all enterprise, and seemed the eternal limit to further progress; when suddenly, from causes which no human forecast would have conjectured, and which he need not now recite, by one tremendous bound we planted our feet upon the farthest verge of our continent, and California was added to the galaxy of States. The American Eagle dipping one wing in the Pacific, and the other wing in the Atlantic, now soars supreme over the whole continent.

Our preacher of the Centenary Sermon, (Dr. Van Rensselaer,) had alluded to the time when the Alleghenies formed the dark barrier, beyond which our religion and our civilization had not ventured. But that day is long since past. The Rocky Mountains even do not bound the field of our enterprise. 'The whole boundless continent is ours.' The Church should come as near as possible to the field of her operation.

In the Apostolic age, the great work of the Church was about its very cradle. Soon the mission of St. Paul to the Gentiles had its centre in Antioch. In the third part of the first century, the Patriarch Apostle John established his seat at Ephesus, where he could oversee the young plantations of the Church; and it is needless to recite how soon the city of Rome and the city of Constantinople were made similar centres.

Mr. Moderator, continued the speaker, I ask you to look at the city of New Orleans, in reference to its relations to the whole region of the great Gulf of Mexico. Who can tell how soon (by some of the operations of natural causes, or by the

irresistible current of events), the whole of that Gulf and its surroundings shall be ours? Look at the relations of New Orleans to Texas, that vast commonwealth, out of which five new States will soon be formed. Look at its relations to that country which of late has occupied the attention of so many of our citizens—Central America. Sir, we may regard the Mississippi as a vast speaking trumpet, and New Orleans its mouth-piece, where the least whisper is propagated to the farthest regions watered by it, in tones that reverberate to every part of our continent. Then think how important is this position for aggressive movements. Feeble as our Church is in this place, and burdened as we are with labors, we are willing to assume still heavier burdens, if it may advance the cause of our beloved Master and His blood-bought Church. I but throw out these suggestions, and will not enlarge upon them.

I wonder at the sagacity of the early traders—at the unerring instinct with which they seem to have been guided in the location of settlements, which afterward expanded into such cities as Pittsburg, St. Louis in the far West, and New Orleans. When Bienville selected the site of this city, he would seem to have been guided by such a prophetic instinct, that were he permitted to rise and appear among us this day, he would not even be surprised.

We ask the General Assembly to take possession of this city, to plant their banner, and to make it one of the grand centres of their operations, as it is already one of the greatest centres of commercial, social, and (we will hope) of Christian influence.

The Church of Jesus Christ is one. She undertakes, as a unit, to spread the Gospel all over the world, and preach it to every creature. That, I take it to be her great, her imperative duty, and her unchangeable purpose. If that be the doctrine, I desire, here and now, to say, that if the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church intends to occupy this particular ground to accomplish this work, she must, in some important particulars, change or modify her plans.

In all our Domestic Missionary fields there is a growing tendency to work outside, and if this Board does not modify its plans, it will be left behind, or will become merely a local

Board. In the Synod of Mississippi, for example," he continued, "nearly \$9,500 are reported in the minutes as having been contributed to the cause of Domestic Missions during the year 1857. But, according to the Report of the Board, only about \$1,900, less than \$2,000, passed through its treasury.

At this moment the Synod of Mississippi employs Dr. James Smith, at a salary of \$2,000—which alone is more than all they are credited for as having contributed to Domestic Missions. Very lately, in response to an appeal in this city, they gave at one time to this Board \$500. A few days later we were obliged, in a sudden emergency, to raise \$500 more, and it was done.

The discrepancy between the sum total raised for Domestic Missions, and our contributions as reported by the Board, is no evidence of disloyalty to the Board, but shows that our own local necessities are the most urgent. If the Board is unable to act more for this region, we shall be compelled to look, first, to God—and secondly, to ourselves.

It may, by some, be thought that this measure will prove an entering wedge to wide-spread change; but it is not so. Grant that a committee is established here, and another in St. Louis, and others at other points. The unity of the Church's operations will be strengthened rather than impaired, if they be made subordinate to the parent Board; and by the establishment of these various agencies, we shall concentrate energies upon those points which could never otherwise be called in action.

Mr. Moderator, I thank God that I was born in the Presbyterian Church! I rejoice that there is a Church which is equal to the wants of the age—an age for large plans and great purposes; an age when there is no time to sit down, fold our hands, and let red tape rule. To Christ the Lord is given the heathen for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession. It is His kingdom, and we must gird up our loins, arm for the fight, and go forth to win it to the Saviour.

As I have listened to the lofty and noble utterances of my brethren upon this platform, urging the Church forward in her

great work, I have burned to speak the emotions that filled my soul. When, too, the accounts were given of the tremendous struggle which has convulsed India, I thrilled to think that this is but the revival of a contest that was begun at least five centuries before Christ was born. In all the historic ages the Occident and Orient have been in deadly strife for the dominion of the world—the powers of darkness opposed to those of light—hoary prejudice and apathy to human development on the one hand, and the love of man and human progress on the other—a contact between two civilizations. In such a contact the Church alone can mediate.

I believe the Church is panting for union, in spite of all the forebodings and the warnings which our fathers have given in this Assembly. I am glad that I am young. I hope to live to see the day when prejudices will be thrown aside—when all the branches of the Presbyterian Church finally will come together, striving for the same objects, and fired with the same hopes, and form one united family. I hope to see the day when I shall be permitted to sit down in the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the World! I hope to see her yet perfect in her unity and perfect in all her parts.

I desire that all the policy of the Church shall be maturely considered and discussed in the public prints, and let the next General Assembly decide. I would strengthen the hands of our Secretary, not weaken them.

I move to refer the whole matter to the next General Assembly.”

To this speech of Dr. Palmer, Dr. Musgrave, Secretary of the Board, made an elaborate and able reply.

He was opposed to the proposition, as one tending to increase the expense of conducting the mission-work of the Church; as complicating its machinery, and preventing the possibility of a knowledge of its entire fiscal operations. The Presbytery was the centre of influence established in the field to be occupied; it brought the Church in contact with the people to be affected by its operations, and had this business entirely under its control.

He gave some statistics, showing that work was done outside

the Board, even in the old Synods of Philadelphia, Baltimore and New Jersey. This proves that a local committee does not influence the matter one way or another. The multiplication of such committees increases expense; introduces confusion; divides responsibility. It was unjust to hold the Board responsible for engagements made by these committees. Besides, the tendency was to converge to the centre instead of to radiate to the circumference, as facts within the knowledge of the speaker would show.

He feared that the establishment of branches of the Boards of the Church, in different sections of the country, would tend to sectionalize it. It was now eminently conservative, and its nationality was mainly due to its centralization through the Boards of the Church.

When all the neighboring and the distant regions shall be ours, it is impossible to conjecture what they may do. With the vast and rapid growth of our nation, Washington is still the Capitol, and is long likely to remain so. The principle involved in that fact applies to the functions and the prospects of the Board.

He thought the measure proposed has truly been tried in New Orleans and failed—having resulted in embarrassments from which the aid, even of the Board itself, was invoked to extricate them. The brethren at Louisville are willing to give up their committee, after a trial of twelve years; and why should our brethren here wish to try an experiment which has already failed. It seems not to have been well considered. It has often happened, that men have failed to foresee the fruit of the seeds which they have planted. You may push the matter farther than you intend or wish. Finding it possible to get along without the parent Board, we may progress to the point of making many new Assemblies, and end with destroying the unity of the Church.

Dr. Baird offered an amendment, which was accepted by Dr. Musgrave, and is as follows:

*Resolved*, That the Board of Domestic Missions be requested to consider the whole subject brought before this body by this overture, and report to the next Assembly whether, in their

judgment, the appointment of a Committee of Missions in New Orleans would be wise and expedient.

The glowing description of the future of our country, and of the Presbyterian Church, presented by Dr. Palmer, will seem visionary to all who look forward to the speedy dissolution of our Republic, but those who believe in its future integrity and continued prosperity, will hardly deem it extravagant. Until the annexation of Texas, in 1845, New Orleans was the frontier city of these United States in the South-west. Its Protestantism dates backward hardly 40 years. It greatly needs to be strengthened yet. But there were men in this Assembly who confessed that the facts of our present history would have seemed as marvellous to them when they first went forth to preach the Gospel, as these anticipations of the future. The day will yet come when New Orleans will be a centre of religious influence to a wide region of country. Whether she is now prepared for this Committee of Missions the South-western Synods seek, will make itself appear, as the public mind of the Church shall be turned towards this matter during the year to come.

#### BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.

Rev. Dr. Stanton, Chairman of the Committee, to which was referred the Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions, read his report, from which it appears, that the receipts of the Board of Foreign Missions from all sources the past year, (including a special contribution to repair the losses of property in India,) have been \$223,977 79.

The expenditures have been \$207,057 50, (the sum specially donated for India, \$18,112 57, being reserved,) leaving a balance against the Board of \$1,186 29.

Thirty Missionary laborers have been sent out during the year; twelve of these were returned missionaries; and ten others are now waiting an opportunity to embark for the fields to which they have been respectively designated.

Under the direction of the Board, there are nine missions among the American Indians; one to the Jews, and one to the Chinese in California, within the limits of the United States.

There are two in South America; two in Western Africa; one in Siam; three in China; two in India, embracing fifteen stations, and extending over a region of country of more than a thousand miles; besides which, pecuniary aid has been extended to the evangelical societies of Belgium, Paris, Geneva and the Waldensian Synod.

Connected with the various missions there are 170 Missionary laborers from this country; 54 native helpers; 50 principal stations and out-stations; 22 organized churches, and nearly 5,000 native youth under Christian schools connected with these missions.

The sad disaster at Futtelgurh, India, cut short, under the most painful circumstances of suffering from the hands of the Sepoys, the lives of eight missionaries and two of their children; others have died on the Missionary field; a loss of a large amount of property has been sustained in India, and the mission-work in China has been partially suspended, but still the work of Foreign Missions has shown manifest progress since the last meeting of the General Assembly; and when in the greatest straits, the Board has found relief in the generous contributions of the Church.

His report concluded by the recommendation for adoption, by the Assembly, of the following resolutions:

*Resolved*, That we are called upon as a Church, through this supreme judicatory thereof, to record our special thanksgivings to God for the favor which he has shown us in this department of the labor which His providence and grace has committed to our hands: First, In that, in the midst of an unparalleled monetary disaster, the receipts of our Foreign Board have been larger than in any former year, and this without any agency beyond the regular action of the inferior judicatories of the Church and the spontaneous offerings of the people. Second, In that, while his hand has been laid heavily upon us, in the melancholy death of our beloved brethren in India, the same has been stretched out for the deliverance of the great body of our Missionaries and their families. And third, In that, the salutary effect upon the people at large of the death of those who have fallen victims to Mohammedan and Pagan cruelties, in awakening the Church to deeper humiliation and more earnest prayer for Zion's increase, has so signally illustrated a

proverb of primitive times, that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church."

2. *Resolved*, That while we are encouraged by the continued liberality of the people in their contributions to foreign missions, we feel called upon to admonish the churches to make even greater sacrifices in this regard, in view of the important considerations presented in the Annual Report of the Board.

1. That they may repair the great losses sustained in the destruction of the mission property in India, amounting in the aggregate to \$150,000, only \$25,000 of which have been refunded by an assessment of the British Government upon the city of Lodianna, under circumstances which do not apply to any other case. And 2d. That the Board may promptly enter—to use their own language—"the new field for Missionary enterprise in portions of the earth heretofore inaccessible," and that they may ensure "the prospective enlargement of the Missionary area in those which have been heretofore but partially occupied;" and, therefore, we earnestly recommend to all inferior judicatories to take such action as shall bring forth for this cause the united, systematic and generous charities of the Church, until all the tithes shall be brought into the storehouse, and every member of Christ's body shall faithfully exemplify that grace of the Spirit exhibited in free-will offerings to the Lord's Treasury.

3. *Resolved*, That we highly approve of the action of the Board in giving the "Foreign Missionary" gratuitous circulation in all our Sabbath Schools which make contributions to the Board; and that all Church Sessions be and they are hereby recommended to aid in this noble work, that the children of the entire Church may early become interested in the foreign Missionary cause and be trained in the duties of an active Christian charity.

4. *Resolved*, That the great loss of property sustained by our Board in the Sepoy revolt, is no discouragement to our future work in India, and that it is the manifest duty of the Church at once to repair these desolations; and, with this view, while as a general rule we should rely upon regular and steady rather than special contributions to all our Boards, the General Assembly, under the peculiar circumstances of the present case, earnestly urge upon the churches, and in particular upon individuals whom God has blessed with wealth, contributions to a special fund which the Board is endeavoring to raise for this purpose, now amounting to over \$18,000, which contributions, however, should in no case interfere with the regular collections for the ordinary and progressive operations of the Missionary work.

5. *Resolved*, That the report of the Board be approved and recommended to the Executive Committee for publication.

The venerable Secretary, Hon. Walter Lowrie, then addressed the House, in a speech which exhibited most lucidly the operations of the Board, and drew tears from the eyes of all who heard him. We would be glad to lay before our readers that portion of his speech which gives an outline of the different Missionary fields, but must content ourselves with his closing words.

“Some are of opinion that we are doing too much for Foreign Missions. Let the following facts be considered,” says Mr. Lowrie, “in answer to such objections.

1. On the minutes of the General Assembly, the aggregate collections of the Church is made in eight different columns. Add these eight items together and see what proportion that of Foreign Missions bears to the whole; the sum for Foreign Missions is less than four per cent.—in other words, out of every hundred dollars raised by the Church, ninety-six dollars are expended for the work at home, and four dollars for the work of Foreign Missions!

2. Take another view. The entire receipts of the Board from the churches, is less by twenty thousand dollars, than they would have been, if each communicant had contributed one cent a week. This cause also receives many donations from benevolent individuals who are not Church members.

Take a third view of this subject.

During an entire year there were 940 churches, with 55,603 communicants, under the care of 437 pastors or stated supplies, who did not contribute to this cause one cent!

There were 526 vacant churches, with 16,128 communicants, doing nothing for a whole year.

There were 126 vacant churches, with 8,157 communicants, who made contributions.

Thus we see that 1,466 churches, with 71,731 communicants, among whom are laboring 437 pastors or stated supplies, doing nothing for the entire year.

In view of such an exhibition as these statements present, I

feel much at a loss what to say. I did not come to this Assembly to exhort the members to do their duty. But placed, as by God's providence I have been, in the position I now occupy—and God knows it was without my seeking—it is my duty to spread these statements before you. To me it does appear, that nothing on this side of eternity can be more solemn than is the subject here presented. Millions in the heathen world going down to death, without having ever heard the name of Jesus Christ on the one hand, and on the other hand, 71,000 professing Christians, with 437 ministers of the Gospel laboring among them, and yet not lifting a finger to tell these perishing millions of Gethsemane and Calvary, and of that Saviour who groaned and died there to save His people from their sins.

Perhaps I ought to close; but I cannot well pass by without noticing the terrible overturnings of the last year.

1. The destruction of mission property, and the private property of our Missionary brethren—schools, libraries, apparatus, churches, dwellings—all destroyed.

2. The death and sufferings of the native Christians.

3. The sufferings of our brethren confined in the forts of Allahabad and Agra, but who were most mercifully delivered.

4. The death of our dear brethren and sisters after leaving Futtehgurh. On this point I can scarcely trust myself to say anything. Ten years ago, the mysterious, but doubtless wise providence of God, permitted a Missionary, beloved by the whole Church, and most dear to me, to be murdered by men of violence and blood. That wound has never ceased to bleed. But when the sad intelligence was confirmed of the death of these beloved Missionaries and their wives, and two infant children, the intensity of that wound was increased many fold. I knew those brethren and sisters before they went out, some of them intimately, and we highly esteemed and loved them all. The martyrdom on the China Sea, and the martyrdom at Cawnpore, almost seem to me to have occurred about the same time, although in reality there were ten long years between them. But the same calmness in the immediate view of death

marked them all. The one casting back his Bible, which he was then reading, into the boat, and when thrown into the sea, turning and swimming towards the boat, till sternly repelled by the iron spears of his murderers, then calmly sinking into the arms of death; the others saying to each other, 'our last day has come,' engaging in prayer, and calmly permitting themselves to be bound, husband and wife together. Mr. Campbell, while thus bound, carrying one of his children, while one of the company carried the other; their care that the native Christians should escape,—and even in these trying times, the ladies sending their good wishes to other native Christians not present,—altogether presents a scene of moral grandeur which the angels must have admired. He spoke of incidents of recent martyrdom in India. A native Missionary tied to the mouth of a cannon, and cut to pieces with swords, after the gun had twice missed fire. A mother and her babe left to die and remain two days unburied, at last flung into a stream by men of the lowest caste. He told of the personal loveliness of four ladies who were victims; of four men who are not excelled by the greatness or the excellence of any four brothers in this Assembly. When taken, they threw away all weapons, offering no resistance. Mr. Mc Lain, an Indian planter, offered \$150,000 for their ransom, and used all other possible means to save them; but the cry was, 'We want not money, but blood!' Husband and wife were tied arm to arm, and carrying their infants, they were marched to the place of butchery, and received the crown of martyrdom. Their passage through the dark valley was short. For them we need not weep; they have joined that blessed and glorious circle around the throne, where 'a great company, which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stand before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palms in their hands.' We know little of what is passing in heaven, nothing, indeed, but what God's word teaches us, but I have thought it not unlikely, that the Missionary martyr of 1847 hastened to the verge of heaven to meet and welcome the Missionary martyrs of 1858. However this may be, we know they have entered into their rest, that

God himself has wiped away their tears, and that the days of their mourning are ended."

Deeply touching were these words of our honored Secretary; and especially the allusion to the fate of his own martyred son, whose bones lie rolling under the China Sea, where he fell by the hand of pirates. The interest was again renewed by Mr. Painter, the nephew of Mrs. Freeman, one of the martyrs of Futtehgurh, and by Rev. Mr. Hay, of Allahabad, who had been in the midst of the rebellion, had witnessed many of its horrors, and who, with his family, had narrowly escaped a cruel death. He spoke "of the wonderful fortitude of the native Christians. They were placed in the stocks to die by inches. They were told that they would be mutilated in their ears, their noses, their chins, and their lips, if they did not deny Christ. All this, too, while they knew not that a European Christian remained in all that land; but not one of them renounced his faith, or denied the Lord that bought him; while many Europeans did, and even derided these poor natives as fools for not yielding. Here is proof of the spirit of Christ to which we can point ever more. It is hard to die—harder still to be mutilated. It is a terrible extremity, and multitudes preserved their lives by pronouncing the words, 'There is no God but God, and Mahommed is his prophet.'" Dr. Hewitt said, "The wail that is heard from India shall be turned into a hallelujah!" He quoted Heb. 11: 35-38, in application to our Missionary brethren of India, and their flocks. "Others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy): they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." "Could I behold a son of mine," said he, "gone to glory, in such white robes as were given to every one of them, how would my hallelujahs arise!" These reports convey but a faint impression of the deep emotion of all who in that large church were permitted to hear the voices of the several speakers.

BOARD OF EDUCATION—CALL TO THE MINISTRY.

The following is an abstract of the report, as presented by the Rev. Dr. Van Rensselaer, Secretary of the Board.

1. *Of Ministerial Education—Candidates.*—The number of new candidates received, 103—making in all, from the beginning, (1819,) 2,630. Whole number on the roll during this year, 385. In their theological course, 122; collegiate, 178; academical, 83; stage of study not reported, 6; teaching, or otherwise absent, 6; total, 385.

The aggregate number of candidates this year is two greater than last year; the number of new candidates is eleven more than were received last year—an increase that is encouraging, chiefly from the fact that there is no decrease.

*State of the Treasury.*—The accounts closed on the 18th of April, which is about two weeks earlier than usual:

1. *Candidates' Fund.*—Receipts, \$47,103 07; balance of last year, \$2,370 29; total, \$49,473 36. Payments, \$43,432 35; balance remaining, \$6,041 01.

2. *School Fund.*—Receipts, \$5,507 29; balance, \$36 96; total, \$5,544 25. Payments, \$5,458 20; balance remaining, \$86 05.

3. *Miscellaneous Fund.*—Balance, \$3 76.

4. *African Fund.*—Receipts, \$83 24; balance, \$1,387 45; total, \$1,470 69. Payments, \$90 00; balance on hand, \$1,380 69.

Total receipts for the year, \$52,693 60; total income, \$56,492 06; total payments, \$48,980 55; total balances, exclusive of the permanent African Fund, \$6,511 52.

From this statement it will be perceived, that the Treasury of the Board has been in a highly prosperous condition. In no year has so large an amount been contributed by the churches to the education of candidates for the ministry.

*Causes of Anxiety to Young Men and Candidates.*—As the present time, in the Providence of God, invites many young men to turn their attention to this subject, its candid and sober discussion may result in good. The following are the topics discussed, under this head, in the Annual Report:

1. The want of sufficient piety. 2. The want of sufficient evidences of a Divine call to the work of the ministry. 3. The want of pecuniary means. 4. Advanced age, beyond the usual period. 5. Ill health. 6. Defectiveness of early education. 7. A profession in life already selected, and entered upon. 8. The scanty salaries of ministers. 9. The opposition of relatives and friends. 10. The want of natural ability. 11. Obscure birth in a low condition of life. 12. The ministry is too vast a profession.

These various topics are discussed with the purpose of removing the objections and anxieties of candid and inquiring minds. Throughout the whole discussion the Board not only assume but lay stress upon the following propositions: 1. The individual possesses, in other respects, the qualifications requisite for making a useful minister. 2. The Holy Spirit can alone give a call to the work. 3. The standard of mental and moral requirements, prevalent in the Presbyterian Church, is not intended to be lowered by the arguments and incidents herein stated, but, on the contrary, the age demands higher qualifications than any preceding one.

*2. General Christian Education—Primary or Parochial Schools.*—The number of Parochial Schools, as nearly as can be ascertained, is about one hundred. Of these, thirty-two have been aided, during the year, by the funds of the Board. Six of these schools report considerable religious interest among the pupils.

*Presbyterial Academies.*—The number of Academies under the care of Presbyteries is *sixty*. An unusual religious interest has existed in several of these institutions.

*Ashman Institute.*—This institution, under the care of the Newcastle Presbytery, and designed for the education of young men of color, is in a hopeful condition. Four of the students expect to go as Missionaries to Africa.

*Colleges.*—The number of Presbyterian Colleges, under ecclesiastical supervision, or controlled by ministers and members of the Presbyterian Church, is twenty-four. Revivals of religion have been reported in Davidson College, N. C.; Oglethorpe University, Ga.; Hanover College, Ind.; Washington

College, Pa.; Jefferson College, Pa.; and the College of New Jersey, at Princeton, N. J.

Dr. Van Rensselaer said: He felt that the spirit of the Assembly is rising higher and higher. He was happy that this Board came before this body under circumstances so favorable. The Board of Education has reason to sympathize with what was said yesterday of our Foreign Missionary labors and sacrifices. One of those martyr Missionaries was once connected with this Board of Education, and we mourn the sad stroke which has taken him away. He spoke of the encouragements of the past year. Notwithstanding the great pecuniary crisis, contributions came in generously, and when churches could not take up their annual collections, individuals sent on their contributions voluntarily.

Rev. Mr. Rockwell, Chairman of the Committee on the Board of Education, presented the following resolutions, which were adopted:

1. *Resolved*, That the Assembly record their profound gratitude to God for the attendant tokens of the Divine blessing which have followed the efforts of the Board of Education to introduce young men into the ministry, and to aid in the religious instruction of our children and youth, as seen in the unflinching attachment of our churches to the cause, manifested even during a period of commercial disaster, in the number who have already been assisted to enter the Gospel ministry, the enlarged number of institutions for Christian education, and for the special influences of the Spirit of God, which have been poured out upon many of the Colleges and Schools under the care of this Assembly, or in connection with Synods and Presbyteries of our Church.

2. *Resolved*, That the field which now lies before our beloved Church, demanding, as it does, a vast increase of ministers of the Word, calls for earnest prayer to the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest, and that the Assembly, while they trust that the cause will daily be remembered by the people of God, recommend the last Thursday of February as a day of special, united prayer, for the outpouring of the Spirit upon our Colleges and Seminaries of learning.

3. *Resolved*, That the present gratifying condition of the Treasury of the Board encourages this Assembly to believe, that the churches are impressed with a sense of the duty of providing for the liberal support and maintenance of indigent

young men, desirous of entering the Gospel ministry, and authorizes a renewed invitation to enter upon the studies necessary to fit them for the duties of such office, with the confident assurance of being sustained by the churches through the Board.

4. *Resolved*, That in view of the great work which Christ has laid upon the Church, to preach the Gospel to every creature, it be earnestly impressed upon pastors to set before youth of piety and promise, the question of their responsibilities in this matter, and to endeavor so to direct and assist them, as that there shall be an increase of candidates for the Gospel ministry, in some measure proportioned to the growing demands of the Church and the world.

The Rev. Wm. J. Hoge followed in an earnest and impressive address, on the importance of parents dedicating their children to God for the ministry, and also in reference to what constitutes a call to the ministry. He rejoiced to be able to lift his voice, for the first time, in this Assembly, in behalf of this Board. We all felt that more men were needed. How shall they be had? As individuals we may all do something towards finding them, and as a General Assembly we may do much. It is amazing that any Christian parent should do otherwise than desire to have a beloved child become an ambassador of Christ. Ministers are representatives of the Almighty God and our glorious Saviour. He enlarged upon the excellence of the office of the ministry. He urged ministers and others not to think too much of their privations, but to esteem it a privilege to make themselves and their children living sacrifices on the altar of Christ's service. We ought to urge men every where to consider this subject. Many young men were prevented from entering the ministry by false and mystical notions of a call to the ministry. Dr. Alexander had said, that no young man should enter the ministry unless he could *prove* that he *ought* to do so. Again it had been said, that every converted young man should enter the ministry, unless he could show good reason why he should *not* preach the Gospel. Both of these formulas were true, as, if time would permit, he could show. Between them both one could satisfactorily ascertain his personal duty. He urged these views earnestly on the attention of pastors and young men.

Mr. Caruthers offered an amendment to the resolutions presented by the Committee, making the last Thursday of February the day for prayer for the children at home, as well as the young men at the Seminaries and Colleges.

Mr. Lowrie offered a substitute for the amendment, when

The Rev. Lewis W. Green, D. D., took the floor, and presented a brief and stirring appeal. He said, a mightier and a nobler era than has ever yet been known, is dawning on our land. There is always an outward preparation for such events. God throws wide open the brazen gates of opposition, before the outpourings of his Spirit. The Westminster Review had said that the old spirit of Protestantism was gone—that it was dead, and nothing now remained but its corpse, lying in regal state, and awaiting its sepulture. Before the ink was dry with which the foul slander was penned, it was refuted, not by power or by might, but by the Spirit of the Lord.

He remembered listening, as to the visionary fancy of a waning intellect, to the late venerable Dr. Alexander, at Princeton, when he said China must be girdled with missions—it must be beleaguered on every side—we must be in readiness to go in suddenly and take possession of that land in the name of Christ. I thought it folly; it was prophecy. Truly the wrath of man is made to praise him. The opium trade, an unholy war, and the massacres of Missionaries, mark new eras to the Church; and we believe this great outpouring of the Spirit is to prepare young men for the work. Our present generation of ministers is rapidly passing away. But God can and does—not only open the way for the Gospel—he also from age to age, and from exigency to exigency, raises up ministers of the Gospel to proclaim it.

The Rev. Dr. Baird could not concur in the views Mr. Hoge has expressed as to a call to the ministry. The old doctrine of the American Education Society was, that every educated young man is bound to preach the Gospel, unless he can show the contrary. If he did not misunderstand Mr. Hoge, this was his doctrine. If so, he would enter his protest against that being considered the voice of the Assembly.

The Rev. Mr. Emerson said, that though yet a young man,

out of twenty-four candidates for the ministry, who started out with him, he could find but three in the ministry of our Church. The great reason was, that most of them had never, at the outset, looked the question fairly in the face, and counted the cost. What our Church needs is earnest men; and none but those who understand the true nature of a call to the Gospel ministry will prove to be such. We want men who will be willing to do any work, even the humblest.

The Rev. W. J. Hoge said, that if he had had the smallest idea that he was uttering the voice of the Assembly, he would have shrunk from speaking at all. He cared not what Board had held the views of a call to the ministry alluded to; they were his own views. His doctrine is, that a young man ordinarily should seek that position which most needs young men, until the demand is supplied. No doubt every candidate will have his siftings before he reaches the ministry. He will have them in the Academy, the College, the Seminary, and the Presbytery, if the latter will do their duty. As to presenting the bright side only, he was only presenting a set off to the cry about the sacrifices and burdens of the ministry, of which we have heard so much. He would have done with sickly sentimentality on the subject. He had no objection to presenting the shady-side, but he wished also to have the more cheerful side of the question looked at. He wished, even though brethren go as Missionaries to India, to be subjected to unspeakable horrors, that they might be able to say, "It is a good work."

The Rev. Mr. Erskine thought there had been extreme views presented here on both sides of the question of a call to the ministry. He supposed that it is the general doctrine of our Church that there is a special call, a call of the Word, Spirit and Providence of God; and that when a young man feels himself thus called, he will be willing to undergo all the trials of the ministry. We must place before every young man all the truth on the subject, and when the proper conviction is produced on his mind, that will keep him faithful, no matter what comes. He had often heard the remark, that if ministers had known in advance the trials of the work, they never would

have entered it. For himself, he believed that if truly called of God, nothing would deter him. It seemed to be implied in the remarks made here, that it is the duty of every parent to devote every son to the ministry. He could not agree to that.

The Rev. Dr. Junkin said, this Board has brought into our ministry many of our most valuable ministers, who otherwise would not be there. Our Foreign Missionary Board came to us yesterday with the crown of the martyrs on its brow; but has the Board of Education no martyrs? Yes, sir, it has had living martyrs—men who, amidst anxieties, uncertainties, toils, tears and prayers, have struggled with poverty and hardship, in order to enter the ministry.

The Rev. Dr. Hewitt read passages of Scripture showing that the true spirit for the ministry is to be new creatures, and to seek the things of Christ, and not our own.

The Rev. Mr. Tenney said he came from one of the newest sections of our country—from Texas. There are calls all around him, and his brethren there had far more work than they can properly do. Within the last year we have lost the opportunity to organize a Presbyterian Church, because we had no minister for them. The members, having waited long in vain, at last joined other denominations. There is this day a lady in this house, originally from Kentucky, who has heard at this Assembly the first Presbyterian sermon she has heard for five years. We need more men, the Board of Education can do much to furnish us men.

#### BOARD OF PUBLICATION.

*Abstract of the Twentieth Annual Report presented to the Assembly.*—Notwithstanding the extraordinary commercial embarrassments and depressions, the Board of Publication is enabled, by Divine favor, to report results which compare favorably with those of any former year.

1. In the department of Production. Fifty-five new works have been issued, of which forty-five are new volumes. Of these there have been printed 85,750 copies. In addition to these, 24,000 copies of nine new tracts have been issued, and 30,000 copies of the "Presbyterian Almanac," making in all

139,750 copies of new publications. Besides these, have been published 324,000 copies of works before upon the Board's Catalogue.

The total number of copies issued during the year has been 463,750 copies. The total number of copies issued since the organization of the Board to March 1, 1858, has been 6,817,188. The report gives special notice of the publication, by the Board, of "The Presbyterian Social Psalmodist." The Confession of Faith has been published in German, and other German publications are now passing through the press. Attention is called to "The Sailor's Companion," as a new work admirably adapted to do good among the brave and hardy sons of the deep. Dr. Jacobus' "Notes on the Gospels," with the accompanying questions, are now issued by the Board, and afford valuable aid to Sabbath Schools and Bible classes. A considerable number of choice volumes have been added to the Board's Sabbath School Library, which is increasingly popular and useful. The Board aims to furnish, as soon as possible, all needful facilities for Bible Class and Sabbath School instruction.

*Periodicals.*—The circulation of the Home and Foreign Record has declined during the past year from 19,000 to 17,500 copies. The circulation of the Sabbath School Visitor is now 54,000, an increase of 9,000 copies since the last report.

II. In the department of Distribution. The publications of the Board reach the hands of the people chiefly through three channels:—1. The regular trade sales at the Publishing-house have been during the year 191,993 volumes, a decrease of 1,583 volumes on the sales of the preceding year. Comparing these results with those of other publishing-houses, during the recent commercial embarrassments of the country, they afford cause for profound gratitude. The sales of tracts at the Publishing-house have amounted to 706,963 pages, an increase of 229,522 pages on those of the year preceding. 2. The Executive Committee have granted, in response to appeals made to it, to Sabbath Schools, feeble churches, humane institutions, and to individuals for gratuitous distribution, 3,724 volumes, and 246,395 pages of tracts. 3. By colportage, a most important

amount of Divine truth has been put in circulation, and the results of the year, considering all things, have been in the highest degree favorable. The number of colporteurs in commission during the year has been 263, being an increase of 9, notwithstanding the recent curtailments found to be necessary. These have been distributed into 29 States and Territories, besides all the British Provinces of the North. Increased quantities of books and tracts have been sent to California, Oregon, Washington Territory, and all the frontier and more destitute regions of our wide land. The number of volumes sold by colporteurs has been 123,924, being a decrease of 655 volumes. The pages of tracts distributed by them have been 1,555,469. The number of volumes gratuitously distributed this year has been 17,905, an increase of 876 volumes on the number last year given. The number of families visited has been 119,685, an increase of 5,503 over that of last year.

The total distribution of volumes of the year has been as follows: By sale at Publishing-house, 191,993; by sale by colporteurs, 123,924; given by colporteurs, 17,905; granted by executive committee, 3,724; total of volumes, 337,546, being an increase on last year of 636.

Pages of tracts sold at publishing-house, 706,962; distributed by colporteurs, 1,555,469; granted by executive committee, 246,395; total pages of tracts, 2,508,827, being a decrease, for reasons explained in the report, of 271,575 pages. Besides the above matter, the Board has issued a large number of pamphlets and periodical papers.

III. In the department of Sustentation. The Treasurer's Report shows an aggregate of receipts for the year of \$126,960 28, which is an increase of \$7,639 25 over the receipts of the preceding year. The total of expenditures has been \$106,801 68, leaving a balance in the Treasurer's hands of \$20,158 60. This, however, will rapidly be called for by the renewed and enlarged operations of the publishing department. The amount received from sales of books, tracts and Sabbath School Visitors, has been \$80,842 86, being a decrease of \$6,581 52 on the sales of the previous year.

*The Colportage Fund.*—The amount received from all

sources for this Fund has been \$21,369 76, a decrease of \$3,453 86. This decrease, it is pleasant to observe, arises not from decreased Church contributions, but from diminished receipts from legacies and miscellaneous sources. The sum received from the churches has been \$17,150 92, an increase from this source of \$1,761 67. The receipts from legacies and miscellaneous sources have this year been only \$4,218 80, while the last year they were \$9,434 37. The balance in which the Colportage Fund was overdrawn, March 1st, 1858, was \$8,788 46. It is hoped that the churches will help to make up this sum soon, so that the Board may proceed to extend its Colportage operations to many new, important and inviting fields.

*Agencies.*—During the past year no paid collecting agents have been employed. The results are such as greatly to encourage the Board to hope that no general recurrence to such agencies will become necessary.

This Report of the Board was followed by the report of the Committee on said report through their Chairman, Dr. Mitchell, which is embodied in the resolutions following, viz :

1. “*Resolved*, That the Assembly recognizes and commends the Board as an efficient and honored instrumentality in counteracting the pernicious effects of licentious and corrupt literature, and in disseminating, through the waste places of our Zion, the seeds of sound theology and of vital piety, which, doubtless, will ultimately produce in the hand of God’s people, thirty, sixty, and even a hundred fold.

2. *Resolved*, That it is subject matter for devout gratitude to God that, although within the past year an unprecedented commercial embarrassment pervaded the country, and brought sorrow and penury to the homes of thousands, the Lord put into the hearts of the members of our churches a spirit of more than ordinary benevolence, in consequence of which, (although there was a diminution in the miscellaneous receipts,) the amount of church collections for the colportage fund were larger than they had been in any former year; and that this unexpected and happy result was accomplished without the payment of a single cent.

3. *Resolved*, That it affords the Assembly much gratification to learn that, notwithstanding the aforesaid convulsion, the Board, by the discreet and prudent management of its re-

sources, during the crisis, not only paid all its pecuniary obligations in the publishing department, but also increased its usefulness by the publication and gratuitous distribution of a greater number of books and tracts than it had published in any previous year.

4. *Resolved*, That it gives the Assembly pleasure to learn that the Board, as far as circumstances justify, are publishing evangelical works in the German language suitable to the wants of the German population.

5. *Resolved*, That the humble and self-denying Colporteur is doing God's work, and deserves the sympathy of God's people; and that as he visits, from house to house, the Lord's poor, with Christ's love in his heart, and the books of the Board in his hand, he is effectually aiding the Missionary of the Cross in diffusing Christian light and knowledge where darkness and ignorance prevail.

6. *Resolved*, That the Assembly earnestly urges on the churches the importance of increasing their contributions to colportage, in order to enable the Board not only to pay off the arrears which, during the past year, necessarily accrued, but also to expand its operations in a degree commensurate with the demands of the Church.

7. *Resolved*, That the Assembly expresses its heartfelt gratification at the laudable and successful effort which the Board has made to publish works for Sunday School Libraries; and that this body, believing, as it does, that the books published are admirably adapted to the wants of children, would impress on the minds of ministers and members that it is their duty to purchase and circulate the books of the Board, rather than those published by any societies not connected with our beloved Church; and that, whenever Sabbath Schools have funds to expend for the purchase of Libraries to present to feeble churches in various parts of the land, the Board should have decided preference."

The resolutions were advocated with appropriate remarks by Rev. Dr. Mitchell, Rev. Messrs. Stevenson and Axtell, Mr. Israel Spencer, of Mississippi, Rev. J. E. Rockwell, Rev. Mr. Cowan and T. R. R. Cobb, of Georgia. The remarks of Rev. Mr. Savage, of New Hampshire, struck a cord of national sympathy in many hearts. "He had come on this long pilgrimage from the Old Granite State to the Crescent City, not simply to participate in the debates and actions of this body, but to show that the Presbyterian Church has no sectional feelings;

that she is conservative in her action, and her sympathies and fellowship are as broad as the Church of Christ. He wished to say there is no place where your publications are more welcome than New England. There was an effort at this very moment making, to render the issues of the American Tract Society sectional and divisive. Should this effort be successful, which, may God forbid, this Board would become of unspeakable importance not only to us, but to the whole land. He hoped this Board would be able to send many more Colporteurs into New England, and thus become as a golden cord to aid in binding our country together in love. He would go back to his Northern home with the most delightful recollections of the fraternal intercourse of this Assembly. Forty years ago he had visited New Orleans, and he was surprised at the changes which time had wrought. There was then no Protestant Church. Now he comes again, and finds numerous Churches, and a strong Presbyterian element. The temple in which we stand is cheering evidence of its progress."

#### CHURCH EXTENSION.

Mr. Coe, the Corresponding Secretary, presented an abstract of the Annual Report, and made a few pertinent remarks in explanation and illustration. The report is as follows:

*Receipts.*—The receipts from all sources during the year ending April 1, 1858, were \$24,741 15, exceeding those of the previous year, \$1,475 54. Less than half, however, of this excess is from donations. The number of contributing churches named in this report is 518; the number named in the preceding report was 502. These results have been reached in the midst of the hard times, without any salaried collecting agent, and are as gratifying as they were unexpected.

*Expenditures.*—The total expenditures of the year were \$24,384 03. The amount paid out to churches this year is in advance of the amount paid out to them last year, over \$7,000.

*Appropriations.*—During the year appropriations were made to seventy-six churches, amounting to \$27,571 03. This is nearly \$10,000 more than the amount appropriated to churches last year.

*Applications.*—From April 1, 1857, to April 1, 1858, one hundred churches applied for aid to enable them to complete their houses of worship, free from debt. The amount of aid they ask is not less than \$45,000, being fully \$12,000 more than the amount of aid applied for last year. At the close of the year there remained on file *sixty* applicants for aid calling for \$25,000.

*Cost of Church Edifices.*—In the two and a half years the Committee have been fairly at work, they have made appropriations to two hundred and five different churches. One hundred and fifty-three of these two hundred and five church buildings, cost from \$500 to \$2,500; thirty-nine from \$2,500 to \$5,000, and the other thirteen over \$5,000. Five of the thirteen were special appropriations.

*Distribution of Funds.*—The Committee have endeavored to distribute the funds entrusted to them as equitably as possible over the whole Church. How far they have succeeded in this endeavor may be determined from these two facts:

1st. Only three of the three hundred new applications received by them have been declined.

2d. Grants have been made to churches in thirty of the thirty-one Synods, and eighty-six of the one hundred and two Presbyteries, from whose bounds applications have come. The Synod and Presbyteries, to which no appropriations have been made, are those from whose applying churches the requisite information has not yet been received.

*Results.*—Scarcely three years have elapsed since the Assembly's Church Extension Committee was organized. In that time over \$57,000 has been raised for the Church Extension cause without any salaried agent. This is within \$11,000 of the whole sum raised during the eleven years of organized effort in connection with the Board of Missions. The amount received from churches in the last three years is double the amount received from churches during the previous eleven years.

These results encourage the Committee to hope that the blessing of God, and the favor of God's people, will advance the Church Extension Enterprise, until all our waste places

shall be supplied with sanctuaries wherein the Lord will take pleasure and will be glorified.

Dr. Breckinridge, from the Special Committee on that Report, then presented the following resolutions, which were adopted:

“1. *Resolved*, That the Church Extension Committee appears to have conducted the great interest committed to them by the General Assembly with diligence and fidelity, and the Lord has blessed and prospered them; for which, thanks are due to His blessed name.

“2. Inasmuch as the work of building houses for public worship over a region so immense and so diversified as that covered thinly by the Presbyterian Church, presents difficulties so various in their nature, as to render it impossible to give specific directions concerning them; the General Assembly, exhorting the Committee to press forward in the important work, and exhorting the churches to contribute liberally to it, contents itself with the general authorization to the Committee to prosecute it in such manner as its own increasing experience, and the continual indications of Providence, shall satisfy them is most wise and effectual throughout the Church.

“3. Such of our congregations as have insufficient accommodations for public worship, are expected, according to their means, to provide themselves with good and permanent places for the public worship of God. Such as have none are exhorted to make vigorous efforts to provide themselves with them; this being the form of Christian effort, especially in neighborhoods where we have no stated place of worship, towards which those without are usually most disposed to contribute.

“4. All our congregations in country places, and especially those in new settlements, are exhorted to make provisions, where it is possible, of suitable and sufficient grounds for a school for their children, a home for their minister, and a burial place for their dead, all convenient to their place of worship. And, in all these necessary matters, secured while the land is still low—all parsimony being avoided, and due care being taken to secure their titles alike against future disputes and future injury to the cause of Truth, and thus laying sure foundations, they act as becomes those who trust God and build for many generations.

“5. Seeing the vast extent of the land yet to be possessed, the almost indispensable necessity of a sufficient place of worship, to the permanent establishment of a congregation, and the great and constant blessing of God upon our Church in all its endeavors, it becomes all our ministers and people,

whose lot is so cast as to enable them to serve the Lord in this way, to use a wise forecast in good time to secure such necessary sites for church buildings, both in towns and in country places, as will facilitate the constant extension of the Church, and its firm establishment in every quarter of the country.

“6. That the Third Annual Report of the Committee be approved and published.”

Dr. Breckinridge called attention to the fact, that we already had eight hundred more churches than ministers, and that this gap between demand and supply is growing wider and wider. We cannot overtake this spontaneous movement of church growth; all we can do is to try to organize it as it advances. He freely confessed that he was one of those who doubted the practicability of organizing this Committee; but his brethren, as they often did, differed from his views; and when he found they would have it so, he submitted, and tried to help on the enterprise in proportion to his ability. He had, therefore, accepted the position at the head of this Committee, and was desirous that all should participate in this great work. He considered all these Boards (this Committee was sometimes called a Board) really *commissions* of the General Assembly; not committees to examine and report, but *commissions* to determine and act. And their organization was but the outgrowth of the life-spirit of the Church. The spiritual Church will always rebound from an effort to repress this spirit. The great reform of 1837 was precipitated and hastened by the attempt, on the part of the New School, in 1836, to carry the dogmatic declaration that the Assembly had no power, in its proper organization, to engage in the work of missions. From that attempt the Church powerfully re-acted. He deplored the idea sometimes expressed by young brethren, that the conflict of that period was an affair of the *past*, not altogether profitable to remember. He believed it to be the roused life of the Church tending to a great movement. It was the power of God impelling the Church to her great mission and great destiny.

The view which the proceedings of these several Boards (or Commissions, as Dr. Breckinridge calls them), for the year past presents, is full of encouragement and hope. It has been a

year of singular disaster. In the commercial world there has been great distress and financial embarrassment. Many have been reduced from affluence to poverty, and with great difficulty have obtained the means of subsistence. The religious principle of the people of God as to the matter of giving, has been severely tested. Yet it has not been found wanting. When the Secretaries came forward, one after another, and assured us that there had not been a diminution, but an increase in the contributions of the Church in the midst of so many reverses, the heart of the assembly throbbed with joy and gratitude. And though there had been mourning in our Israel, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddo, over our martyred missionaries, their wives and their little ones, and though the tear of sorrow flowed down every manly cheek at the renewed recital, it was known that this demonstration of the malice of Satan would be overwhelmed with signal defeat by the King of Zion, and that there are now those who are ready to be baptized for the dead.

#### AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY.

This subject, embraced in overture No. 5, referred by the last Assembly to this, was taken up at an early stage of the proceedings of the Assembly, on the motion of Rev. Mr. Eagleson, and referred to a committee, with instructions to draft a minute expressive of the views of the Assembly on these subjects, and of the claims of the Bible Society on our churches.

This overture of the last Assembly affirms :

First, That the American Bible Society has no right to alter in any way the common and accepted version of the Sacred Scriptures. Second, This society has the right to print and circulate the Bible, and to collect funds for this purpose, but it has no power to edit it. Third, This Assembly have been and are the firm friends of the American Bible Society, and in this sense it feels called upon to resist the smallest departure from the original principles on which that society was founded. Fourth, The Board of Publication of the Presbyterian Church will consider and report to the next General Assembly a plan for the preparation and permanent publication by it of the common English Bible, in a form suitable for pulpit use, with the standard text unchanged, and the usual accessories to the

text commonly found in pulpit English Bibles, from 1611 to 1847.

This subject called forth an animated discussion, in which Rev. W. T. Findley, Dr. Breckinridge and Dr. Hewitt participated ; after which the resolution was adopted.

Mr. Findley wished to know why, in the present posture of the subject, it should be brought up at all. Dr. Breckinridge did not think the concern on this subject is, or ought to be allayed. The minority of the Bible Society's managers contend that the agitation is only begun. The point at issue, the power to make alterations, had been evaded in the discussion. He reviewed the history of the controversy, and expressed a deep gratification at the moral power the Old School Presbyterian Church has exercised in this movement. He admired, loved and honored Dr. Spring more than he had ever before done, for the noble, magnanimous manner in which he had receded from his first position, and for the manner in which he had conducted himself in this whole business. He was glad Dr. Spring continued on the Committee of Revision, and most happy that the other gentlemen had resigned. Our Church ought to take this occasion to express its views on the right of the American Bible Society to edit or alter the common version. Dr. Hewitt agreed with Dr. Breckinridge in his main positions, and honored him for having taken them ; but he thought there was no longer any reason for dread on this subject. No changes would be attempted. He did not wish even so much as to intimate the possibility of such a thing by any action here. Dr. Breckinridge, at a subsequent day, presented the following minute on this subject, expressive of the opinions of the Assembly :

By a vote of the General Assembly of 1857, an overture of that body, which is printed in its minutes, pp. 35-36, relating to the American Bible Society's new standard English Bible, and to the best method of preserving in its integrity the common version of the English Bible, was specially referred to the consideration of the present General Assembly. During the year which has intervened, the attention of the Christian public has been directed to this important subject in a very unusual degree ; and so far as this Assembly has the means of judging,

it is apparent that the Presbyterian Church throughout the country is decidedly opposed to the line of conduct in the premises, pressed by the late Committee on Versions of that society, and to the circulation by that society of their new standard English Bibles. It is, therefore, a matter of great satisfaction to the General Assembly, that the Directors of the American Bible Society have resolved to cease publishing and circulating the aforesaid new standard Bible, and to resume the publication and circulation of the standard English Bible, in exclusive use by the society, before the late work of collation and change commenced, about the year 1847. We also cordially approve the further action of the Board of Directors, so far as it secures a more vigilant oversight in the future, of the work of its Committee on Versions, and prevents any future change either of the text or its accessories, without the careful consideration and special order of the Board of Directors. With regard to any change whatever, either in the text of the English version of the Bible, commonly called King James's version, or in the accessories to that text as they were commonly printed at the foundation of the American Bible Society, we do not admit that the said society has any power or authority to make any alteration in said accessories or said text, except such as appertain to a printer, and not to an editor. By the text of King James's version, we do not mean a copy corrupted by errors and unauthorized changes, no matter where that copy may have been printed, nor how those errors originated, nor who may have ventured to make these changes. But we mean the true text in English, produced and published after the labors of the translators appointed by King James the First of England, which for nearly two centuries and a half has been the standard Bible of all people speaking the English language, and which the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America is resolved to preserve in its integrity and purity, and to use and circulate. Along with the greater portion of the Christian public in this country, we have confided to the American Bible Society the great work of circulating the English Scriptures in the version in common use, and, while we deeply regret the serious error into which it was betrayed, its recent action in the premises demands a cordial response from all the earnest supporters of the great work in which it is engaged. In discharge, therefore, of our duty as the General Assembly of our branch of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, to which he has committed his most blessed word for the guidance and salvation of men, we have made this deliverance; and upon the terms herein set forth, we reiterate our approval of the principles

upon which the American Bible Society was founded, our desire to co-operate with our brethren of all Christian denominations in united efforts to furnish the whole world with the word of God, and our earnest recommendation to our people to give liberally to the support of this great cause.

Inquiry was made, 'whether the paper of Dr. Breckinridge contemplates the version in use when the American Bible Society was organized in 1816, or the version of 1611?'

Dr. Breckinridge replied, by reading from his paper, and added, 'that he had intentionally left the description somewhat vague, from a disposition to avoid entering upon a discussion of the points of difference between the versions named.'

It was urged, 'that the true course of the Bible Society was to reproduce the edition of 1611, with no changes except such as are demanded by modifications of spelling.'

Dr. Breckinridge 'in the main agreed with this, and had tried to draw up a paper that might restore harmony to the Protestant public. Good had been done by the agitation of the subject. Vigilance had been awakened, and the public eye fixed upon it.' He gave notice of a paper, still in his pocket, containing a commentary with a specific text.

The paper of Dr. Breckinridge was unanimously adopted.

It is a source of gratification to the Old School Presbyterian Church, that she has been able to do thus much to preserve the English Version of the Scriptures from arbitrary changes. She has an interest in the so-called Version of King James beyond that of almost any other denomination of Christians. It was first suggested by the Scotch Assembly, in 1601, and cordially assented to by him before he became king of England, and was again requested by Dr. Raynolds in behalf of his puritan brethren after James ascended the English throne. The Scotch divines, of all parties, it is true, adhered to the Geneva Bible until about the year 1640, when the present translation, designed for the Church of England, and too partial to prelacy, was at length silently established in general use. The Presbyterians also contribute far the largest portion to the funds of the American Bible Society, and have the largest representation in it, though without any seeking of their own. The

duty of the American Bible Society plainly is, to publish the English Version as it came from the hands of the translators, with no other changes than the adoption of the modern for the obsolete orthography, and the correction of printers' blunders which may have been made. And there is no need, as is proposed, to adopt the clumsy expedient of collating the editions of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and of the king's printers for England, Scotland and Ireland, to find out the true version of King James. The Bible Society can go directly to it and reproduce it without change, according to the sensible suggestions of Rev. Dr. Curtis, in the last number of this Review, to which Dr. Breckinridge doubtless had some measure of regard in his resolutions. An *improved* version has not yet appeared in the English tongue. When it has been produced and obtained the approbation of the people of God, it will be time to take measures for its publication and diffusion.

ASSEMBLY'S COMMENTARY.

In connection with the Report of the Committee on the Board of Publication, Dr. Breckinridge offered an additional minute to provide a Presbyterian Commentary on the Scriptures, which shall be in accordance with the Westminster doctrines of this Church, as follows:

Inasmuch as the want of a sound, godly, and thorough commentary of the whole Word of God, composed in the sense of the constant faith of the Church of God, as that is briefly set forth in the Standards of the Westminster Assembly, held by the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, has long been felt to be a grievous want, whereby a great lack of due service to God and to his truth occurs, and whereby constant danger arises to men of needless ignorance on one side, and of dangerous misguidance on the other; therefore be it

*Resolved by the General Assembly,* That the Board of Publication shall, and is hereby directed, to proceed with all convenient dispatch to have such a Commentary composed, prepared for the press, and published. And in this great work, the following rules and orders, together with such further as may be adopted from time to time by the General Assembly, shall be carefully observed by the Board of Publication, and

by all others in any way engaged in the execution of any part thereof:

1. The Commentary shall be prepared exclusively by the members of this Church, and in the preparing of it, they shall have all such indulgence, as to time, as they shall respectively demand. And for their compensation, they and their heirs shall receive, for the legal term of twenty-eight years, a fair per centum on the price of work sold—which shall be settled in advance by the Board of Publication—and which shall be uniform; and in lieu of all claims and cost of every sort in any way connected with their said work.

2. The said Commentary shall be fitted for common use by all men, and, in the preparation of it, free use may be made of all materials that may exist—the design being to procure, not so much what may be original, as what may be best in the way of enlightening and saving men. It shall not be prolix, but so arranged that the whole may be embraced in 5 or 6 royal octavo volumes of good print, containing, besides the Commentary, the English text in full, together with the usual accessories thereof, and such other suitable helps to its understanding as plain people need. And the text used in it shall be strictly that of the version prepared by the translators appointed by James the First, King of England.

3. In order to secure the fittest men for this great work, the Board of Publication shall make special application to the general Synods of our Church, at their next stated meetings respectively; and the said Synods shall, upon careful consideration, nominate to the said Board of Publication, any number of their own members, not to exceed five from any one Synod, of such as they shall consider qualified to undertake the work; and the Board of Publication may add not more than four, in addition to the whole number thus nominated to it; and it shall communicate the list of names, thus obtained by sifting the Church, to the General Assembly at its stated meeting in May of next year; making, at the same time, and from year to year thereafter, report of its doings under, and by virtue of this minute.

4. The General Assembly of 1859 will take such further order in the premises, especially with regard to selection of persons out of the list communicated to it, to the distribution of the work among them, and to all things needful for its effectual prosecution, as shall seem most expedient.

This paper gave rise to an animated debate, in which Dr. Breckinridge, Mr. Parke, Mr. Eagleson, Mr. Hill, Mr. Morris,

Dr. Hewitt and Dr. Junkin participated on the one side, and Dr. Rankin, Mr. Floyd, Dr. Hoge, Mr. Squier, Prof. W. J. Hoge and Dr. Van Rensselaer on the other.

Dr. Breckinridge said he had at the beginning of this Board made a movement similar to the present, and from time to time it has been renewed. He was gratified to know from what the Secretary had stated, that the Board had already published something in this way. The theological seminaries, and Princeton in particular, have done much; and the Assembly is now better prepared than at any time previously, to make such a Commentary. Many Commentaries of great merit are in existence, but when asked by brethren in the Church for advice as to a choice of one, he had often been truly perplexed. There is not one that comes up to the Westminster standard, and that is a true exponent of the doctrines of this Church. The present is probably the last opportunity he would ever enjoy of bringing this enterprise before the Assembly. By adopting this scheme, you would have reported to the next Assembly forty or fifty, or perhaps one hundred and fifty names, from which you can then make your selections. Say, for instance, to Dr. Addison Alexander, "Revise and adapt your work on the Psalms for popular use." Go on in this way, and in thirty or forty years you will have the best Commentary the world has ever seen.

Dr. Junkin was in favor of the project, but opposed to its reference to the Board of Publication. This Board is already committed to publishing other Commentaries. If we are to publish Commentaries, let it be under the vigilant eye of the Church.

Dr. Rankin was opposed to the whole thing. Opposed because the paper did not say, "the version in common use." It leaves it optional with the commentators to take one of several versions, or virtually make a new version by combination of others. He would not give his sanction to any version produced in the present day. There is a sense in which the issues of the Board of Publication speak for the Church. But to make that Board give what will be regarded as an official interpretation of the word of God, is a very serious matter.

There are commentaries which were in existence before many of the questions of the present German criticism and philosophy prevailed, which answered every purpose. Even in the Commentary on the Psalms, mentioned here, the foot-prints of Germanism were seen. You cannot get men in our Church to undertake this work without involving a risk of this evil. In the nature of things, this body cannot do this thing. How can this Assembly take up in detail such a Commentary, verse by verse, and examine its accuracy? Rev. Mr. Floyd argued that if more than one man were employed on each of the sixty-six books of the Bible, as should be the case, some four or five hundred men would be needed. Let us see what they will do, before you disparage the works of others. There is often a great difference between the reputation of men when living, and when they are dead. Circumstances often concur to give very ordinary men an elevation in their life-time, which posterity does not ratify. You will be likely to get some of these among your commentators. He had, moreover, great confidence in spontaneity in works of this sort. Set men to writing as a mere duty, and you endanger the probability of getting the best productions of the best men. Prof. W. J. Hoge saw great difficulties. How, for instance, can we meet the diversity of views as to the book of Revelation and the question of millennarianism. As to doctrines we are not one. Take the recent discussion between Danville and Columbia on the imputation of Adam's sin. Dr. Breckinridge denied that there is any war between Columbia and Danville, and paid a high compliment to the professor of theology at the former institution. He admitted the work to be of transcendent difficulty, but there is a sense to the Westminster standards, and whatever that sense is, is to be the rule as regards this Commentary. If the Church cannot attempt and accomplish such a work as this, let us hang our heads in shame and sorrow. Dr. Hoge would be glad to see proper measures initiated to produce such a Commentary. But we hazard much in adopting this paper now. The Assembly, in voting for it, approves the specific way of accomplishing this end. He doubted whether referring to the Synods was the best mode. There are Synods which would not be willing

to name five or even three of their number for this service. In his own Synod, which is an important one, he could not name five whom he would recommend for this duty. He had further difficulties. So far as our standards are concerned, he had stood up for them through many trials; but can any one say that those standards go to the extent of solving every difficulty in interpreting God's word.

Rev. Dr. Van Rensselaer was opposed to the adoption of Dr. Breckinridge's proposition. First, Because the plan proposed opens anew the controversy about the true edition of King James's version, and pledges this General Assembly to a position different from that of the Christian world. Why should this Assembly attempt in any way to dishonor the version now in common use? I deprecate, says he, the agitation of any such question as exciting, unnecessary, and disparaging to our own Church. In the second place, I am opposed to this plan of a Commentary, because the Church, as a Church, is not called upon to make an authoritative interpretation in its own name, respecting the meaning of every passage of Scripture. There are hundreds of passages on which the most orthodox and eminent divines have differed in opinion; and some of these passages have received scores of interpretations. Then there are other passages which involve doctrines, such, for example, as the millennium, which the Church cannot explain in a Commentary without hazarding its peace and unity. Third, The mode of getting up this new Commentary is exceedingly complicated, and probably impracticable. You cannot obtain five Commentators in each Synod; and there are more than five Synods who will refuse to appoint any. It is to my mind exceedingly doubtful whether any of the Northern Synods will take any action on this subject, and if they should, whether any of their ministers would undertake any such work. The writing of Commentaries must be undertaken from the spontaneous conviction of those who may feel that they possess gifts for such a high service. The Church cannot expect to find suitable Commentators in all the Synods. A Commentary produced in such a manner, if produced at all, would not be likely to possess the requisite unity, or to

command in other respects the confidence of the churches. I shall move to refer this subject to the next General Assembly, for two reasons. First, Because this is a most important subject, requiring more deliberation than this Assembly is able to give to it. In the second place, the character of the Presbyterian Church is very much concerned in an undertaking of this kind. The public mind will be fixed upon us; and if we hastily begin so great a work, and should not be able to finish it, or should finish it in an imperfect manner—which are the two most likely alternatives—we shall suffer loss as a Church, and even bring reproach upon our character and standing in the Christian world.

The whole subject was referred to the next General Assembly.

Desirable as it would be for the Church to possess such a Commentary, the greatest practical difficulties will be found in its execution. Many of these were suggested in the discussions had before the Assembly; others will easily occur to the mind of the reader.

There are two kinds of Commentary, the *critical* and the *popular*. The one states the processes by which the commentator is led to his results, it embraces materials philological and grammatical, unfolds the sense, and brings before the mind the language of the original. It investigates the true reading of the sacred text, and not only applies that various learning—antiquarian, historical and geographical—requisite to elucidate the text, but brings it forth to the view of the scholar, that he may be satisfied with the result attained, and retrace, if he chooses, the process himself. *Popular* Commentary does not disclose the steps of the exegetical process, but gives the results in plain and untechnical language. It lays aside learned phraseology and scientific investigation, avoiding everything which a mere English scholar would be unable to understand. It strives only to exhibit in the clearest and most vivid way, the sense of the Holy Scriptures. It is not impossible, in some measure, to unite the two, to bring the one down to popular comprehension, and lift the other up out of the region of trite and vapid remark. Yet this is no easy task, and requires a rare combination of talent and wisdom. It is not the English ver-

sion, but the original Hebrew, Chaldee and Greek Scriptures, which our standards declare to be the rule of faith. Though only a popular Commentary be aimed at, this has to be the result of long-continued familiarity with the original. The comment, of whatever character, must flow from this. How few are the men who have the knowledge and the practice requisite. In our judgment such a Commentary should not be a mere compilation, another *catena patrum*. But if compilation be resorted to, it will not do to compile from the writings of men famed for talents and orthodoxy, without the utmost exercise of judgment. The noble Commentaries of Calvin would often fall short, in the exposition of particular passages, of what is now held to be their true meaning. To compile well, demands the same discriminating knowledge of the originals, and the spirit of these must pervade the whole, and be manifested in every particular interpretation. To meet the public expectation in such an undertaking, would indeed be difficult, if not impossible. To have one's work fail of giving satisfaction, after years of toil, would be deeply humiliating to the ingenuous scholar. Far sooner would a man undertake to prepare a Commentary as the free, untrammelled fruit of his own researches and pleasant studies, and offer it to the judgment of the Church, either to be approved or to be neglected, as they should see fit, than bargain to prepare one in concert with others, under the responsibilities of this scheme. A Commentary *made to order*, would soon, we fear, be as little read as "The Assembly's Annotations," purporting to be composed by members of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, which, however, was not set on foot by the Westminster Assembly, but by Parliament, who, by its Committee for Religion, nominated the commentators, and furnished them with books—nor were all the commentators members of that famous Assembly, nor even of the Presbyterian faith. The Church has a year to reflect upon this matter, and either to adopt the plan proposed, modify it, or reject it wholly.

## CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION.

Wednesday, the 12th of May, had been fixed upon to com-

memorate the re-union of the two Synods of New York and Philadelphia in May, 1758. The Moderator began with a psalm, and reading the Scriptures; the Rev. James Hoge, D. D., led in solemn and appropriate prayer; the Rev. Cortland Van Rensselaer, D. D., delivered the Centennial discourse according to the appointment of the last General Assembly, and the Rev. R. J. Breckinridge, D. D., offered thanksgiving and prayer. The whole exercises were closed with psalmody, the doxology and the Apostolic benediction.

Dr. Van Rensselaer spoke of the influence of a century on human progress, and regarded Centennial periods as furnishing appropriate points of observation of the train of events. He ascribed the origin of the Presbyterian Church in the United States to those persecutions which had swept like a tide over Scotland, Ireland, England and France, and borne with its wave from the Old World to the New, those sturdy men who subdued the wilderness and planted the standard of civil and religious freedom on the shores of the New Continent. The separation of the Church into the "Old" and "New side," was not occasioned by difference of doctrinal views on the fundamentals of theology. The Old Side adhered with the greatest strictness to the Confession of Faith, and stood up for education in the ministry. The New Side would license men to preach the Gospel who were neophytes in literature, provided they gave evidence of piety. The revival under Whitfield and the Tennents added fuel to the conflagration. The New Side men embarked in it with zeal, and were regarded by their opponents as extravagant enthusiasts. At length, in the year 1741, the highest judicatory of the Church was rent asunder and the Synod of New York was founded by the New Side in opposition to the Synod of Philadelphia. Meanwhile, both parties retraced their steps, and after the lapse of seventeen years, nine of which were spent in negotiation, came together after mutual concessions in the year 1758, in a union which has been accompanied with the happiest results.

The narrative of the reconciliation, as given by the speaker, brought the scene and the venerable men engaged in it before the view of the Assembly, with a portraiture and a grouping,

which showed how near together are the employments of the painter and the orator—the one addressing the mind through the organs of vision, the other through the hearing of the ear. The whole discourse was well conceived, rich in instruction, and eminently suggestive as to our future history. Towards the close he referred to the field which past events have opened to our progress in the following terms:

The old French war, which was in active operation at the time of the re-union, in 1758, was a war of principles, of races, of religions; and God gave might to right. By the treaty of peace, all the French possessions in North America reverted to England; and over the whole valley, east of the Mississippi, (with a small exception,) and north of the Ohio, the flag of liberty and King George waved its triumphs in the air, throwing its shadows on the prostrate emblems of France and the Bourbons. Then was achieved the first victory which announced the future destiny of all this glorious region. As between England and France, God vested this country in England, to retain it until the young Republic should become of age.

Next came the war of the Revolution; and the West having been annexed to the Colonies, the Colonies were now to be dissevered from England, in order that the West, with the East, might be cultivated for the whole world.

Thus did God mark out for the Church a country vast in extent—to be added to in future years, but now first guaranteed to the Church—vast in its increasing extent, until lake mirrors gulf and sea surges into sea. How great has been the political and civil influence of the last century upon this country! And who can tell what another century shall bring, of increase to this magnificent inheritance of liberty and religion? How the ignorance of man clouds the vision of faith? And yet, methinks, faith can see into the vista of years. Like as the eye, with a telescope, unravels the tangled skein of nebulae in the skies, faith can behold the confused mysteries of Central America taking their places as stars in the firmament of our Union. And as astronomers think there is some central point, whither the whole system is tending, so, were I to theorize about the territorial centre of our Republic, when expanded a century hence, I would say it might be here, in the city of our Centennial celebration; here in New Orleans, where lines from the North and South and West meet, a triangle enfolding a problem of greatness; here, on the highway to the whole of

the glorious Pacific States; here, in contiguity with Texas and with the States of the great Mexican peninsula, all the way down to the Isthmus.

At a subsequent period, as the Chairman of the Committee of Bills and Overtures, Dr. Van Rensselaer made a report, recommending the following overture on the Centennial celebration, which was adopted:

This General Assembly having been called upon, in the providence of God, to unite in a Centennial commemoration of the re-union of the Synods of New York and Philadelphia, in 1758, deem it proper, on this occasion, to adopt a minute relating to that interesting and important event.

The Assembly recognize the good hand of God, in early bringing to these shores immigrants of Scotch, Scotch-Irish, English and Huguenot extraction, to assist in establishing the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ among the waste places of this continent. The memory of the ministers who commenced the work of evangelization, and who laid the foundation of the Church, is treasured by this Assembly, with gratitude to Him who sent them forth to accomplish His purposes, with many self-denials, abundant labors and great success.

The Assembly record the goodness of God in leading the fathers to adopt authoritatively the Westminster standard for the future guidance of the Church.

The Assembly further record their views of the unspeakable importance and blessedness of pure revivals of religion in the Church; praising God for the general results of the great revival of religion within our bounds in the days of Whitfield and the Tennents, and rejoicing that the present year has been signalized by the same precious and glorious outpourings of the Holy Spirit.

The Assembly further put upon record their sense of the obligations of the Church to its Great Head, in preserving incorrupt its outward forms of order in the olden time; in gradually and surely increasing its educational and evangelical resources, and in endowing it, after the lapse of the first century of re-union, with such enlargements of its missionary work at home and in foreign lands.

On an occasion which forcibly brings to mind the blessings of God upon re-union, and which commemorates the dwelling together of brethren in unity, the Assembly expresses a deep conviction of the desirableness of the union of all sound Presbyterians; and do hereby cordially and earnestly extend an invitation to all who are like-minded with ourselves, to unite with

this General Assembly in the way and manner conformable to the acts and deliverances on this subject already made by this Assembly.

On motion of Dr. Breckinridge, the following resolution was added to the minute :

*Resolved*, That the thanks of this Assembly be tendered to Dr. Van Rensselaer, for his discourse, and that the Board of Publication be directed to publish it, together with the other papers connected with the subject, in book form.

#### CORRESPONDENCE WITH FOREIGN BODIES.

A communication was read from Dr. R. Baird, who had been commissioned to represent the Assembly in foreign Christian bodies, he reporting his visit to the Evangelical Conference at Berlin, which continued in session nine days. The whole Christian world was represented in that conference, and the number of delegates was not less than 1,400. The result of this meeting, which was the third he had attended—the first being held in London and the second in Paris—was the formation of an evangelical alliance, and the evident progress of religious truth.

An interesting communication was forwarded to the Assembly by Rev. Frederick Monod, from Dr. G. Fish, of France, in the name of the "General Synodale of the Presbyterian Church of Paris." It was referred to the Committee on Foreign Correspondence, the chairman of which, Dr. Hewitt, made a report, accompanied by the following resolution, viz. :

1. That when the statistics of the last year are completed, and more particularly that relating to the present revivals of religion, our Moderator be requested to reply to the President of the Synod of the Free Church in France, expressing the sympathy, veneration and affection of this Assembly for that sister church.

2. That if one or more of our brethren shall visit Europe the ensuing summer, our Moderator be empowered to commission him or them to represent this Assembly in that Synod.

The report and resolutions were received and adopted.

The Rev. William Young appeared before the Assembly as a Delegate from the "Associate Reformed Synod of the South."

He gave a rapid sketch of the condition of the Associate Reformed Synod, from which it appeared that it now has eight Presbyteries, ten churches, seventy ministers, a College in South Carolina which is prosperous, and a Theological Seminary which is doing something to prepare young men for the Christian ministry. A number of the churches have recently received times of refreshing from the Lord. They have, under their care, likewise, several colored churches, which are regarded as a part of their body, and to whose peculiar necessities their doctrines are especially adapted. He said, "our doctrine, faith, and practices, are the same as your own; and I am ready, on behalf of the body which I represent, to give to this General Assembly, the right hand of fellowship.

I am not authorized to speak, officially, as to a close and permanent union of our two bodies; but I take upon me to say, that such an event would fill all our hearts with joy unspeakable; and if the time has not yet arrived for such a union as that referred to, we may be still perfectly united in heart and purpose to proclaim peace on earth and good will to men, and to advance the Kingdom of the Redeemer." He closed by announcing that the next meeting of the Associate Reformed Synod of the South will be held at Abbeville, S. C., in October next.

Dr. Scott, the Moderator, in a few appropriate words, welcomed Mr. Young, in the name of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States.

The Rev. John Woodbridge presented a report of his attendance as the delegate of this General Assembly to the last General Synod of the Reformed Dutch Church of North America. And in the course of the Assembly's proceedings the Rev. Dr. Chambers appeared as a delegate from the aforesaid Synod, and offered the cordial salutations of that Church in an interesting address, responded to by the Moderator in corresponding terms.

#### UNION WITH THE ASSOCIATE REFORMED.

Negotiations to this effect have been going on for some years past between the Synod of South Carolina and the As-

sociate Reformed Synod of the South. It was soon found that these two bodies were not co-ordinate, and could not treat with each other. The Associate Reformed Church was divided into two Synods, the Northern and Southern, which had no connection with each other. The Northern Synod had become united, since the meeting of the Assembly at New Orleans, with the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and those two bodies have become merged into one. On a memorial from the Synod of South Carolina to the Assembly meeting in New York in 1856, a Committee of Conference was appointed, of which Rev. Edwin Cater is Chairman, and a co-ordinate committee, consisting of one from each of their Presbyteries, was appointed by the Associate Reformed Synod of the South. The Committee have never met face to face, nor had the reply of the Committee on their part to the last communication from us been received at the meeting at New Orleans. There had, however, been an informal Convention of ministers and elders of the respective churches held in Columbia, S. C., which convened in March last, at which were present six ministers and eight elders of two Presbyteries of the Associate Reformed, and twenty-two ministers and sixteen elders, chiefly of the Synod of South Carolina. This Convention did not act with any authority derived from the judicatories of either Church, but had in view to find out on what terms, if any there are, the two bodies might be brought together. The Convention having been organized, it was resolved that the two parties should meet separately, and that their correspondence should be conducted in writing. It was found that the only bar to this union, now existing, is the practice of the two bodies on the subject of Psalmody, the Associate brethren, in common with all bodies of Presbyterians in other lands, speaking the English tongue, using Rouse's version of the Psalms, and they, as a Church, making it a matter of conscience to use in Divine worship only what has been divinely authorized, and, therefore, insisting heretofore, that the Psalms are to be used alone, and in a version as nearly literal as the laws of metre will admit.

As a term of union they proposed:

1. A new version of the Psalms of David to take the place

of Rouse's version, now in use in the Associate Reformed Church; and of Dr. Watt's imitation, now in use in the Presbyterian Church. This new version to be prepared by translation or collation, or both, and to be as near the original as the laws of versification will allow.

2. This version, when approved by both bodies, to be employed in the congregations and private families of each denomination, not on the principle of accommodation or forbearance, but as authorized by the Head of the Church, and by the Church itself.

3. While we believe that the Psalms of David are the only songs which God has authorized to be employed in his praise; and while, on this account, we do not feel at liberty to use anything else, yet we believe that many persons in our body, for the sake of union, would be willing to forbear with their Presbyterian brethren in the use of uninspired songs.

To this, the reply of that part of the Convention representing our own Church, was as follows:

The spirit of your propositions we understand to be this: That a book of praise shall be prepared, in which there *shall* be a literal version of the Psalms, and in which there *may* be a collection of hymns and spiritual songs, such as those now in use in the churches in the General Assembly. The new version you propose, we do not understand as designed to supersede our present book of Hymns, nor even as excluding Watts' imitation of the Psalms, provided they are brought under the category of the Hymns. If we are right in this interpretation of your terms, we can not see what is to hinder an immediate union of the two bodies. We are prepared to concede to you the exclusive use of the version of the Psalms which you now employ, and to take steps for having it incorporated into our book. We do not desire you to relinquish it, if you yourselves are satisfied with it.

If, on your own account, you desire a new version, we shall be happy to co-operate with you in making one, not as the condition, but as the result of union.

If we have misapprehended your meaning, and your purpose is to exclude from our churches our present songs of praise, if the new version is to supersede our Hymns in our congregations, that would obviously be asking us to abandon our whole doctrine on the subject of Psalmody, a condition, we are sure, our Associate Reformed brethren do not desire to impose, especially as it would involve a serious loss to us, and its effect would be a gain to them in a better version of the Psalms.

The Convention came to no further results than to ascertain these facts and to part with feelings of fraternal regard, and, probably on both sides, with a conviction that the hour of our union had not yet come.

When the report of these proceedings was made to the Assembly, Dr. Breckinridge moved that the Committee of Conference be discharged. "He was persuaded the union of the two bodies on the terms proposed was impossible. The terms yielded by the Committee would never be agreed to by our Church, and the brethren of the Associate Reformed are so deeply rooted in their feelings about the Psalms that they never would be satisfied unless we went the whole length with them. There is no occasion for a new version of the Psalms, and if there were there are no men to make it. You cannot raise up poets to order, much less a committee of them. The great danger of our own body is its strength. We need homogeneity to enable us to develop it. Introduce this new element and you endanger our perpetuity and unity." Dr. Hoge "had never been sanguine as to the successful issue of these negotiations, nor even strongly desirous that they should succeed. We shall never agree in the matter of communion with other churches. In their communication to us they had made no allusion to this. He felt bound, under the circumstances, to support the motion of Dr. Breckinridge, but proposed as an amendment, that we assign as a reason, that we cannot agree in Psalmody and intercommunion." The motion of Dr. Breckinridge was earnestly opposed by others. Rev. Mr. Hoyt "lived in Abbeville District, S. C., near the headquarters of the Associate Reformed Church, and was a member of the Convention at Columbia. He felt confident that the matter is entirely misapprehended. The Convention was not an ecclesiastical body. It was entirely informal and voluntary. Nothing that it did can be binding on either body. Few of the Associate Reformed ministers were present at the Convention, and they mostly of the younger ministry. It was natural that they should feel embarrassed, and in the fear of yielding too much should not yield enough. The Convention did in part succeed. In guarded language the Associate

Reformed portion of that Convention expressed the opinion, that the principle for which we contend (Christian liberty in worship) would be conceded."

The Rev. Mr. Bishop thought the Assembly ought not to cut short this subject just here. 1. The Committee do not believe the matter has reached a finality. 2. The doings of an informal conference of the Associate Reformed body have been mistaken for official action of their Church. It is no such thing. And 3. The correspondence, thus far, has done good; by continuing it, much more will be gained.

Dr. McKinney opposed the discharge of the Committee—1st, Because the subject is one of serious importance, and has not been exhausted. 2d, Because the papers presented are truly to be regarded as the work of a committee rather than of the body itself. He had lived with these people in habits of intimacy, and often preached to them. He well knew their feelings towards us. They and we have come together within the last six months more than in the previous twenty years. Formerly they thought we had among us no religion, and we thought they had none. But we have learned to know each other better. These discussions have done us all good, and even the writings of Dr. Breckinridge have had their share in the good work.

Judge Calhoun, of Alabama, regretted to differ from brethren he venerated. The similarity of doctrines between the members of this body and the Assembly, the tenacity with which they had adhered to their principles, and their acknowledged piety and Christian spirit, were guarantees that they would introduce no disturbing element. He described, from personal knowledge, their purity of character, their heroic adherence to the usages of their fathers, and their devotion to the truth; and, though the time of union might be far distant, he thought true policy and Christian sympathy demanded the continuance of the Committee. He still had hope. Have not similar bodies been consolidated in Ireland. The changes he had witnessed among these brethren convinced him that the remaining obstacles would be removed. The great body of the younger

members would even now gladly hail the union, and probably on terms agreeable to us.

Mr. Eagleson, of the Special Committee appointed to consider the matter of continuing in office the Committee of Conference with the Synod of the Associate Reformed Church of the South, submitted the following report and resolutions :

The Committee, to whom was referred the report of the Committee of Conference in reference to a closer union between the Associate Reformed Synod of the South and the Presbyterian Church, represent that they have carefully examined said report, and recommend the adoption of the following resolutions :

1. *Resolved*, That the fidelity of the Committee be approved.
2. *Resolved*, That the Committee be continued with addition of the following persons, viz: Chancellor Job Johnson, Rev. Messrs. Thomas Hoyt, Thomas L. McBryde, D. D., and J. H. Thornwell, D. D. Said Committees to report to the next General Assembly.

*Resolved*, That it be recommended to all, and especially to our ministers and churches in the South, to circulate for examination and use, the psalms and hymn books of our Church, with selections from the Book of Psalms in metre, according to the versions used in the Church of Scotland.

The report and resolutions were adopted; and Rev. Mr. Young, the delegate from the Associate Synod, made an appropriate response.

We are better satisfied with this result, (the continuance of the Committee yet longer,) than if it had terminated otherwise. The origin of the Secession Church was an honorable one. When Ebenezer Erskine and his associates stood aloof from the Church of Scotland, and seceded from it, it was on a just principle—the principle of resistance to tyranny and error. Their secession originally was not from the *Church* of Scotland, but from the reigning party in it, the Moderates of that day, by whom heresy was protected, sound doctrine condemned, the rights of congregations violated. The secession of 1733 and 4, was on the same ground with the disruption of 1843, when Chalmers led forth the Free Church of Scotland from the Church of the Establishment, in that ever memorable exodus which filled the

world with admiration. They were, indeed, few in numbers, and were treated with great severity. In this severity they became unduly obstinate, but they were noted for godliness and doctrinal purity. We need only mention the names of the Erskines and James Fisher in illustration.

We do not sympathize in the fears expressed that the union with these brethren will introduce into our body a disturbing element. This was not so when, in 1822, a portion of the Associate Reformed Synod of the North came into our Church, and became a component part of it. Those brethren have been esteemed as among our most orthodox and useful members. In the struggle of 1837, the New School charged that we were instigated in our reform measures by this element. Even if it were so, we have never regretted the measures we then took. To the honor of the Secession Church be it said, that in the defection from the faith, which in former years had nearly ruined the Church of Ireland, this body stood firmly by the doctrines of the Cross, and by the salt of their truth and grace, contributed much to preserve that important branch of our Presbyterian family from apostacy. As to intercommunion, we would apprehend no difficulty. Their communion with us would be unrestricted. We may leave it with propriety to sessions, who are the original judges in the case, to decide how far intercommunion with other denominations should be carried. We might bear with them in this, and forbear, as they must do with us. And as to psalmody, which, in reality, is the only ground of present separation, they should remember that it formed no part of the original testimony of their founders; while we, on our part, should recollect that we are the only Presbyterians worshipping God in the English tongue, who do not use the version of Rouse. To those accustomed to its use, it has a venerable sanctity, notwithstanding its rugged verse. Its author, who sat in the British Parliament, was also a lay member of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, who sanctioned this book on the 14th November, 1645. It was revised by the General Assembly of Scotland, and adopted in 1648. The Westminster Assembly are said to have approved and acted upon the principle also, that "in using the book of

Psalms in the praises of God, we should not only keep to the *sense*, but to the *words* of the sacred text." We have not been able to ascertain this from any adequate authority. Certain it is that the Church of Scotland have used *paraphrases* of passages of Scripture from the Old and New Testament, for some one or two hundred years. Our Fathers brought this psalmody with them to these shores, and its use in our churches has never been repealed by any act of our highest ecclesiastical court. It has at different times allowed of the use of Watt's imitation of David's Psalms, and of his Hymns, and has provided for its churches the book of Psalms and Hymns now in use, without designing to exclude or prohibit the other. And not without considerable commotions among ourselves, was the New Psalmody first introduced. The Scotch version, too, is associated in the minds of those who use it, with the martyrdom of their fathers. In the martyrologies of the Church of Scotland, how often do we find the martyr at the stake or scaffold, chanting some portion of these Psalms as he is about to receive his dreadful baptism of blood. Their proposition that we join them in securing a new poetic, yet close version of the Psalms, is attended with great difficulties. Undoubtedly a smoother version than Rouse's could be made, and equal closeness to the text be preserved. But an absolutely *literal* version in unconstrained and "numerous verse," is perfectly unattainable. The number, rhythm and movement of true lyric poetry, can be secured only by a free translation made by a poet's hand. If we must confine ourselves to a literal translation in Divine worship, the version must be in *prose*, and the Gregorian chants, or some other such, be introduced in our church music, or it must continue to be inharmonious and constrained.

Our negotiations with our brethren of the Associate Reformed have, thus far, failed to result in that union which was hoped for. If this could be effected by bringing their Psalmody into connection with ours, by publishing in the same book either the version of Rouse or the new one they seem to desire, so that it could be met with by them throughout the bounds of the Church, this seems to us a concession, if it is entitled to this

name, which we could afford to make, and by omitting some of the least important duplicates of the Psalms found in each book, and some few of our Hymns, the size and cost of our book would not be greatly increased. An overture asking that the Psalms of David, in Rouse's Version, or such other as may be acceptable to the Associate Reformed Synod of the South, be published in the front part of our Book of Psalms and Hymns, was sent up to the Assembly by the Presbytery of Knoxville, but the Assembly declined to take action upon it *at present*. If union of these two bodies could be effected, it would secure in many neighborhoods strong Presbyterian Churches where now there are weak and feeble ones, or where each party is too inconsiderable in number to attempt any organization at all. For the want of it the Presbyterian cause is losing, especially in newly settled places, every day.

UNION WITH THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD OF THE SOUTH.  
(NEW SCHOOL.)

The Southern portion of New School General Assembly separated from that organization in May, 1857, in consequence of the spirit of abolition prevailing in that body. The ministers and churches who thus seceded, met in Convention subsequently at Richmond, and took measures for another and more general meeting, which assembled at Knoxville, and organized themselves into a Synod, on the 2d of April, 1858. This Synod appointed a Committee to confer with the Old School General Assembly on the subject of union. This Committee, consisting of Rev. C. H. Read, D. D., and \_\_\_\_\_ were understood to be in attendance. On motion of Rev. Mr. Cunningham, the subject of conference with this Committee was taken up. A motion made by Dr. Van Rensselaer to appoint a committee of three to meet this Committee of Conference, gave rise to a debate, in which Dr. Breckinridge, Mr. Cobb and Rev. Dr. Hoge participated. Dr. Breckinridge "was one of the few ministers who fought through the whole war of 1837. He had nothing to retract. We should take care that our extended and extending body is not rendered discordant by inharmonious elements. At the time of the great division there were minis-

ters and churches who went with the New School who ought to have been with us; but this is a very different thing from saying that as bodies they and we should be one. He had personal knowledge that there are leading gentlemen in that body who are not like-minded with us. The body itself is not agreed as to the propositions they make us. Of nineteen gentlemen, ten voted for the propositions and nine against them. He agreed with the nine. We are called upon by them to retract our deliberate action as to the ex-scinded Synods—a thing we did considerately, and prayerfully, and which has been approved by the Church, and approved by God—to unite with them. As to abolitionism, the world has periodical periods of madness. This moral epidemic of late has raged in the North, and produced scenes of folly and absurdity which have astonished all sane and prudent men. But the conviction which has always swayed this Assembly is gaining ground, that Ministers, in their sacred capacity as ministers, have nothing to do with matters apart from the doctrines of salvation.

+ On the terms proposed he would not treat with his own father or his own brother. Cut his body into ten thousand pieces, and it was his individual conviction, that every individual piece of him would protest.” Thos. R. R. Cobb, Esq., plead eloquently for the Committee of Conference. “This,” said he, “is the battle of a past age. Of all the members belonging to this Assembly, Dr. Breckinridge is, perhaps, the only one remaining who fought in the beginning of the contest. In the contest which now presents itself—the contest of brotherly love and Christian charity, let us outvie them.” Dr. Hoge objected to the Committee of Conference: “1. Because without their terms officially before us, we are acting in the dark. 2. To appoint such a Committee will be the beginning of controversy with them. 3. Their terms, as published in the newspapers, indicate a wish to introduce into our body the elements of another contention. 4. The fact that they propose to us to change our views is indelicate and improper. 5. He doubts whether the Assembly has power to enter into any work of this kind, further than to prepare it and send it down to Presbyteries.”

The motion to appoint a Committee of Conference with the

Corresponding Committee of the New School prevailed, and the Rev. Drs. Van Rensselaer and Palmer and the Rev. Mr. Cunningham, were appointed by the Moderator, to obtain from the Committee of the United Synod, organized at Knoxville, their terms of union. This Committee subsequently reported that they had met that Committee, and, as the result of their meeting, asked leave to submit the following, which embraces the

TERMS OF UNION :

This may certify, that the meeting of the United Synod of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, which was organized in Knoxville, Tennessee, the 2d day of April, 1858, the following action, being instructions to the Committee of Two appointed to confer with a Committee of the Old School General Assembly in the event of that body appointing one for the purpose, with reference to a union of the two bodies, was taken.

*Resolved*, That said Committee be directed to propose to the Committee appointed by the General Assembly, the following terms of union as indispensable to our honorable union; on our part :

“1st. We agree to unite as ecclesiastical bodies by declaring, as this Synod now does, our approval of the Westminster Confession of Faith, and Larger and Shorter Catechisms, as an orthodox and excellent system of Christian doctrine; and, also, our adherence to the plan of Worship, Government and Discipline, contained in the Westminster Directory.

“2d. Both bodies agree in declaring it to be a fundamental principle, in the Presbyterian Church, that no judicatory of the Church can, *for any cause whatever*, by an act of legislation, constitutionally condemn, or exclude from the Church, other judicatories, or ministers or private members, without a process of trial, such as is prescribed in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church.

“3rd. Both bodies agree that it is consistent with the requirements of the Westminster Confession of Faith to receive said Confession according to the adopting Act of 1729, to wit: As containing all the essential truths of Christianity, and also the doctrines that distinguish the Calvinistic from the Pelagian, Socinian and Arminian systems of theology. We agree likewise in believing that this system of doctrine includes the following truths, viz: The Trinity, the incarnation and deity of Christ, the fall and original sin, atonement, justification by faith, per-

sonal election, effectual calling, perseverance of the saints, the eternal happiness of the righteous, and eternal punishment of the wicked.

“4th. Both bodies agree in declaring that slaveholding, or the relation of master and slave, cannot, *in any case*, be a bar to membership in the Church of Christ. And while they admit the right of the judicatories of the Church to take cognizance, in the way prescribed in the Constitution, of cruelties practiced in the relation, they hereby declare the opinion, that as the continuance or abolition of the system of slavery, in this country, belongs exclusively to the State, the discussion or agitation of slavery, further than pertains to the moral and religious duties, arising from the relation, is inappropriate to the functions of Church judicatories.

“5th. It is further agreed that in effecting the union, the Presbyteries connected with this Synod shall be united as Presbyteries, and without an examination of their ministers, with the Synods belonging to the General Assembly, to which, because of their geographical limits, they should be attached, excepting that the Synod of Tennessee and the North Alabama Presbytery shall retain their name, and occupy their present territory.

“6th. In the event of the General Assembly agreeing to the above terms, the Committee of Synod are directed to communicate the fact to the Presbyteries in connection with this Synod, and the Presbyteries are hereby requested by the United Synod to take action upon the terms of union agreed upon by the Committees of Synod and the General Assembly, and to send a copy of their minute to the United Synod that will meet in Lynchburg on the third Thursday in May, 1859.

“7. The Committee appointed by this Synod to confer with a Committee of the General Assembly, are hereby directed to attend the meeting of the Assembly in New Orleans in May next, and present the preamble and first two resolutions adopted by this Synod as their authority for requesting a conference with a Committee appointed by the General Assembly to the General Assembly, which will then be in session in that city. And if no member of the Committee should be able to attend the meeting of the Assembly in New Orleans, they are directed to send a copy of the preamble and first two resolutions to the Moderator of the Assembly, and request that body, if they should think proper, to appoint a Committee for the purpose above specified, to designate a time immediately after the adjournment of the Assembly for a conference of the Committees. The Committee of this Synod are requested, in

the event of a conference being had with a Committee of the Old School Assembly, to publish, as soon as practicable, the result of their consultations."

JOSEPH H. MARTIN,  
*Permanent Clerk of the United Synod.*

The following additional article was submitted and adopted :

"8th. That in the event no union is agreed to, the Committee be directed to propose to the General Assembly the establishment of a mutual correspondence in the future between us as ecclesiastical bodies."

A true extract from the minutes.

JOSEPH H. MARTIN,  
*Permanent Clerk of the United Synod.*

The action of the Assembly on this whole subject is expressed in the following minute, which had been offered by Dr. Breckinridge in the opening of this discussion, and being amended, was unanimously adopted :

1. The Committee appointed by the United Synod of the Presbyterian Church has communicated to this Assembly the official action of said Synod, settling, on their part, the "*terms of union*" by them declared to be "*indispensable*;" and the Assembly is informed, through the public press, of the contents of papers adopted by that Synod, and called by it "*A declaration of principles*." In the judgment of this Assembly, those official papers do not afford a basis of Conference upon which this Assembly is able to see that there is any prospect of advancing the interests of Christ's kingdom in general, or those of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, or those of the United Synod of the Presbyterian Church in particular.

2. The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America has always received, frankly and in Christian love, all churches, office-bearers, and private persons of all denominations, making application for admission into her communion, upon the single condition that they are like-minded with herself. At this time ample provision is made in her existing acts and ordinances, for the reception of all such into her communion, on terms and by methods precisely equivalent, and, where it is possible, identical with those provided in regard to her own children, reared in her own bosom. Seeing that it was in a voluntary secession from the Presbyterian Church that the present difficulties of the United Synod of the Presbyterians had their origin, and that the door has always been open for the orderly

return of such of those who left us as were like-minded with us, it can hardly be unexpected that we decline any official conference based on terms which appear to us to involve a condemnation of ourselves, and a renunciation of the rich and peculiar favor of God upon us, in the very matters which led to their secession from our Church twenty years ago.

3. With reference to the recent secession of the New School body, this General Assembly does not see in that event, or in anything which has hitherto resulted from it, any call of Providence for the Presbyterian Church to take any new steps whatever, either with the view of union or that of a closer intercourse than now exists, with either of the parts into which that body is now divided. The subjects upon which the whole New School body differed from us, at the period of their secession from us, and the subjects upon which the two very unequal portions of that body have recently separated from each other, are questions upon which we, as a denomination, are at peace, and with regard to the whole of which we see no occasion to revise the understood and unalterable faith of our Church, or to enter upon fruitless conferences.

It was further resolved that the Moderator of the Assembly communicate the minute now adopted, to the "United Synod of the Presbyterian Church," as the official act of this Assembly.

#### THEOLOGICAL SEMINARIES.

On Wednesday, May 12th, Dr. Dumont, from the Committee on Theological Seminaries, made the following report, which was adopted:

The Committee on Theological Seminaries report that they have examined the reports of Seminaries under the care of the General Assembly, as follows: Princeton, N. J., Union, Va., Western, Penn., Danville, Ky. All these Seminaries during the past year have been highly favored. The teachers have been faithful and the pupils diligent and exemplary. The numbers in attendance have increased, and a desire for the Missionary field has been manifested. It has generally been a year of health, and but one death has occurred. The Committee, in view of the pecuniary necessities of these institutions, recommend the reiteration of the resolution of the last Assembly, viz.: "That the churches be urged to complete the endowment of those Seminaries that are not yet fully endowed; to increase

the number of scholarships; to furnish funds for repairs and erection of suitable buildings, and the enlargement of libraries.”

*Seminary of Princeton.*—The Directors of Princeton Seminary have “resolved,” that the General Assembly be requested to amend the Plan of the Seminary, Art. II., sec. 1, so as to erase the following words: “And the President, or, in case of his absence, one of the Vice-Presidents shall be one.” The Committee recommend that the request be granted, and that the Plan of the Seminary be so amended.

*Union Seminary, Va.*—In the Report of the Directors of the Union Seminary of Virginia, they request “that the Board of Directors be authorized, with the concurrence of other judicatories, to whose care the Assembly has committed the Institution, to transfer to ‘the Trustees of Union Theological Seminary in the county of Prince Edward,’ recently incorporated by the General Assembly of Virginia, all the lands, funds and other property now committed to the trust of the Directors.”

The Committee recommend that the request be granted, and the following resolution adopted, viz.:

*Resolved,* That the Board of Directors of the Union Theological Seminary in Virginia be authorized, with the concurrence of the Synod of Virginia, the Synod of North Carolina, and the Presbytery of Winchester, to transfer to the Trustees of Union Theological Seminary, in the county of Prince Edward, Va., all the lands, funds and other property belonging to said Seminary, now in the hands of said Directors, or which may hereafter come into their hands.

*Danville Seminary, Ky.*—By the Report of the Directors of Danville Seminary, it will devolve on the Assembly, at its present session, to elect a Professor of Church Government and Pastoral Theology, to fill the chair made vacant by the resignation of Stuart Robinson, D. D. The Committee recommend that it be the order of the day, on Friday, at — o’clock, to elect a Professor of Church Government and Pastoral Theology, in Danville Seminary.

*Resolved,* That the arrangement made for this year to terminate the session of the Theological Seminary at Princeton, on the last Wednesday of April, be made permanent.

It was subsequently ordered, that the election of a Professor in the Danville Theological Seminary, to fill the vacancy occasioned by the resignation of the Rev. S. Robinson, D. D., be made the first order of the day for Monday next, (May 17th.) Nominations to fill the vacant Professorship were made on Friday, May 14th. L. J. Halsey, D. D., of Louisville; Rev. Joseph B. Stratton, D. D., of Natchez; Rev. S. J. P. Anderson, D. D., of St. Louis; Rev. T. E. Peck, of Baltimore; and Rev. A. Hamilton, D. D., of Pennsylvania, were severally nominated. The Assembly then, in pursuance of a standing rule, engaged in solemn prayer for Divine direction in the election of a Professor. In this prayer Dr. L. W. Green led the Assembly. On Monday morning, May 17th, the election took place. The name of the Rev. Dr. Anderson was withdrawn with leave of the House. Permission was also obtained by Mr. Smylie, the nominator, to withdraw the name of Dr. Halsey, at which moment Dr. Breckinridge had leave to address the Assembly. "He was not authorized," he said, "to speak for the Directors, or the Faculty. The Directors were prohibited from making any nomination, yet they had expressed their preference, and these were for the Rev. Dr. Van Rensselaer. But that gentleman peremptorily said he 'was not fit.' His next choice was the present Moderator, (Dr. Scott,) but that gentleman gave no encouragement. He was then at the end of his string. He would frankly say, that the exigencies of their case require a man who has either no particular sectional character, or, if any, it should be with the South. Two out of the present Faculty were from the North, and he himself is from no further South than Kentucky. The attempt has been made to create the impression that the Seminary is a Kentucky affair. But for this he would favor the election of Dr. Halsey. Upon the whole his mind has inclined to the Rev. Dr. Stratton, of Natchez. Nevertheless, you are to understand that we can make no nomination, and have no preference."

Dr. Junkin then withdrew the name of Mr. Peck, and Dr. Halsey's name was also allowed to be withdrawn. Rev. Dr. Breckinridge then moved that it be the sense of this House

that the Rev. Joseph B. Stratton be the Professor of Church Government and Pastoral Theology in Danville Theological Seminary. This was unanimously agreed to, and Rev. Drs. Green and Baird, and Rev. Mr. Worrell were appointed a committee to inform Dr. Stratton of his election, and to urge his acceptance of the position. Thus, with a solemnity and deliberation every way suited to so important an occasion, was this election conducted, and a worthy, able and beloved minister chosen to an important chair in the young but flourishing Seminary at Danville.

SERMONS DELIVERED BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY.

The Historical Discourse was delivered before the Assembly on Friday night, May 7th, under the appointment of the Presbyterian Historical Society, by Rev. George Howe, D. D., of the Theological Seminary, Columbia, S. C.; the Sermon on Foreign Missions, on Monday night, May 10th, by Rev. A. A. Porter, of Selma, Alabama; the Sermon on the interests of the Board of Publication, on Tuesday night, by Rev. S. P. J. Anderson, D. D., of St. Louis, Missouri; the Sermon on Education, on Thursday night, by Rev. J. N. Waddel, D. D., of La Grange College, Tennessee.

Mr. Lowrie moved that it be made the second order of the day for Friday next, to elect a preacher in behalf of the Foreign Board. An amendment, proposing to include in the order the election of preachers in behalf of all the Boards, was made and accepted.

Dr. Junkin had no objection to making this business a special order, but would respectfully invite the attention of his brethren to the question, *cui bono*, in regard to these sermons as a permanent appendage to the exercises of the General Assembly. Is the amount of good accomplished by them commensurate with the time, talent and money expended upon them? He was himself persuaded that one such scene as has just closed, was better calculated to further our great cause, than many sermons, excellent as they may be. Is the Church never to be considered as informed upon the doctrinal basis, or the Scriptural motives of Church enterprise? If the arrangement, which

seems about assuming the claims of a permanent institution, be designed to spread light, and do good in the most effective way; and if it can be shown that past experience has proven its efficiency, let it continue. But if one design, and a chief one, be to awaken interest, by extending compliments to particular ministers or churches, it is unworthy of the Church and of the cause. He merely desired to ask his brethren to ponder the question, and make up their minds in due season.

These remarks met with no response from the Assembly, and when this matter came up for action, Dr. B. M. Palmer as principal, and Dr. R. L. Stanton as alternate, were elected to preach before the next Assembly on Foreign Missions; Rev. Henry C. Clark as principal, and J. C. Brown as alternate, to preach on Domestic Missions; Dr. Nicholas Murray as principal, and Dr. Brown as alternate, to preach on Education.

#### JUDICIAL CASES.

The Judicial Committee made the following report in the case of the Rev. Mr. Thatcher, of the Synod of Albany.

*Judicial Case No. 1.*—Complaint of Rev. J. Fisher against the action of Albany Synod in the case of the Rev. F. H. Thatcher. The Presbytery permitted Mr. Thatcher to demit the office of the Gospel Ministry, of which action complaint was made by Mr. Fisher to the Synod in 1856. This complaint was sustained, but no copy of it appears on record, and no order was made to Presbytery on the action of Synod, as to what disposition Presbytery should make of Mr. Thatcher, but no protest was entered against this action, and no complaint was taken to this body. In 1857, at Synod, a memorial was presented from the Presbytery, asking Synod to define their action, which memorial was laid on the table. The memorial before us purports to lie against this latter action—yet it is called a complaint “of the action of Synod in the case of Rev. F. H. Thatcher,” and all the reasons of the complaint are against said action. The Committee recommend that the case be dismissed. 1. Because the complaint was not made in time. 2. Because the case being decided, should not be taken up on the complaint of a single individual. 3. Because neither the

complaint which the Synod sustained, nor the records of the Presbytery, are to be had here. Rev. Mr. Tully (charged with the management of this case for the brother, who was not present), explained at length, and said that the only action here sought for is to define the status of Mr. Thatcher. Rev. Dr. Halley replied. He complained that the proceedings which have brought the matter before this Assembly, are all wrong and unfair; that it was introduced in the Synod to which it belongs at the very last hour of a protracted session. He claimed that it is unfair to take it out of the hands of the Synod. That body is competent to decide, and is bent on doing justly and righteously. He urged, as an act of duty and right, that the subject be sent back to the Synod.

This case, thus introduced, was taken up on the eleventh day of the Session, the report of the Judicial Committee concurred in and the case dismissed, the Assembly expressing no opinion as to the original action of the Presbytery allowing Mr. Thatcher to demit his office.

*Judicial Case No. 2*—Which was styled an appeal, taken by the Presbytery of Kaskaskia from the decision of the Synod of Illinois, in the case of the complaint of Rev. James Stafford and others, against the Presbytery of Kaskaskia, for refusing to receive a Church organized at Trenton. The Judicial Committee believing that the act referred to was administrative rather than judicial, considered it a case of complaint rather than of appeal and recommended that it be so issued. This case was not reached till the last day of the Session, when many had left for their homes. Dr. Baird moved that the appellants have leave to withdraw their appeal, on the ground that the Presbytery had wrongfully made it an appeal, rather than a complaint, for the avowed purpose (as stated before the Judicial Committee) of arresting proceedings, removing Mr. Stafford from his field, and dispersing or defeating the progress of that church. They ought not to be allowed the benefit of their own wrong. After some further explanations the motion of Dr. Baird was adopted and the case dismissed.

*Judicial Case No. 3*.—The complaint of E. W. Sawyer and others against the decision of the Synod of Chicago, in the case

of O. M. Hoagland. Mr. Hoagland had been summoned to appear before the Session of which he was a member, on the charge of prevarication. After the Session had begun the trial of the case, they referred the whole to Presbytery, and Presbytery decided that there was no valid ground of accusation against Mr. Hoagland. Appeal was taken to the Synod of Chicago who confirmed the decision of Presbytery. An appeal was now taken to the Assembly, and the appellants had failed to appear, on the alleged ground of ill health of one of the parties who was expected to attend. Meanwhile, Mr. Hoagland was denied church privileges by the pastor. The Judicial Committee report the case as being fallen from, by the failure of the complainants to appear and prosecute their complaint. They recommended that the complaint be dismissed, and that Mr. Hoagland be considered as entitled to all his former rights and privileges in the Church of Hopewell. This report was adopted.

*Judicial Case No. 4.*—The appeal and complaint of Rev. Robert Finley and Smith Bloomfield, against the Synod of New Jersey, for their action touching the affairs of the Second Church in Woodbridge. This was the most important case before the Assembly, and occupied nearly two days.

The Session of the church had instituted discipline against certain members of the church for acts connected with a fourth of July festival. The discipline was commenced about six months after the acts complained of. Part of the congregation sided with the Session, and part against it. The parties under discipline complained to Presbytery, that in the circumstances then existing, justice could not be done them, and Presbytery remitted them to the Session, as the court having jurisdiction. Again they came to Presbytery with a memorial from sixty-seven persons, desiring that a parish meeting might be called, and they were again remitted to the Session. Some months after, on the night before the spring meeting of Presbytery, the pastor and Session bring charges against those who appeared before Presbytery against them. Presbytery, at this third meeting, advises a suspension of these trials, and under its general power “to visit churches for the purpose of inquiring

into their state, and redress the evils that may have arisen in them," appointed a commission to investigate the circumstances, who, after inquiring diligently into the case, reported that a majority of the trustees of the session, and of the congregation, desired the resignation of the pastor. Things grew worse and worse. At length the Session gave notice of a meeting, in connection with a lecture preparatory to the communion, to choose additional elders. When the pastor was proceeding to this business, after the lecture, the accused party and their friends nominated a moderator of their own, and created a disgraceful tumult. After the pastor had pronounced the benediction, he, with a majority of the church, retired, and the party remaining in the house passed resolutions denouncing the pastor. The trustees then closed the church, which remained shut three consecutive Sabbaths, but on the remonstrance of Presbytery it was again opened.

Charges were then tabled by the Session and pastor at a meeting, when all were not present, against six persons, one of whom was a member of Session, and they proceeded at once to discipline them. The Presbytery was convened at the call of the Committee, to hear their report. That report recommended: 1. That the session be recommended and enjoined to call a parish meeting, by a certain time, to get an orderly expression of the will of the people as to the disposition of the pastoral relation. 2. To avoid prejudice, they recommended that a neighboring minister be called to preside. 3. That none but church members and pew holders be voters. 4. That besides the Commissioners, to be selected by the people, the pastor and an elder should appear before the Presbytery. 5. That in consequence of the new cases of discipline, arising out of the recent difficulties, therefore, *Resolved*, That the Session be enjoined to suspend these trials until after the action of Presbytery, on the foregoing recommendation.

Presbytery then took action, recommended the cessation of these acts of discipline, dissolved the pastoral relation, recommended the resignation of one member of Session, and the election of others. The vote in Presbytery was nearly unanimous, 21 to 3, and 4 *non liquets*. Synod sustained Presbytery by a vote of 54 to 24. Mr. Finley, the pastor, has removed to

Illinois; thirty-seven members of the church have joined the Dutch Reformed, and the church is harmonious under another pastor. These facts are gathered principally from the statements of the Presbytery in its defence, as reported in the public prints.

Dr. Hoge, who assisted in the defence, maintained that Presbytery is the fundamental council in our form of government, and the fountain of power. Presbyteries constitute Sessions, have constituted the General Assembly, and reserve to themselves powers which belong neither to Synods nor Sessions. They may declare a church vacant, can remove a pastor when the church applies for it; but they are not restricted to this, but are endowed with the power of visitation to redress grievances. If the aggrieved party were a minority, they had a right to apply for redress. The majority were prevented from calling a meeting of the congregation by the majority of the Session. If the people came irregularly before Session, it was because they were tyrannized over. Dr. Breckinridge, counsel for Mr. Finley, said this was a struggle for power on the part of the trustees against the Session. These trustees had violated their trust. Civil power cannot control the ecclesiastical, but merely protect it, and follow its wishes in regard to its trusts. The majority, if they were opposed to the pastor and Session, could have *demande*d from the Session a congregational meeting, and if refused, they could have complained to Presbytery. He differed, with deference, from Dr. Hoge on a question of government and discipline. Historically, there was no doubt on the subject. Makemie preached the gospel, and churches were gathered, other laborers came, and these churches formed themselves into a Presbytery. This Presbytery divided itself and formed the original Synod. This Synod divided itself and formed the Assembly, which is the General Assembly of *The Church* and not *the churches*. The Parochial Presbytery is the basis of our power. This is the Church. The final action of Presbytery was wrong. The weak have no protection except in *forms* of law. There are *forms* prescribed for installing pastors and dissolving their relations, and the Presbytery has no power to dispense with them. The appellant alleges that the whole proceedings, from first to last, are irregular and un-

warranted, and are an exercise of ecclesiastical tyranny, because: 1. A Presbytery has no power to make an uncalled-for interference with the internal affairs of a church, and tear up its whole proceedings. 2. A Presbytery can not dissolve the pastoral relation when neither the church, congregation nor pastor, requests its action. 3. The duty of the Presbytery was to have sustained the hands of the Session in maintaining purity of discipline and doctrine. 4. The Presbytery has virtually acknowledged its error in finally ordering to be done what the Session had attempted to do, both as regards the cases of discipline and the election of elders. 5. The Presbytery and Synod have virtually stood up with the world against the Session, aiding the trustees and the outside congregation to control in spiritual things. To conclude: in his judgment, the Assembly ought to set aside the judgment of the Synod, and to sustain the appeal. He was instructed to say, that there was never a time when Mr. Finley would not have gladly yielded to the desire of his people, if they, as a church, had ever said the word. Dr. McGill maintained also, 1. That a Presbytery has no power to dissolve the pastoral relation without the application of either pastor or people. 2. Presbytery has no power to interfere for the arrest of proceedings in the court below. By permitting a higher court to invade the province of a court below, you destroy the court above as a court of appeal, and thus overthrow the beautiful symmetry and gradations of our whole system. Mr. Craven was a member of the Synod, and voted against its decision. He proceeded to assign the reasons which determined his vote on that occasion. He said the Presbytery may arrest a decision, but in order to do so correctly, they must proceed regularly. The steps are laid down in our book of discipline. He read the law. The first step is to cite the judicatory. This step was never taken; its not being taken vitiates the whole proceeding. Never having been cited to appear, the arrest of decision could not take place. 2. A committee was appointed. But when such a committee is appointed, the parties must be cited, and have the means of producing rebutting testimony. This was not done. They sat with closed doors. 3. The evidence upon which the committee formed their opinion, was not introduced. It does not appear

that it was ever read in Presbytery. 4. The Presbytery directs the congregation to elect four elders; but where on the books do Presbytery find the authority to order the election of four elders? It was their duty to resist the exercise of unconstitutional power. 5. There are ways pointed out by the law in which the pastoral relation may be dissolved. Neither of these modes were followed by the Presbytery in the case of this pastor. The Presbytery have the right to visit—that implies the right to convene. They might have sent a committee to that church, and issued an order convening the congregation. This was not done. If there is an opposition which is factious, it should not be indulged. If it arises from heresy in doctrine on the part of the pastor, he should have been proceeded against judicially, and he should have been deposed. If the Presbytery were right in all their action, they were wrong in refusing the appeal.

The roll of the Assembly being called, the vote resulted as follows: To sustain the appeal, 84; to sustain in part, 24; not to sustain, 30; *non liquet*, 2. A paper was subsequently introduced by Dr. Palmer, defining the effect of this vote, that it was not to reverse the decisions of the court below, and restore Mr. Finley to his rights in the church at Woodbridge, plainly showing that though the case, by sufferance, had been treated as a case of appeal, it was really a complaint against acts administrative and not strictly judicial. The paper alluded to is as follows:

This General Assembly sustains the appeal and complaint of Robert S. Finley and Smith Bloomfield, against the Synod of New Jersey.

In this decision it is not intended to censure the courts below for want of zeal and faithfulness in doing according to their best judgment what the case required. Much less is it intended to reverse, in form, what has been done in the case of Mr. Finley, so as to restore him to his pastoral relation in the Second Church of Woodbridge; for this would be not only impracticable in the circumstances as they now exist, but inexpedient, even if it were practicable.

But the Presbytery of Elizabethtown erred in attempting too much to direct and control the action of that Session, interfering without being called to do so, according to the forms of our Constitution; in arresting the process of discipline before

it had been issued—while the Session was pursuing it in an orderly manner; and in dissolving the pastoral relation upon a mere presumption of a majority of the people desiring it, without the regular application of either party; thus making what they judged a necessity in the case, of more importance than the forms of the Constitution.

The Synod of New Jersey erred, not only in sustaining the action of the Presbytery in this case, but also in refusing to entertain as an appeal the remedy sought by a party who was both injured and aggrieved by said action of the Presbytery.

The following dissent was presented, and admitted to record:

The undersigned dissent from the vote of the General Assembly, assigning reasons for the decision in the case of the appeal of the Rev. R. S. Finley, because, in their opinion, it does not express the sense of the Court deciding the case; and because the minority were permitted by this vote to change or modify the deliberate decision of a majority of the Court. (Signed) John H. Rice, E. W. Bedinger, J. A. Smylie, P. E. Bishop, R. V. Shanklin, James Cleland, L. H. Long, R. C. Galbraith, Lilburn R. Railey, D. McQueen, W. E. James, E. M. Gregg.

It seems to be decided by the Assembly in this case:—1. That a Presbytery has no right to interpose to dissolve a pastoral relation, even though in the judgment of the pastor and Presbytery it ought to terminate, when neither the pastor nor the people have expressed the same under the *regular form*, the one by a resignation offered, the other by a regular vote of the congregation. 2. That there can be no meeting of the congregation for such a purpose except one called by the Session. 3. That Session is not bound to call one except upon a petition signed by a majority of the congregation. 4. That if the majority of the congregation do not desire the Session to call such a meeting, nor the pastor resign, the pastoral relation is to continue, whatever may be the immediate result to the peace and harmony of the church and congregation. 5. That Presbytery has no power to interrupt and postpone the process of discipline which is commenced in the Session, however incompetent it may think the court as constituted may be, through its divided state, or by being parties to an active contest, to conduct the case to a successful issue. 6. Whether the Presbytery has power to visit for the redress of grievances, the Assembly did not decide; but it seems to be intimated

that, if it has such a power, there are no means of finding out the wish of the congregation, except by a citation of the same, to ascertain, *by a regular vote*, what may be its desire in the premises.

The Committee who have it in charge to revise the Book of Discipline, will do a great service to the Church if they will define accurately the powers of the several courts; the difference between an appeal and a complaint; and the mode of procedure in the latter; and who are the parties before the court in each case. The vagueness and obscurities of our book, united with the inexperience of our ministers in judicial matters, give rise to great uncertainties often in the administration of discipline.

#### NARRATIVE.

This was an inspiring document, drawn up ably by the Chairman on the Narrative, Rev. Dr. L. J. Halsey. It embodies statements from 117 Presbyteries, all of whom have glad tidings to report, excepting about 12. About 70 Presbyteries, nearly two-thirds of the whole number, have enjoyed deep and powerful revivals of religion. At the close of the Report the Assembly joined in a joyful song of praise, singing in full chorus the 581st Hymn, and was led by Rev. Mr. Grimes, in a prayer of thanksgiving to God.

#### OVERTURES.

*Overture No. 20*—From the minutes of the last Assembly, requesting action of the Assembly in reference to the management of ecclesiastical property, and referred from that Assembly to the present, was then taken up, and was sent down to the Presbyteries with instructions to send up their opinions to the next Assembly.

*Overture No. 13*—In reference to the dismissal of a minister from the sacred office. A minute was sent down to the Presbyteries, for them to answer whether the office is not perpetual, unless the minister relinquishes it, or is disposed of for incapacity.

*Overture No. 15*—A Memorial from Dr. Wm. M. Awl recommended that the next Fourth of July, which occurs on the Sabbath, be observed as a concert of universal prayer; be-

ginning at 10 o'clock, A. M., precisely, by Cincinnati time, and continuing one hour. Adopted.

CONCLUSION.

The usual votes of thanks were passed to the citizens of New Orleans for their unbounded hospitality; to the Press of New Orleans and its Reporters; and a special vote of thanks to the Rev. R. C. Lancey, for his generous and successful efforts in securing a free return on most of the railroads and steamboats to the members in attendance. It was then *Resolved*, on motion of Dr. Junkin, "that this General Assembly be now dissolved, and that another General Assembly, chosen in like manner, be required to meet in the Third Presbyterian Church, in the city of Indianapolis, on the third Thursday of May, A. D. 1859, at 11 o'clock, A. M." The Moderator then made an appropriate and feeling address, the Assembly united in singing the 342d Hymn, the Moderator offered an impressive prayer, and thus closed the General Assembly of 1858.

The circumstances and place of its assembling, the harmony of its counsels, the prevailing unity of its views on all subjects of general interest, the patriotic and conservative influences which prevailed in all its proceedings, notwithstanding its members were convened from every section of this Union, equalling now in territorial extent the Roman Empire; and the true dignity of its deliberations, were sources of high encouragement to its own members, and to all beholders interested in the Kingdom of Christ. To a large part of the Assembly, the country, scenery, and locality were new. They went away with better feelings and a more candid spirit towards those who had looked on them with respect, and treated them with unmeasured kindness. New Orleans itself has a better view of our polity, our numbers, our unity, our strength, and of the honor with which our Lord and Head has crowned us as a Church, than it could otherwise possess. Even the outward political world has been attracted by our oneness, and our conservatism, and has not been silent in its auguries of good to our common country, from the influence of such a ministry and such a Church as have been raised up, in God's providence, over this wide domain.