

[REDACTED]

Library of
Princeton University.
Presented by

Mr. W. S. M'Calla

A
CORRECT NARRATIVE
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
PRESBYTERY OF PHILADELPHIA,
RELATIVE TO THE
RECEPTION AND INSTALLATION
OF
MR. ALBERT BARNES:
WITH
THREE LETTERS IN ANSWER TO ONE, RELATIVE TO
THE AFORESAID PROCEEDINGS.

BY
William
W. L. M'CALLA,
Pastor of the Eighth Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia.

AUDI ALTERAM PARTEM.

PHILADELPHIA :

PRINTED BY RUSSELL & MARTIEN, 22½ WALNUT STREET.

.....

1830.

YIPPIE
YIPPIE
L.N. NOTION

TO THE PUBLIC.

It is hoped that every reader of the following publication will keep constantly in mind that the author has been compelled to it in self-defence. But for this he assuredly would never have made it; nor given more publicity to the proceedings of the Philadelphia Presbytery, in the case of Mr. Barnes, than his trial itself occasioned. Not a single sentence would ever have gone from him to the press, nor, he verily believes, from one of the minority, if their opponents had kept silence on their part. To the writer it did seem, that while the case of Mr. Barnes was yet *sub judice*; while a complaint of the proceedings of Presbytery was yet to be disposed of by the Synod, and perhaps by the General Assembly—the parties in the case, like those in similar circumstances when a cause is yet pending in a civil court, ought not to endeavour to pre-occupy and prejudice the public mind, on the one side or the other. But if one side will not consent to this method of procedure, the other may at length be obliged, in self-defence, to depart from it. Otherwise the public mind may become prejudiced against the silent party; may even take silence for consent; may believe that nothing is said in reply, because nothing to the purpose can be said. Now, let it be remembered, that for three months past, the religious newspapers of our country, far and near, have been teeming with the *ex parte* representations of the majority; and that some of these representations have been collected into a pamphlet, and very widely distributed, under the title of “A Sketch of the Debate and Proceedings of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, in regard to the Installation of the Rev. Albert Barnes, in the First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia”—the pamphlet to which the present publication chiefly responds. Yes, reader, for three months in succession, the minority saw and heard themselves represented as stupid dolts, illiberal bigots, or malicious maligners of their brethren, and observed a profound silence. And have you thought that they were silent, because they were unable to plead their own cause, or were conscious that their cause would not bear a defence? Nothing further from the truth than this. It was because the minority—I can at least

(RECAP)

5503
.147
.6

JUL 28 1905 195213

Digitized by Google

speak for one—had such confidence in the superiority of their arguments when they brought them forward in the presence of a large assembly at the trial before the Presbytery, and because they hoped that a superior judicature would ere long do them justice, that they were willing to rest their reputation and ultimate vindication on these grounds, without entering into an altercation with their brethren in newspapers and pamphlets. But every thing has its limits—Christian forbearance itself will be set down for conscious guilt, or dastardly cowardice, if it never speaks a word in its own defence, when insult and falsehood are heaped upon it without measure. When, therefore, the writer was most unexpectedly called upon by the author of the short letter to which this publication is a reply, for “a statement of the other side of the question,” he determined that he would give it—both to the letter writer and to the public. This letter was probably addressed to William L. M’Calla, because he had been held up, rather more than any other individual, at one time as an object of contempt, and at another of abhorrence; and it was probably wished to hear what such a man could say for himself. William L. M’Calla now says—read and see. He challenges any opponent to deny a single *fact* that he has stated, and if desired, he pledges himself to prove it, by as unquestionable testimony as ever was demanded in a court of law. If in any instance he has been *circumstantially erroneous*—against which he has sedulously endeavoured to guard—he will thank any one, friend or foe, to point it out, and the error shall immediately be acknowledged and corrected. For all the remarks and strictures of the publication he alone is responsible. Let it only be recollected that no reserve as to names and pleadings before Presbytery, and in the public papers, was used by those who compelled him to write, and that he could not reply *on equal ground* without throwing off all reserve, on his part. He has therefore thrown it off—always, however, feeling that he had a sacred responsibility to his divine Master, not to violate truth, nor to array even an antagonist in darker colours than he deserved to wear; but feeling, at the same time, that this was a case which urgently demanded that the truth should be told plainly, and that things should be called by their proper names. If a reply is attempted, he hopes the replicator will have courage enough to appear with his proper name.

NARRATIVE
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS OF THE PHILADELPHIA PRESBYTERY,
IN RELATION TO THE CASE OF
MR. ALBERT BARNES.

[For the following Narrative, the writer is indebted to a friend who had ample opportunities of ascertaining the facts in the case, and he here publishes it without any alteration.]

THE debates in the Presbytery of Philadelphia, on the reception and installation of the Rev. Albert Barnes, have been regarded with unusual interest by many, as involving points of great moment to the Presbyterian Church, in relation both to her discipline and doctrine. They have not only furnished a pregnant theme for conversation, but a subject for the essayist and reporter. Several of the religious periodicals have lent their aid in circulating statements, from which the spirit of impartiality and equal justice has been discarded. Even in the earliest stages of the affair, and previous to any decision, this course was pursued, with the evident intention of prejudicing the public mind, and producing an effect which would influence the final determination of the Presbytery. The truth should never be dreaded, however loudly proclaimed or widely diffused; but when honest intentions are misrepresented, and facts are misstated, alarm is justifiable, and passiveness becomes criminal.

A pamphlet lately published in the city of New York, professes to give an accurate and detailed history of the debates in question, in which the names of the speakers are mentioned, and abstracts of their speeches furnished. The writer of it, in our opinion, was totally disqualified for his task; a disqualification arising either from entire ignorance of his subject, or a determined dishonesty in its exhibition. He alike conceals the weak points of the majority and the strong points of the minority. He has betrayed little capacity for comprehending the argument, and less discretion in publishing his incompetency. In a word, the sketch contains just sufficient colouring of truth, to give plausibility to general misrepresentation. Many, however, may receive his report as true, until they are furnished with more authentic information; and to supply this, we have been reluctantly compelled to abandon the reserve

which we had intended to observe whilst the case was under judgment. A report of speeches which occupied a debate of seven days continuance, is not our intention. Such a report, to be honest, should be full, and would not only be tedious, but at this time, impracticable; and we should consider our candour and integrity in jeopardy by an imitation of the writer of the "Sketch," who reports a long speech in three unmeaning lines of a pamphlet. We must, however, be excused in following his example in one particular; we mean his freedom in the use of names. In exercising this privilege for the purpose of rendering our narrative intelligible, it will be our aim to "render to Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's," avoiding the charge of libel, except where the truth may be construed into libel. This much being premised, we proceed to give the promised detail of circumstances in the order of their occurrence.

In the month of ——— it became the subject of common conversation, that the First Presbyterian Church of this city were directing their attention to the Rev. Albert Barnes, of Morristown, N. J. with the intention of presenting him a call to become their Pastor. His talents, ministerial fidelity, and success, were spoken of in terms of high commendation. At the same time, it was notorious that the candidate had never occupied the pulpit of the First Church, and that with the exception of a few individuals, the congregation were entirely ignorant, as far as their personal experience was concerned, of his ministerial qualifications. In addition to the verbal testimony of friends, a sermon preached and published by Mr. Barnes, was referred to in proof of his ability. This was freely circulated among the congregation, and the commendations bestowed upon it naturally excited the curiosity of many not connected with this Church, to see and peruse it. A rumour was at length heard, that this sermon contained errors in doctrine, which placed it in direct conflict with the doctrinal standards of the Presbyterian Church, and the truth of the rumour was shortly afterwards confirmed in a review* of the sermon, published in the "Philadelphian." This review proposed to place the sermon of Mr. Barnes and the Presbyterian Confession of Faith in *juxta-position*, that the discrepancies between them might be observed at a glance. This publication was decryed as an ungenerous and malignant personal attack upon the author of the sermon, although it speaks for itself, as a temperate exercise of a right which every individual possesses, of canvassing the merits of any published document. A reply from the pen of

* The writer of this review was the Rev. Wm. M. Engles, whose name was revealed by the Editor, the Rev. Dr. Ely, to certain gentlemen belonging to the First Church, who had taken umbrage at the review. This was done without his concurrence, and he felt that he had reason to complain, that persons totally unauthorised to make the demand, and who were disposed to make an ungenerous use of the information, should have been gratified by the Editor at the first expression of their wish.

the Rev. Dr. Wilson soon appeared, and a controversy of considerable length between him and the reviewer was conducted and published in the same periodical.

In the mean time, a congregational meeting had been held in the First Church, and a call was determined upon for the Rev. Mr. Barnes. According to constitutional provision, it was necessary that this call should be submitted to the Presbytery, that they might grant or withhold their permission for its prosecution before the Presbytery of Elizabethtown, of which Mr. Barnes was a member. At this stage, the ecclesiastical proceedings in the case commenced. When the call was presented before the Presbytery, at their stated meeting in April, and permission asked by the commissioners to prosecute it, the venerable Dr. Green arose, and with a manner characterised by kindness and courtesy, solicited the attention of the judicatory whilst he detailed the reasons which would induce him to give a negative vote on the motion then pending. These reasons, he said, were founded upon Mr. Barnes' doctrinal errors, as they had been recently proclaimed to the world in his printed sermon, and upon which he proposed briefly to animadvert. His attempt, however, was hastily interrupted by a comparatively youthful member of the Presbytery, (Mr. Biggs) who affirmed it to be both irregular and unkind, to make the sermon a ground of judgment, as it would virtually amount to an arraignment and trial of Mr. Barnes for heresy, whilst he was beyond the jurisdiction of Presbytery. A motion to this effect was made and seconded, and a debate of considerable length and animation ensued on the point of order. On the one side, it was contended that a congregation had an unquestionable right to call any favourite candidate, provided his standing was regular in a co-ordinate judicatory, and that it was an arbitrary stretch of authority to interfere with that right upon any grounds; that the presentation of a call to Presbytery did not imply a right in them to adjudicate, but was merely a *pro forma* proceeding; and that to urge objections to a call, grounded upon the doctrinal delinquencies of a candidate, however proclaimed in his writings, was *extra-judicial*, whilst he remained unimpeached in the Presbytery to which he regularly appertained. On the other side, it was maintained that a congregation which had voluntarily subjected itself to the jurisdiction of a Presbytery, had no such independent right as that which was pleaded; that their right to call was not more clearly demonstrable than the right of Presbytery to object and refuse permission to proceed to subsequent steps; that the very fact of submitting a call to Presbytery for approval, implied the right of disapproval, and so far from being a mere *pro forma* proceeding, was a direct acknowledgment of jurisdiction; and, finally, that if members of a Presbytery had a right to vote upon such a question, they had a right also to state the reasons which determin-

ed their vote, and if these reasons were deduced from an authentic printed document, they neither violated the constitution of the church nor the laws of brotherly kindness in urging them. The argument being finished, it was decided by a vote of *thirty-seven to ten*, that it was perfectly regular for the members of Presbytery to raise objections to the prosecution of the call from Mr. Barnes' printed sermon; the Rev. Dr. M'Auley and Messrs. Patterson, Belville, Biggs, Sandford, and Hoover being the only ministers who dissented. The attempt to enforce the gag law upon Presbytery having thus happily failed, the sermon of Mr. Barnes was read entire before Presbytery, by its order, and the debate then proceeded upon the original motion, "Shall the call be prosecuted?" The discussion of this question was protracted and singular in a high degree. Those who are now known as the "minority," met the question fearlessly upon its doctrinal merits, and opposed the call because Mr. Barnes had recently published a Sermon on the Way of Salvation, in which,

1. He makes no mention of the cardinal doctrine of justification by faith.

2. In which he contemptuously rejects the doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin.

3. In which he intimates that the first moral taint of the creature is coincident with his first moral action.

4. In which he denies that Christ sustained the penalty of the law, and employs language on the subject highly derogatory to the character of Christ.

5. In which he boldly affirms that the atonement of Christ had no specific reference to individuals.

6. In which he declares, that the Atonement in itself secured the Salvation of no Man, and possessed only a conditional efficacy.

7. In which he maintains that the entire inability of the sinner for holy actions consisted in indisposition of the will; and, finally, in which he declares his independence of all formularies of doctrine, notwithstanding his professed adherence to them.*

* It was thought by the minority, that these were not the *comparatively* venial errors of Hopkinsianism, but the more dangerous ones of Murdock, Taylor, and Fitch, which have recently been grafted on the original stock.

Professor Woods of Andover, in his late admirable reply to some points in the *speculative, philosophical religion* of Dr. Taylor, coincides precisely with the minority of the Philadelphia Presbytery, in estimating the doctrines of the New Haven School. He considers them as in a high degree erroneous and dangerous. His language in the 98th page of his Letters, justly expresses the view by which the minority were influenced in their proceedings. It is as follows: "Whether right or wrong, we have been accustomed to consider the controversy which early arose in the Church between the Orthodox and Pelagians, and which, after the Reformation, was continued between the Lutherans and Calvinists on one side, and the Arminians or Remonstrants on the other, as of radical importance. Now, how would you expect us to feel, and, with our convictions, how ought we to feel, when a brother, who has professed to be decidedly Orthodox, makes an attack upon several of the articles of our faith, and employs language on the subject of moral agency, free will, depravity,

In addition to these reasons, it was also incidentally objected that the call was irregularly framed, omitting one important clause of the form, which is in these words, "and having good hopes, from our past experience of your labours." The fact was, that the congregation had no past experience of the labours of the candidate, as they had never heard him preach; and this fact, which induced the remarkable omission, accounted also for another fact, that but *fifty* votes were given for the call, out of more than *two hundred and twenty* in the congregation who were legally entitled to vote.

On the part of the majority of Presbytery, the debate was conducted in a truly novel manner. With the single exception of Thomas Bradford, Esq. who honestly avowed his coincidence of sentiment with Mr. Barnes upon Hopkinsian ground, there was a studious and persevering endeavour to avoid the doctrinal discussion. The Rev. Dr. M'Auley admitted that the sermon contained some things which were not true, some that were equivocal, and some that were unhappily expressed; but he maintained that we had nothing to do with Mr. Barnes' doctrinal sentiments, although the Presbytery had just decided the validity of such a scrutiny. The Rev. Mr. Sandford occupied the same ground, substantially, and hoped that he might not be considered as giving any opinion upon the doctrinal question. The remarks of the Rev. Dr. Ely were written at length, and read before the Presbytery, and the tenor of them was, that although there were many things in the Sermon which appeared suspicious, yet, with a little of his interpretative and explanatory aid, they could be reconciled with orthodoxy. But the all-powerful argument which appeared to be most relied upon, if we judge from its frequent reiteration, was, that Mr. Barnes had the confidence of many excellent men, that he was an exemplary Christian, and that he had been a successful preacher of the Gospel! This furnished a prolific topic for declamation, and the *understandings* of the Presbyters were forgotten in the anxiety to affect and enlist their *feelings*. A persecuted saint, assailed in his character and impeded in his career of usefulness, was a picture, it would seem, too affecting for the *judgment* of some men to withstand. Whether such appeals were honourable in a doctrinal discussion of this kind, the candid reader is left to decide. But this was not all, attempts were made to overawe the minority. They were told that the *world* had already sounded the alarm of ecclesiastical domination and tyranny—that the discussion was doing great disservice to the cause of religion in the community at large—that public sentiment was too enlightened and liberal to countenance such inquisitorial proceedings—that the call in question was from the *First Presbyterian*

divine influence, &c. which is so like the language of Arminians and Pelagians, that it would require some labour to discover the difference?"

Church in Philadelphia—and that that respectable and important congregation would secede if their wish was denied, and last, though not least, for its preposterousness—that the First Church would decline any future contributions to the Board of Missions, because the Rev. Dr. Green and the Rev. Joshua T. Russell, the President and the General Agent of that Board, were members of the minority!* Arguments of this class, however they might indicate the policy, certainly did little credit to the understandings of those who broached them. They doubtless produced an effect upon some minds; it soon became apparent that there was a popular and an unpopular side to the question, and those who were unwilling to encounter reproach, and submit to misrepresentation, had their resort.

The motion was at length put to the house, "Shall the commissioners have leave to prosecute the call?" and it was carried in the affirmative, by a vote of twenty-one to twelve. The minority then recorded the following Protest, and the Presbytery adjourned.

PROTEST.

We, the minority in the above case, do hereby protest against the foregoing decision for the reasons following, viz:

The Rev. Albert Barnes, the person to whom the call from the First Presbyterian Church was directed, in a Sermon preached, and lately published by him, accompanied by notes, which he has entitled "The Way of Salvation," and in which he professes to give "the leading doctrines of the Bible, respecting God's way of saving men," has, as we conceive, broached errors, which we, as guardians of the purity of the Church, cannot, in any way, countenance; because we believe them to be opposed to the doctrinal standards of the Presbyterian Church, and in their tendency, exceedingly dangerous; as will be seen from the following particulars, viz.

1. It is believed by the undersigned that the Rev. Mr. Barnes has denied in this Sermon, with its accompanying notes, the fundamental doctrine of original sin, as plainly and expressly taught in the standards of our Church. So far from admitting the federal and representative character of Adam, and our responsibility in him, he says at page 6, "Christianity does not charge on men crimes of which they are not guilty. It does not

* We had regarded this as an idle threat, incautiously uttered, but we have since learned that an individual of that congregation, who had pledged himself in the 100 dollar subscription, has since declined to redeem his pledge!

Mr. Russell, from his former associations, was well qualified to engage in this debate, and expose the dangerous speculations of the new school divinity. This he did with much force and ability, and this, we are glad to say, he continued to do, although reminded that a *calculating policy* would best subserve his official success in the management of the Assembly's Missions.

say, as I suppose, *that the sinner is held to be personally answerable for the transgressions of Adam or of any other man*, or that God has given a law which man has no power to obey. Such a *charge* and such a requirement would be most *clearly unjust*." And again, at page 7, he says, "neither the facts, nor any proper inference from the facts, affirm that I am in either case *personally responsible for what another man did before I had an existence*." Again, in the same page, he asserts, that "*the notion of imputing sin is an invention of modern times*." And again, in the same page, he says, "Christianity affirms the fact, that in connexion with the sin of Adam, or as a *result*, all *moral agents* will sin and sinning will die;" and then proceeds to say, "It does not affirm, however, any thing about the *mode* in which this would be done. There are many ways conceivable in which that sin might secure the result, as there are many ways in which all *similar facts* may be explained. The drunkard commonly secures as a result, the fact that his family will be beggared, illiterate, perhaps profane or intemperate. Both facts are evidently to be explained on the same principle as a part of moral government." Here, it is conceived, the author of the Sermon represents the effects of Adam's fall upon his posterity as their *misfortune* and not as their *sin*. And the Protestants do further consider it to be implied in the statements of the Sermon, that infants are *sinless* until in the exercise of moral agency they do positively, by their own act, violate the law. Vide Con. of Faith, cap. vi. and Catechism Larger and Shorter, on Art. "Original Sin."

2. On the doctrine of the atonement, the Protestants believe that Mr. Barnes maintains sentiments which are in direct contradiction to those set forth in our doctrinal standards. At page 11, he says, "This atonement was for all men. *It was an offering made for the race*. It had not respect so much to *individuals* as to the law and perfections of God. It was an opening of the way of pardon; a making forgiveness consistent, a preserving of truth, a magnifying of the law, *and had no particular reference to any class of men*."

Again, at page 11, he says, "*The atonement of itself secured the salvation of no one*;" and again, "The atonement secured the salvation of no one, except as God had promised his Son that he should see of the travail of his soul, and except on the condition of repentance and faith." Vide Con. of Faith, cap. viii. 5 and 8.

Again, at page 10, he says Christ "did not endure indeed the penalty of the law;" and again, page 11, he says, "Christ's sufferings were severe, more severe than those of *any mortal* before or since; but they bore, so far as we can see, only a very distant resemblance to the pains of hell, the proper penalty of the law. Nor is it possible to conceive that the sufferings of a *few hours*, however severe, could equal pains, though far less

intense, eternally prolonged. Still less that the sufferings of human nature, in a single instance, for the divine nature could not suffer, should be equal to the eternal pain of many millions." Vide Larger Cat. Q. 38.

In all this language the Protestants do sincerely believe, that Mr. Barnes denies that Jesus Christ was a vicarious sacrifice—that his atonement had a definite design—that it was in itself efficacious—and that it was a proper satisfaction to divine justice for the sins of his elect.

3. In this Sermon, the Protestants believe that Mr. Barnes employs language on the subject of man's ability, which is contrary to the standards of our Church.

In speaking of sinners rejecting the Gospel, he says, page 14, "It is not to any want of physical strength, that this rejection is owing, for men have power enough in themselves to hate both God and their fellow men, and it requires less physical power to love God than to hate him;" and on the same page, he evidently insinuates that man's sole inability is in the will, and the principal effect of conversion upon the will. Again, page 30, in speaking of the causes which exclude a sinner from heaven, he says, "*It is simply because you will not be saved.*" The Protestants believe that to ascribe man's inability to the will alone, is contrary to the doctrine of our Church. Vide Con. of Faith, cap. vi. 4.

In addition to the foregoing reasons founded on the doctrinal errors advanced in the Sermon, we protest also, because,

1. In the forecited Sermon, professing to give a summary of leading doctrines relating to man's salvation, *no mention whatever* is made of the doctrine of justification by faith through the imputed righteousness of Christ, a defect, which, under the circumstances, cannot well be accounted for, except on the supposition that it was not received by the author; and

2. Because the author of the Sermon makes certain general declarations which induce us to believe, that he does not properly regard his obligation to adhere to the doctrinal standards of the Presbyterian Church. Thus, at page 6, he says in relation to one of his statements, "It is not denied that this language varies from the statements which are often made on this subject, and from the opinion which has been entertained by many. And it is admitted that it does *not accord with that used on the same subject in the Confession of Faith* and other standards of doctrine." And, again at page 12, he says, "The great principle on which the author supposes the truths of religion are to be preached, and on which he endeavours to act, is, that the Bible is to be interpreted by all the honest helps within the reach of the preacher, and then proclaimed as it is, *let it lead* where it will within or without the circumference of any arrangement of doctrines. He is supposed to be responsible not at all for its impinging on any theological system; nor is he to be cramped by any frame-work of faith that has been reared around the Bible."

And we do hereby further protest against the forementioned decision, because,

1. We believe, for the reasons stated above, that the decision will prove injurious to the purity of the Church, and to the best interests of religion : and,

2. Because, notwithstanding it had been decided on a previous question, by a vote of 37 to 10, that it was the right of Presbytery in examining the qualifications of their own members, to bring the said printed Sermon of Mr. Barnes under review, and to draw thence arguments for or against the prosecution of the call; yet in the final vote, a number of those who voted in the majority, whilst expressing their dissent from Mr. Barnes' doctrines, declared that they were guided in their vote, by the consideration that Presbytery had no right to inquire into Mr. Barnes' theological views, or to make them a ground of objection to the prosecution of the call.

For these reasons, we consider it our solemn duty to protest against that decision, which granted leave to the commissioners from the First Presbyterian Church to prosecute a call for the Rev. Albert Barnes before the Presbytery of Elizabethtown.

(Signed)

MINISTERS.—Ashbel Green, George C. Potts, John Burtt, Joshua T. Russell, Alvin H. Parker, W. L. M'Calla, William M. Engles, Charles Williamson.

ELDERS.—Andw. Brown, Jos. P. Engles, James Algeo, Moses Reed.

A special meeting of the Presbytery was held on the 18th of June following, "for the purpose of considering the subject of the reception of the Rev. Mr. Barnes, and to do what may be deemed proper in his installation." This meeting was held in the Lecture room of the First Church, and was numerously attended by Presbyters and spectators. The indelicacy of abandoning the usual place of meeting, and selecting this location, might be a subject of just comment; but if it had a design to influence, it totally failed; the minority neither retracted nor modified their ground. The following extract from the minutes of Presbytery will show how the business was introduced at this stage. "The Rev. Albert Barnes presented a certificate of dismission from the Presbytery of Elizabethtown to join the Presbytery of Philadelphia. The minutes of the Presbytery at their last stated meeting in relation to the case of the Rev. Albert Barnes, were then read. It was then moved and seconded, that Mr. Barnes be received as a member of this Presbytery; and after some discussion, it was moved (by the Rev. Dr. Ely,) and seconded, that the motion now under consideration be postponed, that before deciding on it, any brother of the Presbytery who may deem it necessary, may ask of the Rev. Mr. Barnes such explanations of his doctrinal views as said brethren may

deem necessary." Here the question determining the right of a Presbytery to examine the qualifications of those proposing to become members, by dismission from a co-ordinate judicatory was brought prominently under debate, although it had been virtually decided in the affirmative by the first vote of the Presbytery at their April sessions. The right was strenuously contended for on the one side as one recognized by the constitution; as clearly ascertained by various decisions of the General Assembly; as inherent in Presbyteries as radical courts; as necessary as a safeguard against the rapid spread of error; and as essential to preserve the proceedings of a Presbytery against foreign interference. The argument on the other side, was the mere and confident denial of all these principles, as calculated to bring Presbyteries into conflict, and thus to interrupt the peace of the Church. Strange as it may appear, assertion prevailed over demonstration, and the right of Presbytery to examine the qualifications of its own members, was denied, by a vote of twenty to eighteen, twelve ministers voting in the affirmative and twelve in the negative. The original motion for Mr. Barnes' admission being again brought under consideration, it was moved by the Rev. Mr. Engles, that the motion now under consideration be postponed with a view to take up the following:

"Resolved, That the certificate presented to this Presbytery by the Rev. Mr. Barnes, from the Presbytery of Elizabethtown, be sent back to the Presbytery of Elizabethtown, with an attested copy of all the minutes of this Presbytery in relation to his case, with a request that the said Presbytery will consider and decide upon those doctrinal statements contained in a printed sermon of Mr. Barnes, which are referred to in a Protest signed by a minority of this Presbytery, and which are considered as grounds of objection to his admission into this Presbytery."

The majority had, in the course of argument, indicated this as the proper resort of the minority, but now feeling themselves to be sufficiently strong to carry all their measures, they changed their views and negatived the motion. The debate on Mr. Barnes' reception was then commenced anew.

To report speeches is not our intention; but we cannot refrain from adverting to that of the Rev. Mr. M'Calla, as an able and masterly defence of orthodoxy, in opposition to the spurious theology of New England, and to that of the Rev. Dr. Green, as the solemn warning of the sole representative of the fathers of our church, now fallen asleep, who, having observed the disastrous decline of the once glorious churches of France, Switzerland, and Ireland, could not suppress his grief in remarking on the present occasion, the same false spirit of liberality; the same unbounded latitude of interpretation, and the same unwillingness to arrest error in its commencement which had brought on their eclipse. At this stage of the business, the Rev. Dr. Ely, who had strenuously defended the right of Presbytery to exa-

mine Mr. Barnes, arose, and stated that he purposed to vote for the reception of Mr. Barnes, because, from a *private interview*, he was convinced of his general orthodoxy, in proof of which, he read a written creed prepared by himself, and adopted and signed by Mr. Barnes. This was a proceeding, in our opinion, alike discreditable to both parties; the dignity of Mr. Barnes was compromised in submitting to have his views explained by another, when he was so earnestly solicited to improve the most favourable opportunity of doing it himself, and the dignity of Dr. Ely suffered in condescending to string together a set of nicely adjusted phrases, which, however orthodox their aspect, were evidently intended to cover two schemes of totally different characters.* It is with reluctance that we advert to such transactions, but we wish our narrative to be recommended by its truth. The vote was eventually taken by ayes and noes, on the motion for receiving Mr. Barnes, and decided in the affirmative, sixteen ministers and fourteen elders voting in the affirmative, and nine ministers and seven elders in the negative.

A paper was then presented to the moderator, containing charges against Mr. Barnes, for his unsoundness in the faith and in arrest of his installation. The moderator, however, decided it to be out of order, as originating a new business at a *pro re nata* meeting. This opinion was appealed from by Dr. Ely, but the appeal was not sustained. He, and at least two others of the majority, contended that the *mere announcement* from the moderator of the existence of such a paper of charges, was a sufficient bar to the installation, and yet immediately afterwards, they surmounted the bar and voted for the installation.† Strange occurrences take place in over anxiety to give

* It is true, that Mr. Barnes did, on one occasion, rise and promise to make some explanations of his doctrinal views. This he said he would do voluntarily, but not in compliance with a demand, which he was convinced Presbytery had no right to make. The minority were pleased with the promise, although Mr. Barnes was careful to represent it as a mere concession of courtesy; but at the manner in which he fulfilled it, they were not only disappointed, but surprised. It is doubtful if he occupied the floor for *five minutes*, and in that time explanations could not have been expected, much less satisfactory ones. He acknowledged, it is true, that his sermon was defective, through oversight, on the doctrine of justification, (an acknowledgment which the "Sketch" has *forgotten* to record) but what he said in brevity, on the other disputed points, only tended to increase the suspicion, and confirm the conviction of his error, in the minds of the minority.

† Upon the presentation of this paper by Mr. Hoff, (whose manner in this whole transaction was characterized by firmness and decision) a curious scene ensued. The moderator, commendable for his general impartiality, decided the paper to be out of order, if it professed to be a copy of charges, but to be in order, if it professed to be a bar to the installation. Now, it so happened, that it came under both these professions, and hence a dilemma. The majority, however, confirmed the decision that it was out of order, and yet determined that it should be read. Dr. Ely, Mr. Biggs, and Mr. Steel professed to regard the paper, before it was read, as a very serious obstacle to the installation; but subsequently, Mr. Biggs found that the charges contained *no new matter*; Dr. Ely, that they were preferred *too late*; and Mr. Steel offered no ground for a change of opinion, and they were eventually *found united* in the vote for installation.

success to a favourite measure, and these sessions of the Presbytery have been prolific of such occurrences. It was decided by regular vote, that Mr. Barnes' doctrinal errors might be canvassed, and it was also decided that they might not be canvassed; it was maintained, that Mr. Barnes might be arraigned when he should become a member of Presbytery, and it was maintained by the same persons, when he had become a member, and an arraignment was attempted, that it was too late to arraign him for acts committed in another Presbytery, and in the full knowledge of which he had been received by this; there were those who declared themselves to be of the old orthodox school, and yet were willing to lend their influence in promoting the interests of the new school, which is any thing but orthodox; it was maintained by the same person, that the same sermon contained false doctrine, and that it contained no false doctrine; some were found who could advocate one side of a cause in their speeches, and advocate the opposite side by their votes; but we forbear; our only comment is, that truth is beautifully consistent with itself. This we honestly believe to be a correct narrative of the proceedings in relation to the case of the Rev. Mr. Barnes, and it has been extorted from us by the officious zeal of those who have attempted to pre-occupy the public attention by their imperfect and garbled sketch.

Hostility to any of the brethren we disclaim. We merely review and condemn that conduct which we consider reprehensible in them as Presbyters. We conscientiously believe that we have stated the truth, and we are willing to defend it. If there must be controversy, *we* have not sought it, but, obtruded upon us, we will not avoid it.

LETTER

*From a gentleman in New Jersey, dated July 29th, 1830, to
"Rev. W. L. M'Calla, Philadelphia, Pa.*

Rev. and Dear Sir,

I have just received and read a Sketch of the proceedings of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, in regard to the installation of the Rev. Albert Barnes; it is a sketch of one side only. The arguments in favour of the installation of Mr. Barnes and of his doctrines, are given at some length, while those against him are suppressed. There are some persons here who do not think Mr. Barnes that paragon of perfection he is by some represented to be. I think it but fair that the whole of the proceedings should go before the public. I have, therefore, taken the liberty to request you to forward to me the debates against the doctrines of Mr. Barnes; by so doing, you will oblige

Your obedient servant."

ANSWER.

Letter I.—The Sketch Exposed.

Dear Sir,

You have assigned me a difficult task; I will endeavour to perform it as in the presence of my final Judge. You probably think us either very patient or very insensible, to bear, in silence, for so many months, the cross-fire of the *Philadelphian* and the *Sketch*. To be wounded in the house of a friend, is a great trial, but it belonged to the cup of our Master's sufferings, and in his cause, we are willing to have our names cast out as evil. The free use which the *Sketch* has made of names, in blazing them before the public eye, has probably amazed you; but if his *cause* be right, his *course* should not be offensive in this particular. If we be guilty, let us be exposed; if we be so full of *acrimony* and so destitute of *tenderness or christian candour*, as he says, let the public know our names and our offending. The reporter says, that Dr. Green and his coadjutors "seemed to forget all the laws of kindness and christian fellowship, and gave a loose to their long harboured prejudice against the '*new school divinity*,' as they called it."* Now I am not unwilling to be published as an opposer of the "new school divinity;" and to allow its friends to call me by whatsoever hard names they may think best. And if Dr. M'Auley and his followers have concluded to forsake the old system, and become the protectors, and the uncandid protectors of the "*new school*

* *Sketch*, p. 5.

divinity," let them, by name, get the credit of their achievements. In my account, therefore, of the debate, I may attach their names to their deeds. In doing so, remember, I follow the example of their reporter, the author of the Sketch, in which we are assailed with such severity and unfairness as imperiously calls for a defence.

This writer professes to have been present, and to have noted what passed, except what he calls "a long speech" of mine. It would be too great a waste of time to notice half the errors of this miniature report; permit me to give you a specimen. After the minority of the Presbytery had presented charges against Mr. Barnes, Dr. M'Auley represented them as having prepared these charges long before they were handed in; and (as I understand) he insinuated unworthy motives for such a measure. The "Sketch" makes him say, "Dr. Ely told me yesterday morning that charges were already prepared." The reporter then says, "Dr. Ely explained that it was not in the morning, but afternoon.* Remember, he pretends to have heard and noted the above assertion of Dr. M'Auley, and explanation of Dr. Ely. Yet Dr. Ely, (in the Philadelphian of July 23d) denies having made the above explanation, and denies having heard Dr. M'Auley make the assertion which the reporter attributes to him, as having elicited the explanation. If his own partisans contradict him, it is no wonder that I should deny many other statements and slanderous insinuations of far greater importance.

Besides the inaccuracy of the report, its partiality, to which your letter refers, might be shown at great length. I will trouble you with one sample. We were discussing the question of order, concerning the right of our Presbytery to examine Mr. Barnes, when coming to us with an orderly dismissal and good recommendation from the Presbytery of Elizabethtown. The reporter states that Mr. Patterson "quoted from Steuart's collections, two cases, to show that it was not the usage of the Scotch church; that they never did re-examine a minister for installation."† The writer does not condescend to report my speech in reply to Mr. Patterson, but only represents it as characterized by "*wide digressions*," and other things far worse. In compliance with your request, I will endeavour, in a small degree, to supply the defect of this "sketch of one side only," by mentioning two of those "*wide digressions*," which the reporter thinks so contemptible in comparison with Mr. Patterson's "*two cases*," as he inaccurately calls them. Mr. Patterson's two authorities from Steuart's Collections, were intended to show that the rules and usages of the Scottish Church are favourable to receiving and installing Mr. Barnes, without examination, by our Presbytery, in which the calling congregation lies. One of his quotations represented "the call as to what

* Sketch, p. 30.

† Sketch, p. 12.

appeareth at present to be *orderly*." In reply, I reminded the Presbytery that the call for Mr. Barnes, "as to what appeareth at present," was *disorderly*; because it was presented before the congregation had ever heard him preach; and it therefore omitted the words, "*from our past experience of your labours*;" which fact, in this, "or like form," our constitution requires to be stated in an *orderly* call.* If this was a *digression*, it was not a very *wide* one. Mr. Patterson's second quotation is as follows, viz. "Actual ministers, when transported, are not to be tried again, as was done at their entry to the ministry."† This was very confidently read, and boldly applied to the case in hand, to show that Mr. Barnes, when translated, should not be examined by the Presbytery in which the calling congregation lies. In my second *wide digression*, I begged leave to read those words, in Steuart's Collections, which immediately follow the words quoted by Mr. Patterson. They are these, viz: "But only the Presbytery, *in which the calling parish lies*, shall judge of his gifts, from what they have heard of him in the exercise thereof." The reading of this context which, evidently, turned Mr. Patterson's authority against himself, and placed his *candour* in no very amiable light, produced such an impression upon the whole house, as showed that they did not consider it a *wide digression*. But our *impartial* Reporter has not thought proper to advert to it, in any other way than to accuse me of *invective, insinuation, personal allusions, and wide digressions, with the most unsparing bitterness!!* Surely this Reporter must be an example of *insupportable sweetness!*

For the purpose of injuring a good cause, by calumniating and dividing its advocates, he writes as follows, viz. "Even those on the same side of the question [with Mr. M'Calla,] all the time he is speaking appear to be on the rack, for fear that he would disgrace and destroy the cause which he pretends to defend.‡ As these words evidently intimate that I lack the confidence of my party, it may not be amiss to inquire whom he means by those on the same side of the question. If he mean the minority, then he contradicts their own declarations. Dr. Green, our honoured leader in the Presbytery, and Mr. Engles, our triumphant champion in the press, both referred, in their speeches, to my argument, with flattering approbation. If there be any division in the minority on this subject, I am ignorant of it. That the majority are divided is quite probable. One of them (Mr. Steele) told me with his own lips, that he very highly approved of my doctrinal argument against Mr. Barnes' Sermon.

It is not impossible that the Reporter was watching the countenances of other members of the majority, who call themselves

* Form of Gov. chap. 15. Sect. 6.

† Steuart's Col. Book 1, Title 2, Sections 3, 11.

‡ Sketch, p. 15.

old-school men. Perhaps Mr. Sanford appeared to be on the rack while I was speaking. It is true that we were on the same side, when he was a candidate for his present station. Then he appeared to all parties to be an old-school man indeed. On this account the heterodox opposed his coming, and the orthodox were his advocates. But he is now aiding and flattering his former opposers, and insinuating the charge of *dotage* against his old friends, for remaining faithful to that cause, the name of which procured him his present promotion.

But perhaps the Reporter observed the countenance of another self-styled old-school man, Dr. M'Auley, to be on the rack while I was speaking; although His LOWLINESS appeared ludicrously anxious to be thought infinitely above noticing me, or any thing that I could say. That the Reporter considered the Doctor as belonging to the *other* side, is evident from his sketch; but that he assigned him to *our* side, also, is quite possible, because Dr. Ely, in his best speech on our side, proved, that during the last Assembly, Dr. M'Auley exhibited an astonishing propensity for being on both sides of every question; and expressly owned a desire to vote on both sides.

That Dr. Ely also, another self-called old-school member of the majority, was sometimes thought to be on the rack, will appear from the Reporter's words immediately following those quoted above, viz. "One day, some time ago, a certain Doctor, who was on the same side of a question with him in the General Assembly, got up and declared in his presence, that if he had a good cause, and wished to have it ruined, he would get Mr. M'Calla to plead it." It is true that, in 1826, Dr. Ely and myself were on the same side in the General Assembly; and that I took a position a little in advance of the Dr., as I am rather apt to do. It is true, also, that while a multitudinous foe assailed me in front, a professed friend in the rear, hurled a javelin which he thought would lay me low.

At a subsequent period, I had the pleasure of advocating a committee to which Dr. Ely belonged, in the Board of Missions. After the adjournment, he threw his arms around me, and said, that when a man attacked him with a drawn sword, he should like to have me to stand by him. Compare this with his declaration that if he had a good cause, and wished to have it ruined, he would get Mr. M'Calla to plead it.

But the Reporter pretends that I injured Dr. Ely and others during the discussion. He says, "Rev. W. L. M'Calla again arose, and spoke until nearly 8 o'clock. His speech consisted principally in answering some personal remarks respecting what he had before said. He animadverted very severely upon what he called the inconsistency of Mr. Biggs, Dr. Ely, and some others."* These others were Dr. M'Auley and Mr. Thomas Bradford, from whom the Reporter's *personalities* came, not

* Sketch, p. 18.

only against me, but against Dr. Green and Mr. Russell. Dr. M'Auley often insisted that when a minister was dismissed from one Presbytery, and recommended to another, he ought to be received of course, merely out of respect to his clean papers, obtained from a co-ordinate court, and that no Presbytery had ever acted otherwise. Yet, in the same speech, he, at last, told us, that however clean a man's papers might be, no respect to a co-ordinate court could bind a Presbytery to receive him, if he came rather as an *editor* than a *pastor* or *preacher*. Although this invidious description does not fit Dr. Green and Mr. Russell, who are more useful ministers than Dr. M'Auley himself, yet they are editors, and without charge; so that it appeared tolerably evident that his general rule was manufactured for the introduction of such unsound men as Mr. Barnes, and his nullifying exception was a convenient invention for the preclusion of such men as the obnoxious worthies abovementioned. To carry the contradiction to its greatest extent, the Dr. asserted that the Presbytery of New York had precluded many upon this ground. We could not then see the bearing of a great deal that the Dr. read with a very wise and mysterious air, out of a little book, containing, as he said, "a variety," which he seemed to think we had never read, or had entirely forgotten. It was the New Testament, Acts xv. Its true application became more apparent, when Mr. Bradford disclosed an additional exception to their general rule. It was this,—that if a man were guilty of contention and disputation, no recommendation from abroad, no call from a congregation at home, could justify a Presbytery in receiving him. Now you know that in the popular code of the present day, *contention* and *disputation* in defence of the truth, are crimes to which the punishment of death is annexed, *without benefit of clergy*. As I have long been an outlaw on this account, it was easy to tell for whom Mr. Bradford's exception was intended. Now was the time to show the true application of Dr. M'Auley's little *variety-book*, of which he affected to think us so ignorant. He had read to us Acts xv. about certain men, like Mr. Barnes, who came down from Judea, and taught a *way of salvation* which was contrary to the gospel. Did Paul and Barnabas receive them upon the credit of their clean papers? Did they tamely admit them, for fear of being themselves expelled by some Mr. Bradford, for the alleged crimes of *contention* and *disputation*? Did they escape the cross, by pretending that it was a mere *point of order*, in which the *doctrinal question* of *The way of salvation* had nothing to do? Let us hear again the 2d verse which Dr. M'Auley read to us. "When, therefore, Paul and Barnabas had no small *dissension* and *disputation* with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem, unto the apostles and elders, about this question." This visit of theirs to Jerusalem, and their deliberations while there, related to the question of *doctrine*, upon which they made the point of

order to turn. The latter was 'virtually determined by their decision on the former; which, in their letter to the churches, said that these false teachers "have troubled you with words; subverting your souls." There was not even one Dr. M'Auley among them, to move for the expulsion of Paul and Barnabas, as the *Editors* of this Epistle; nor was there one Mr. Bradford, to condemn them for their *dissension* and *disputation*, against the troublers of the church, and the subverters of souls.

Now for the Reporter's assertion, that I "*animadverted very severely*" upon the inconsistency of Mr. Biggs and Dr. Ely. As to the former, I only proved what Mr. Engles had proved before me: that Mr. Biggs had rejected former candidates, notwithstanding their verbal adoption of our constitution; whereas now he insisted that we should receive Mr. Barnes, because he adopted our constitution by profession; thus placing a confidence in his professions, which he had withheld from others of equal claims to veracity. After the discussion I asked Mr. Biggs if he considered my remarks severe, and he very readily declared that they were not. Dr. Skinner, the Moderator, who is generally considered as agreeing with Mr. Barnes, in doctrine, declared the same thing; but this wise, charitable, and impartial Reporter, seems to know the operation of medicine better than the doctor or the patient either. He evidently wrote his little work, to pre-occupy the public mind with groundless and cruel prejudices against our cause and its advocates; and to forestall us in the Synod and General Assembly, to which he expected this thing to be carried. Doubtless, many of them, when they see the *Sketch*, will feel anxious, like yourself, to see the other side; and it is but fair that they should see it.

As to my severe animadversions upon the inconsistency of Dr. Ely, they were much of a piece with his animadversions upon Dr. M'Auley. On the motion for receiving Mr. Barnes, Dr. Ely's first speech was considered an admirable one in our favour; and the most admirable part of it was thought to be his exposure of Dr. M'Auley, for endeavouring, during the last Assembly, to reconcile the affirmative and negative of almost every question, so as to make out that there was no difference between them; and thus advocating both sides, in the same speech, continually. Take notice, this first speech of Dr. Ely, on this motion, was in our favour: but his next speech on the same motion, was as decidedly against us. In my reply, I, rather jocosely, animadverted upon this inconsistency, comparing and contrasting it with that of Dr. M'Auley, and reminding the Presbytery, that this was only one link of a notorious chain of similar acts, from day to day, through the protracted deliberations of that body.

And it was a protracted affair indeed; for I believe it occupied seven days; two in the session-room back of the 2d Church, two in their session-house in Cherry street, and three in the ses-

sion-room of the 1st Church, where the Assembly meets of late years. During this time the most important motions, according to my recollection, were eight; some of which were discussed, during the suspension of others by postponement. I shall mention them without regard to chronological order. Three of them related to the *calling, receiving, and installing* of Mr. Barnes. Three of them related to a judicial process against him, for the errors of his printed sermon. Two of these, made on the 4th and 7th days, were for sending him back to the Presbytery of Elizabethtown for trial. The third, on the 7th day, presented charges against him to be tried before his installation, by this Presbytery, after they had received him. Serious as the charges were, the majority proceeded to the installation, without regarding them.

The two remaining motions of my enumeration related to the examination of *Mr. Barnes* and *his sermon*. As to the *examination of a minister*, subsequent to his ordination, Dr. M'Auley boldly and repeatedly denied, that the principle or the practice could be found in any portion of the church of Christ. The absurdity of this position is so extravagant, as to appear incredible: yet I am not apprehensive of contradiction from the Doctor, or any of the Presbytery; for it was this, in a great measure, that gained him the victory. He asserted it so often, with such an oracular tone, and with such an awful majesty of manner, and looked down with such sovereign contempt, upon any authority, or any speaker which came in his way, as to make one feel a shuddering fear, lest insisting upon Mr. Barnes' examination, might bring upon us the double disgrace and guilt of ignorance and blasphemy. This was too much, even for Dr. Ely's new system of HARMONY, which has arisen out of the ashes of his defunct CONTRAST. He, therefore, joined Dr. Green, Mr. Engles, and the minority, in proving, by abundant evidence, that the Presbyterian Church, in Scotland, and in this country, were familiar with the principle and the practice, of judging the character of an ordained candidate for admission to a Presbytery, and of rejecting him, if they were not satisfied with his doctrinal or practical correctness. Take the three following authorities, from our General Assembly, viz. "*It is the privilege of every Presbytery to judge of the character and situation of those who apply to be admitted into their own body, and unless they are satisfied, to decline receiving the same.*" A Presbytery, it is true, may make an improper use of this privilege; in which case, the rejected applicant may appeal to the Synod or the General Assembly." "*Every Presbytery has a right to judge of the qualifications of its own members.*" "*The right of deciding on the fitness of admitting Mr. Wells a constituent member of the Presbytery of Geneva, belonged to the Presbytery itself.*"*

* Minutes of 1825, p. 265. of 1826, p. 28. Digest, p. 325.

Dr. Green showed that all Princeton treated our view of this subject, as an important, honourable, and acknowledged principle of Presbyterianism. This he proved from the 143d page of the 2nd vol. of "The Biblical Repertory, and Theological Review; edited by an Association of gentlemen in Princeton, and its vicinity," a work which is highly recommended and patronised by several of the Majority now opposed to us. A writer in opposition to the Repertory had intimated that our constitution laid us open to corruption. The answer to this argument, Mr. Engles also read from the REPERTORY in the following words, viz. "We must be permitted to say that in arriving at this conclusion, the writer left entirely out of view *one very remarkable feature in the constitution of the Presbyterian church in the United States.* It is this: *Every Presbytery judges of the qualifications of its own members;* and what is the result? *If a congregation choose a pastor, who, in the opinion of the Presbytery, is heretical, or otherwise unfit for his office, the Presbytery refuses to ordain or install him:* and if the congregation persist in its choice, they must become independent, and consequently have no influence in the judicatories of the Presbyterian church, and cannot be members of the Assembly. And further, if a Presbytery become corrupt, it is amenable to its Synod, and to the General Assembly, and may be cast off as easily as single members. *These provisions are not a dead letter. They take effect every year to a less or greater extent.* It generally, indeed, happens that when a *Presbytery refuses to receive a pastor elect,* the congregation, confiding in the more enlightened judgment of the Presbytery, or Synod, desists, and chooses another pastor; but if not, they cease to have any connexion with the Presbytery."

This language of the *Repertory* shows that its editors agree with the Minority, in their interpretation of our constitution, which says that a Presbytery is instituted, "in order to preserve soundness of doctrine, and regularity of discipline," "and in general to order whatever pertains to the spiritual welfare of the churches under their care."* To lay aside this constitutional authority, by pretending that the theology of pastors does not pertain to the welfare of churches, would be as bad as Dr. M'Auley's way of evading Steuart's collections, where it is said that, "The Presbytery in which the calling parish lies shall judge of his *gifts*." The Dr. read the context, to show that the word *gifts* was equivalent to *abilities*; and that if Mr. Barnes had GIFTS, or ABILITIES, of an order suitable to the intellectual character of the church which called him, the passage in question did not contemplate an examination whether his doctrines were correct or corrupt.

I am willing now to let the Scotch church decide whether

* Form of Gov. Chap. 10. Sections 1. 8.

these *gifts* or *abilities*, are only such as may be connected with doctrinal error, or such as are connected with orthodoxy. It so happens that the great Scotch Durham, who was, perhaps, as well informed a disciplinarian as any who ever bore the Presbyterian name, has treated these two sorts of gifts, in the two first paragraphs of one of his many chapters on ecclesiastical offences. The chapter discusses the means by which Satan drives on the plague of error among the people. If his first paragraph be true, then Satan goes just as far in examining his ministers, as Dr. M'Auley allows the Presbytery to go: that is, he examines into their intellectual, literary, and rhetorical *gifts* and *abilities*. Durham then tells us of "such coming from one place to another, as from Jerusalem to Antioch, Acts xv, and elsewhere, purposely to spread their errors, as the Apostles did travel for preaching the truth." Here he refers us to Acts xv, the very chapter which Dr. M'Auley read so gravely from his little *variety-book*, about men of unsanctified *gifts*. We have already heard, that instead of receiving them, "Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them." In connexion with this, Durham refers us to Rev. ii. 2; where Christ commends the Ephesian Presbytery for patiently and resolutely examining and rejecting these gifted errorists: "I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how *thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them* which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them LIARS." In Durham's next paragraph he shows that ministerial *gifts*, instead of being indifferent to truth and error, are bestowed for protection against error. He uses the following words, viz. "*Gifts are given to men by Jesus Christ, purposely to guard the Church from being tossed to and fro with corrupt doctrine by the sleight of men.*"* I would only add the following rule of Scotch Presbyterians, ancient and modern, on both sides of the Atlantic, viz. "*As for him that hath formerly been ordained a minister, and is to be removed to another charge, he shall bring a testimonial of his ordination, and of his abilities and conversation, whereupon his fitness for that place shall be tried by his preaching there, and (if it shall be judged necessary) by a farther examination of him.*"†

In truth, the very fact of their being allowed to vote on the subject, allows them to vote in the negative; which, as Dr. Green proved, overthrew completely, the doctrine, that they had no discretion in the matter, but were bound, as a matter of course, to grant leave to call the candidate.

Thus have I endeavoured, in sincerity, to show that the Bible, the Scottish church, our Constitution and acts of Assembly, with

* Durham's Treatise concerning Scandal, Part 3, chap. 6.

† Scotch Collections, p. 180. Also, the Directories of the Reformed, and of the Associate Churches in America.

the gentlemen in Princeton and its vicinity, support the minority in the position that the Presbytery of the calling congregation have a right to examine into the theology of an ordained applicant for admission by translation: that is, they have a right to examine Mr. Barnes.

It may seem strange, that the motions for *examining Mr. Barnes*, and for *examining his sermon*, were decided in opposite ways; yet such was the fact. On the first day, when the motion was made for giving leave to call Mr. Barnes, Dr. Green arose, and in a manner too mild for any thing but the Reporter's insensate malevolence to censure, declared his conscientious opposition to the motion, until difficulties, presented by Mr. Barnes' printed sermon, should be removed. It is somewhere about this stage of the business, that the Reporter accuses the minority of indulging great acrimony against Dr. Emmons, Dr. Murdock, and Dr. Taylor, as well as Mr. Barnes and his supporters. It is true the minority humbly disapproved of the theology of Mr. Barnes, and the three Doctors, Emmons, Murdock, and Taylor; but this offence was amply punished by their avengers, Dr. M'Auley, and Messrs. Bradford, Biggs, and Sanford, who, in the excess of their liberality and magnanimity, bearded Dr. Green, and attempted to stop free discussion, by a vote of the house, to prevent Dr. Green from specifying the errors of Mr. Barnes' sermon, as his reasons for opposing the call, and voting in the negative. While they opposed the reading of Mr. Barnes' own printed sermon against him, they eagerly uttered all the *hear-say* things that they could gather, in his favour. They were constantly telling us that the 1st Church said he was sound, and their committee said he was sound, and this preacher said he was sound, and that Doctor and the other Doctor said he was sound, and yet they were not willing for his soundness to be tested by his own sermon; they were not even willing to give to Dr. Green, nor to any other member, the exercise of a constitutional right, in giving his lawful, his real, and his only reasons, for voting as he did. But the Presbytery were not yet ripe for a *gag-law* of so sweeping a character. They, therefore, determined to allow Dr. Green the enjoyment of his right, by a vote of 37 to 10. Now let it be remembered that irrelevant matter should be kept out of the discussion. But here is a vote of 37 to 10, which allows the examination of this sermon at any length, and thus establishes the relevancy of its doctrines to the motion in debate. If, therefore, there be an *important* opposition, and especially if there be a *vital* opposition, between the doctrines of the sermon, and those of the Bible and Presbyterian constitution, this vote of 37 to 10 virtually said that the motion should be decided in the negative. This is according to our ordination vows, in which we answer, with a solemn affirmative, to the following question, viz. "Do you promise to be zealous and faithful in maintaining the truths

of the gospel, and the purity and peace of the church; whatever persecution or opposition may arise unto you on that account?"*

Letter II.—The Sermon Criticised.

Dear Sir,

A full compliance with your letter requires that I should give you some account of our arguments against the sermon. Here the Sketch shows a degree of dishonesty which is truly pitiable. In the real debate, Mr. Engles, of the 7th Church, astonished and delighted his friends, and (permit me to say) the friends of Jesus; and he obtained the honour of the *leer malign* from his enemies: yet in the Sketch, he is no higher than an ordinary school-boy. As for Dr. Green, the *Nestor* of our little band, the Reporter appeared determined to mark him for the charge of *dotage*, insinuated against the minority, without a decent apology, by the "hopeful youth," who now succeeds him in the pastoral charge. This was according to the maxim, that peculiar severity should be shown to the ringleader of an obnoxious body. Yet if God were pleased to send again on earth, the Witherspoons, the Rodgerses, the M'Whorters, and the Tennents, the gigantic associates of his earlier days, in rearing and defending our present constitution, they would not be ashamed of the fidelity or consistency, the talents or firmness, of this "*Last of the Greeks*." Dr. Green, however, has been heard to say, that the greatest speech made during the whole presbytery, was by Dr. Janeway, on the fourth day. Yet he did not vote, because, before the vote was taken, he was dismissed, at his own request, to join the Dutch Reformed Church, to whose congregation in New Brunswick he was called. This address occupied a considerable time, and proved, most clearly, the gross inconsistency of calling the author of that sermon to a Presbyterian congregation. Its unanswerable force may be, in some measure, estimated, by its drawing an insult instead of a refutation, from that specimen of politeness, Dr. M'Auley; and thus giving Dr. Janeway an opportunity of showing that he was as humble as he was able; and that he possessed, in an eminent degree, that true Christian modesty, about which Dr. M'Auley, on the last day, with such unfeeling irony, taunted the minority, merely because they continued their constitutional opposition to the arbitrary measures of the majority. It is not improbable that Dr. Janeway's speech had considerable influence in making the minority as large as it was. Yet the author of the Sketch, after pretending to take notes, has not recorded

* Form of Gov. chap. 14, sect. 12, Qu. 6.

a word of this speech, nor even the name of the speaker; but has added, upon his own responsibility, ten votes to the real number of the majority, that he might set the public to wondering at our "*very small minority indeed*, when we consider how great an influence Dr. Green has hitherto possessed in this Presbytery."* This error is like the addition of an inch in a man's nose.

I shall not attempt to give you the arguments of the above speakers or the other members of the Minority, who owned their Master in the midst of reproach. All that I can do, is, to give you a brief out-line of my own argument, and then touch upon the arguments resorted to by the Majority. On the merits of Mr. Barnes' sermon, I made three addresses; one on the forenoon of the 2nd day, and one on the afternoon of the 4th day, against the motion for granting leave to *call* the candidate; the other on the forenoon of the 6th day, against the motion for *receiving* him. In the two former I endeavoured to show that Mr. Barnes' sermon, called "The way of Salvation," was censurable for the following reasons: 1. It denied the doctrine of *original sin*. 2. It taught a way of salvation without a gospel *justification*. 3. It denied that Christ bore the penalty of the law. 4. It denied the efficacy of the atonement. When about to proceed to a 5th particular, circumstances induced me to agree that the motion should be put.

On the morning of the 6th day, many new members made their appearance, who, of course, had heard nothing that went before. On this account it became necessary to read again certain exceptionable passages of the sermon, and contrast them with a few passages of our constitution. This was all the repetition used on the occasion; notwithstanding the artful insinuation of the Reporter; I say, *artful*, because he shows that he did not believe what he tried to make others believe. In this address, the objections to Mr. Barnes' sermon were the following.

1. While asserting his *supreme* responsibility to God, in which we all agree, he adds, that in his preaching, "He is supposed to be responsible *not at all* for its impinging on any theological system; nor is he to be cramped by any frame-work of faith that has been reared around the Bible." (p. 12, note.) Compare this with the fourth question which he answered in his ordination: "Do you promise *subjection* to your brethren in the Lord?" How he can be *subject* to his brethren, and yet be "*responsible not at all*," for violating their constitution, it is hard to see. It may be said, as he argues in one instance, (note in pp. 6, 7.) that our Confession is not "in the Lord." But let him remember what answer he gave, and what answer he wishes to give again, to the following question: "Do you

* Sketch, p. 5.

sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith of this church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?" He is not bound by the *civil* law contrary to the law of God; but when he has voluntarily adopted the code, and sworn civil subjection to it, is he, in his conduct, "*responsible not at all for its impinging*" on that code? Is he not "to be cramped by any frame-work of" polity "that has been reared around the Bible?" So said the men of Munster, concerning both church and state; and the reason why our fair-weather reformers hold a responsibility to the state, and not to the church, is, that they have much stronger *corporeal* than *moral* sensibilities.

2. The sermon denies that men are answerable for the first sin of Adam: as follows, viz. "It [the Bible] does not say, as I suppose, that the sinner is held to be personally answerable for the transgressions of Adam, or of any other man." (p. 6.) In a note he admits that this language "does not accord with that used on the same subject in the Confession of Faith, and in other standards of doctrine." Remember that the Assembly of 1798 censured Mr. Hezekiah Balch for "in effect setting aside the idea of Adam's being the federal head or representative of his descendants, and the whole doctrine of the covenant of works."*

3. He holds such a natural ability for spiritual and acceptable service, as the Bible and our Confession consider inconsistent with that entire corruption which forms one feature of original sin. He says, "Men have power enough *in themselves* to hate both God and their fellow-men; and it requires less physical power to love God than to hate him." "It is found that it is far easier to be reconciled to God, and love him, than to remain at war, and oppose him." (p. 14.) Our Confession says, that by the fall men "are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil." (ch. vi. 4.) "Their ability to do good works is *not at all of themselves*, but wholly from the Spirit of Christ." (ch. xvi. sect. 3.) In a note on the same page, Mr. Barnes says, "If God requires more of men than *in any sense* they are able to perform, then, in the practical judgment of all men, according to the reason he has given them, he is unjust." To the same amount Mr. W. C. Davis published the following words, viz. "If God has to plant *all* the principal parts of salvation in a sinner's heart, to enable him to believe, the gospel plan is quite out of his reach, and consequently does not suit his case; and it must be impossible for God to condemn a man for unbelief; for no just law condemns or criminales any person for not doing what he cannot do." It is true that Dr. Ely considers Mr. Barnes' words, "*in any sense*," a complete protection to him from the

* Digest, p. 130.

charge of error : but this phrase is no better qualification to the passage from Mr. Barnes, than the word "all" was to the passage from Mr. Davis : yet the General Assembly of 1810 disapproved of these sentiments, and "The Assembly do judge, and hereby do declare, that the preaching or publishing them ought to subject the person or persons so doing to be dealt with by their respective Presbyteries, according to the discipline of the church relative to the propagation of errors."* This sentence, Dr. Ely, in his *Theological Review* of July, 1819, approved. This is a subject on which he used to contend boldly : but his zeal, of late, has taken a turn from *ecclesiastical* to *political* reformation ; which makes one fear that his former heroism partook more of metaphysical blustering, than the spirit of martyrdom.

4. His sermon presents a phenomenon in a Presbyterian church ; a *Way of Salvation*, without gospel *justification*. The manner in which it has been handled presents another phenomenon. Ten leading men of the 1st Church publish a piece written, (as one of them declared in Presbytery,) by Dr. Wilson, their former Pastor, asserting that the sermon *does* contain the doctrine of justification ; and Mr. Barnes writes a letter to Dr. Ely, lamenting that it *does not* contain the doctrine of justification. To make up the deficiency, Dr. Ely, his professed advocate, examines him privately, and manufactures an article on the subject, which Mr. Barnes readily adopts. We also ask the liberty of examining ; but here the candidate demurs. He is very willing to be examined by his own attorney, but not by the opposite counsel ; for a cross-examination often undoes all that went before it. That it would be so in the present case, the whole tenor of Mr. Barnes' sermon proves. The man who can write that production must repent of his errors, when he believes in that key-stone of the Reformation, *forensic justification*, an essential doctrine of the Bible and of our Confession.

5. The sermon asserts the doctrine of an indefinite atonement. It says, "This atonement was for all men. It was an offering made for the race. It had not respect so much to individuals, as to the law and perfections of God.....and had no particular reference to any class of men." (p. 11.) Our Constitution considers redemption as purchased for believers. "*Redemption* is certainly applied, and effectually communicated to all those *for whom Christ hath purchased it* ; who are in time by the Holy Ghost enabled to *believe* in Christ ; according to the gospel." It declares that redemption is effected for the elect. "Wherefore, they who are *elect*, being fallen in Adam, are *redeemed* by Christ.....Neither are any other *redeemed* by Christ.....but *the elect* only." His atonement is for his *people*. "Christ executeth the office of a *Priest* in his once *offering*

* Digest, pp. 147, 148.

himself a sacrifice without spot to God, to be a reconciliation for the sins of his people; and in making continual intercession for them." That is, for *his people*, not for the world, but for them whom the Father had given him, in the decree of election. Here there is no room for the distinction which some make between *atonement* and *redemption*. Have Christ's *priesthood*, *sacrifice*, and *reconciliation* nothing to do with his *atonement*? Yet, in this last authority, he is a *Priest*, *Sacrifice*, and *Reconciliation*, (that is, *Atonement*) for the sins of his people, for whom he intercedes. Therefore our Confession expressly pronounces "Christ's one only *sacrifice*, the alone *propitiation* [that is, *atonement*] for all the sins of the elect."

6. Of a piece with the above error, and naturally flowing from it, the sermon teaches the *inefficacy of the atonement*; and publishes it as the sentiment of one of the greatest enemies to this error which the church has seen for many centuries. From the great Dr. Owen, he *professes* to quote the following isolated sentence, viz. "The atonement of itself, secured the salvation of no one." (p. 10.) The sermon does not say where these words may be found in Dr. Owen's works; nor has its author informed us, although inquiry was made, in his presence, in the Presbytery!

This is a convenient place for showing the honesty of our Reporter in a particular not yet noticed. It reads as follows, viz. "He [Mr. McCalla] read quotations from Owen, Edwards, and some others. It is remarkable that he *quoted nothing from the Bible*, and nothing from the early Fathers. He made one or two quotations from Calvin; that was to prove the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ."* The truth is, that to prove the doctrine of justification, I quoted nothing from Calvin. But remember that towards the close of Mr. Barnes' sermon, he says concerning the doctrines which it contains," "*This is Calvinism!!*" (p. 27.) Now he has confessed that it does not contain the doctrine of *justification*, (which omission of itself, is Anti-calvinistic enough, truly,) but I chose to confront him with Calvin in the doctrines which his sermon did contain. He calls himself a Presbyterian; I confronted him with our constitution. Men of his views call themselves Edwardites, and he referred to Edwards; I confronted him with Edwards. He *professed* to quote Owen in favour of an ineffectual atonement. I read pages from him, in pointed and irreconcilable opposition to this error. Mr. Barnes quoted nothing from the *early Fathers*; and therefore I quoted nothing from them. The truth is, his theology was not known in the church militant, until the *early Fathers* were discharged from service. In their days the doctrines of Dr. Ely's CONTRAST every where prevailed. This was the good old way. But in the 4th century, Mr. Barnes' way of

* Sketch, p. 15.

salvation was introduced by Pelagius ; and in his first trial by a Presbytery, a system of HARMONY, similar to the scheme proposed by Dr. Ely, procured him an honourable acquittal by a much greater majority than the Reporter boasts in favour of Mr. Barnes. As for his emphatic assertion that I *quoted nothing from the Bible* ; he ought to recollect that this may be settled by ocular evidence. I cannot now say exactly how much scripture Mr. Barnes quotes in his way of salvation : but I think that I am within bounds, when I say that the proportion of scripture in my speeches and his sermon, is *forty to one* in my favour.

There is a short passage now before me which I read to the Presbytery, which will show that Mr. Barnes has abused Dr. Owen as much as his Reporter has wronged me, viz. "*But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. His wounding and our healing, impetration and application, his chastisement and our peace are inseparably connected.*"* To me it appears that Isaiah and Owen both thought that the atonement of Christ and the salvation of his people were inseparable, and that the former procured the latter. But the advocates of a governmental atonement, would take off our confidence from the meritorious satisfaction of Christ, and refer us to a supposed arbitrary promise of God, and to the fulfilment of conditions on our part. The following is Mr. Barnes' context so much admired by Dr. Ely, viz. "The atonement secured the salvation of no one, except as God had promised his Son that he should see of the travail of his soul, and *except* on the condition of repentance and faith." In answer to this *exception*, Owen says, "How vain is it to *except* that these things were not bestowed absolutely upon us, but upon condition, and therefore were so procured : seeing that the very condition itself is also merited and procured."† Thus on the 59th Question of the Larger Catechism, Ridgley, edited by Mr. Barnes' predecessor, says, "The application thereof does not depend on the will of man, or on some uncertain *conditions*, which God expects we shall perform, that so the death of Christ might be rendered effectual ; for whatever condition can be assigned as conducive hereunto, it is the purchase of Christ's death." In accordance with which our Creed says, "The Lord Jesus, by his perfect obedience and *sacrifice* of himself, which he, through the Eternal Spirit, once offered up unto God, hath fully *satisfied the justice* of his Father ; and *purchased, not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of Heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given unto him.*"‡

7. The sermon denies that Christ bore the penalty of the

* Owen's Death of Death in the death of Christ, Book 2, chap. 4, p. 169, of the Philadelphia Edition.

† The same, Book 3, chap. 10, Argument 4.

‡ Confess. of Faith, chap. 8, sect. 5.

law. It says, "He did not endure, indeed, *the penalty of the law*." (p. 10.) Dr. Ely justifies this by the context, which says that "He died in the place of sinners." But to die in the place of sinners, without enduring the penalty of the law, is what can be said of the Roman Decius; and surely is not the scriptural nor Calvinistic way of salvation. But the Dr. thinks that Mr. Barnes has secured himself from censure by what he himself calls "an inaccurate explanation:" that is, he explains *penalty* in such a manner, that the very explanation itself denies the possibility of its being endured by a substitute!* Suppose that Mr. Barnes had said that Christ did not bear the *curse* of the law: could a novel, arbitrary, and artful explanation, justify him? Yet the true church has always understood these words to amount to the same thing. The Jesuits once stopped the mouth of Dominican orthodoxy, merely by an inaccurate explanation, for the sake of *harmony*. But Pascal, who followed the doctrine of the *Contrast*, said, "You have received the *name* of her enemy into the church, which is as baneful as having received the *enemy* himself. *Names* are inseparable from *things*.....It will never do; the *explanation* will be detested; the world uses more sincerity on the most unimportant occasions; the Jesuits will triumph.....it will be of no avail for the Dominicans to protest that they impute a different *sense* to the expression. The people accustomed to the *general use* of the word, will not listen to their *explanation*."† But according to Dr. Ely's principle, a man may be perfectly justifiable in casting fire-brands, arrows, and death, if he will afterward *explain* himself to be in sport. For reasons given already, I read many things from Calvin, Owen, and Edwards, to show that they had no notion of being robbed of this all-important truth by heretical sophistry.

8. The sermon denies the doctrine of *imputation*. These are his words, viz. "The notion of *imputing sin* is an *invention of modern times*: it is not, it is believed, the doctrine of the *Confession of Faith*." As to the Confession of Faith, he says, "It is manifest, so far as it is capable of interpretation, that it is intended to convey the idea, not that the sin of Adam is *imputed* to us, or set over to our account; but that there was a *personal identity* constituted between Adam and his posterity, so that it was really *our act*, and *ours only*, after all, that is chargeable on us. This was the idea of Edwards." (p. 7, note.) The above passages are equally opposed to the imputation of our sins to Christ; and the tenor of the note and of the sermon evidently militate against the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us; notwithstanding the creed which Dr. Ely wrote for

* These are his words, viz. "The *penalty of the law* is what God will inflict on its unredeemed violators—neither more nor less." (p. 10. note.)

† Letter 2d of Pascal's Provincial Letters, New York and Boston edition. pp. 42. 37.

him, to remedy this evil. Our Confession, in which he can see no *imputation of sin*, says, concerning our first parents, "They being the root of all mankind, *the guilt of this sin was imputed*, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed, to *all their posterity*, descending from them by ordinary generation."* On the imputation of our sins to Christ, and of his righteousness to us, I read many declarations from Mr. Barnes' own authorities; among which take the following from Calvin. "The Son of God, though perfectly free from all sin, nevertheless assumed the disgrace and ignominy of our iniquities; and on the other hand arrayed us in his purity." "Now it is evident what the prophet meant when he said, *the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all*; namely, that when he was about to expiate our sins, they were transferred to him by imputation."†

Letter III.—*The Majority answered.*

Dear Sir,

I am truly sorry to be so long coming to the various arguments of the majority, for the course which they pursued.

1. They argued that it was A POINT OF ORDER, which occasioned them to take the course they did. In the Bible it is *a point of order* to try the spirits, and beware of false teachers, and guard the flock, and watch the city, and stand in the gap, and contend earnestly for the faith. Now if there were an article of order in our Constitution, which required that we should all be dumb dogs that cannot bark, hirelings which flee when the wolf cometh, or traitors which admit the enemy into the camp or city, without a scriptural countersign, it is evident that such an article would *impinge* upon our *inspired* standard. But we have already shown that the Bible, the church of Scotland, our constitution and acts of Assembly, with the gentlemen of Princeton, agree with the minority, in believing it a glorious feature of Presbyterianism, that the *point of order* is exactly the other way.

2. They urged, in his justification, that he had preached other sermons which were approved. They urged, also, that he had agreed to articles of belief drawn up for the occasion by Dr. Ely; concerning which the *Sketch* says, "*They were such as THE MOST RIGID HOPKINSIAN would not object to.*" (p. 18, note.) It was also warmly pleaded that Mr. Barnes had adopted our own Constitution, and was willing to do it again. Now we have shown that his sermon expressly attributes to our Confession a great absurdity, and professes to differ from it, in the very way for which Mr. Balch was censured. Is it no objection

* Chap. 6. sect. 3.

† Institutes, Book 2, chap. 16, sect. 6.

to a minister that he knowingly adopts creeds which are fundamentally opposite? A man holds the Koran in one hand and the Bible in the other, and swears to both: does this make Mahometanism innocent?

3. During Mr. Barnes' absence, it was pleaded that we could not understand the sermon, without the looks, tones, and gestures of the living author. Yet we were told, from the same quarter, that the congregation understood it, and approved of it so highly as to make out a call before they ever saw the living author. Moreover, when he came to Presbytery we wished to examine him, and were not permitted.

4. They pleaded that it was a hasty production. Yet it turns out that about a year elapsed between different times of preaching it, and it was then published after a careful revision, and all the notes, containing much of the most exceptionable matter, added.

5. The argument which was plied, and often plied, most handsomely and impressively, was, that the sermon was composed while the minister's mind was under the inexpressible pressure of a *revival*. It is often hinted that a *revival* is a thing that we ignorantly oppose; and that in comparison with each other, the *revival* and *anti-revival* men are as patricians and plebeians. I ardently desire a revival of *true* religion. But let us see whether some things called *revivals*, may not be worthy of opposition. Ought I to admire a revival which makes a man deny his guilt in Adam, and his helplessness in himself? Does a true revival excite a minister to declare that the imputation of sin is a novel doctrine, that Christ did not endure the penalty of the law, and that the atonement, of itself, secures the salvation of no man?" Is the pressure of a true revival, of such a description, as to make a minister forget, during a whole year, that *justification* belongs to the true way of *salvation*; and never think of it, until reminded of it by one of our Minority, in a review of his sermon? Would that he could then think of it aright!

6. It was vehemently urged in favour of Mr. Barnes, that he was a man of wonderful *piety* and *devotion*, *talents* and *success*. He was thus considered by Mr. Sanford, the same member who plainly hinted that the Minority (which contained his white headed Elder, Mr. Brown, and his two predecessors in the pastoral office, Drs. Green and Janeway,) were in their *dotage*. Now I am willing to try the question, to whom this term is most applicable; to these truly venerable fathers, or to the *hopeful youth* who has thus insulted them. To insist upon our reception of Mr. Barnes, as a man of extraordinary piety and devotion, is the same plea which was used by the enemies of Troy for introducing the famous wooden horse into their city: it was presented as a pious and devout offering to their gods. There was a Minority in the city opposed to receiving the favour. The event showed whe-

ther they were the dotards or not. But if, previous to its introduction, this Minority had been allowed, by a vote of 37 to 10, to examine the interior of this gigantic structure, and had exposed to the public gaze its truly *talented* contents, with their *pious* swords, and *devout* battle-axes, all intended for the destruction of Troy ; and if, after this, they had been overruled by a vote to receive the engine of destruction, would the *rejectors* or the *receivers* have been the *dotards* ? Before Mr. Barnes was received amongst us, it was shown, from his sermon, that his *piety* was independent of the vicarious satisfaction of Christ ; and that his *devotion* could flame, for a whole year, through the inexpressible extacies of a professed revival, without once acknowledging or depending upon the imputed righteousness of Christ, in evangelical justification. His *success* was, of course, in proselyting to *his* system, and his *talents* were enlisted in opposition to *our* system. Surely, then, we must be dotards not to receive a man so highly recommended.

7. The opposition of the Methodists to Mr. Barnes was very plausibly advanced in his defence. But every faithful minister may expect persecution ; and he should, through divine help, maintain the truth in despite of it, according to his ordination vows. Yet if I may judge from the Methodist "Advocate" of March 19th, their persecution is pretty much like that of which we are accused. They prove that Mr. Barnes' pretensions to Calvinism are uncandid ; that his sermon and our Confession of Faith are irreconcilably opposed to each other ; and that honesty requires him to renounce his vows of ordination as publicly as he made them.

8. The spirit of the age was considered as demanding far greater *liberality* than the Minority approved. Every one was to be allowed to interpret the scriptures and the constitution for himself. This, in my judgment, is a treacherous attempt to justify the slander, that our standards have any or every meaning, even opposite meanings, and, of course, no meaning. But if Presbyterians advocate such an unhallowed latitude in the interpretation of their own constitution, ought they to condemn Anti-presbyterians for acting accordingly ? Our church disavows a wish for a national establishment ; and appeals to our constitution for what they say. But remember that the liberal spirit of the age has made our constitution like a nose of wax. Accordingly, a Pennsylvania Editor undertakes to prove from our constitution and acts of Assembly, that we professedly aim at a union of church and state. He was contradicted by one of the *liberal* Majority, in severer language than that of the Methodists against Mr. Barnes. From this it is evident that they have two opposite rules of interpretation, one for themselves, the other for their antagonists. Infidel *Liberals* are required to interpret language in its real, simple, plain, honest, meaning ; which interpretation would certainly give our constitution

credit for being opposed to a union of church and state: But Presbyterian *liberals*, like Dr. Ely, and Messrs. Bradford, Sanford, and Patterson, are allowed to give whatsoever explanation their taste may dictate, or the occasion may require. This leaves the latter class at liberty to practise the rule prescribed to infidels whenever they think proper. This was done extensively by Dr. Ely, in his old work, called "A Contrast between Calvinism and Hopkinsianism." But he has promised us a new work to be called "A Harmony;" in which we may expect to see *liberality liberalized*. Permit me to give you an instance of his application of both these rules to the same subject, on different occasions. The Executive Committee of the Board of Missions refused to employ two candidates, because they believed that God was the author of sin. Dr. Anderson, their theological instructor, wrote a violent complaint to the Board, saying that neither he nor his students believed that God was the AUTHOR of sin, but only that he was the CAUSE of sin!! Dr. Ely, who belonged both to the committee and the Board, practised the *Contrast* rule of interpretation on this occasion, and said that the two expressions meant the same thing. He, therefore, rejected the applicants who had learned these horrible sentiments from Dr. Anderson. Yet, after Mr. Barnes' reception, Dr. Ely comes out in the *Philadelphian* of July 30th, and opens the arms of his liberality to Dr. Anderson, the teacher of these abhorred errors, allows him to distinguish between *author* and *cause*, and then apologizes for him, by saying that he does not intend "to charge his Maker with any thing morally evil." This is the *Harmony* rule. You see the different results of the two rules. The latter acquits the seducer, after the former had punished his dupes. These two rules are strikingly exemplified in two adjacent columns of the paper referred to. The right hand column contains a descant on the word *Shibboleth*, in which he strikes and scatters Pagans, Mahometans, and Infidels, Arminians, Independents, and Prelatists, Baptists, Socinians, and Quakers. He also gives a broad-side against New-school Calvinists, who err on original sin, natural ability, atonement, and justification. This is according to the *Contrast* rule. In the left hand column, he promises his new *Harmony*; throws his mantle over metaphysical and speculative divines, pleads for union, and says that he "would rather *narrow* than *widen* the differences which exist among *renewed* men." You can discover the results of these two rules, in this case, by inquiring whom the Doctor means by *renewed men*. This you may learn from another publication of his, in which he speaks as follows, viz. "We think that an *Arian*, an Arminian, a Hopkinsian, and a *Universalist*, may give us reason to suppose that he is a RENEWED MAN."* It is evident that our liberals are now in the

* Theological Review, vol. 1, p. 158.

flood tide of successful experiment in *narrowing*, rather than *widening* the differences between them and their *renewed* brethren last mentioned : but the minority still prefer some distinction between the precious and the vile.

9. One of Dr. Ely's pleas was, that there was every reason to hope that Mr. Barnes would change his ~~sentiments~~ after he should be received. He therefore recommended to him not to confess that he was the author of the sermon. This, he said, would put it out of the power of the minority to prosecute him successfully before *this* Presbytery, and his reception among us would prevent a prosecution before his *former* Presbytery. He then advised him to refrain from preaching the views of his sermon in future, and all would be well. He insisted that he would change his sentiments; and gave as a reason, that it could be said of none but A FOOL that he never changed. He insinuated that a wise man was very apt to undergo this change before he reached the age of forty-five years. The Presbytery were very much indebted to the Dr. for his patience in instructing them thoroughly on this subject; for without such instruction, they might have fallen into great mistakes, in accounting for the marvellous change which the Dr. himself has undergone. We now know that it is because he is somewhere about forty-five, and is NO FOOL. It seems, however, as if Dr. Green, unhappy man! were doomed to a perpetual minority. This is one particular in which the greatest wisdom of antiquity appeared to fall short of the astonishing improvements of the present day; for Solomon, instead of making versatility the test of wisdom, said, "Meddle not with them that are given to change."* According to the Doctor's view, no sound Presbytery or congregation ought ever to receive a sensible, healthy, orthodox minister, of the age of 44; because he has only one year to serve in the covenanted ranks, while the remainder of a long life must be spent in *narrowing the differences* between such *renewed men* as *Arians* and *Universalists* on the one hand, and Trinitarians and Calvinists on the other.

10. The last plea which I need mention, is Dr. Ely's bold assertion of Mr. Barnes' orthodoxy! The Doctor still professes Calvinistic Presbyterianism himself; and to gain credit for his pretensions, he follows the policy of the French ministry, by occasionally fitting out a polemical expedition, in the Philadelphia, against all the heretical Algerines that infest our theological Mediterranean. All this parade, however, is evidently intended only to make poor credulous Calvinists rally round his standard, and unite themselves to his increasing corps of *renewed men*, soon to consist of Arians, Arminians, Hopkinsians and Universalists, brought lovingly together, by his art and industry in *narrowing differences* between irreconcilable contradic-

* Prov. xxiv. 21.

tions. When the deluded Calvinists in this heterogeneous mass, have been amused with a few skirmishes against a foreign enemy, they are then ready, like the French army, to follow their apparently patriotic leader, against the *La Fayette* of our Presbyterian minority, and those who, like him, advocate the liberality of the *charter*, in opposition alike to despotic prerogative, or disorganizing *liberalism*. While the Dr. is hoisting Calvinistic colours for himself and Mr. Barnes, he acknowledges, in the Philadelphian, what every one knows to be a fact, that the enemies of our church and constitution proclaim, "confidently and extensively, in the language of exultation, that *new divinity* has gained the ascendancy in the mother Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church." It is true that such *old divinity* men as he and Dr. M'Auley and Mr. Sanford deny the fact, and order them to hush with their boasting; but it is too evident that they connive at it, and rejoice with Hopkinsians, over that defeat which Calvinistic Presbyterianism has sustained through their defection. But Dr. Ely says, if Mr. Barnes "is not a Calvinist he is not a Hopkinsian." It can be proved, however, that Mr. Barnes has been known as a Hopkinsian in Jersey; it was this well known character that recommended him in Philadelphia; he has called himself a Hopkinsian; he is so considered by all the Hopkinsians themselves; and as soon as the sermon was read in Presbytery, Dr. M'Auley said that it was *moderate Hopkinsianism*. Now if moderate Hopkinsianism deny our guilt in Adam, and our lost and helpless condition in ourselves; if it deny the imputation of sin and the vicarious satisfaction of the Saviour in enduring the penalty of the law; if it deny the efficacy of the atonement, and dispense with gospel justification, —if *moderate Hopkinsianism* thus subvert the souls of men, and remove the foundation of a Christian's hope, what must be the character of that genuine, unadulterated, matured Hopkinsianism, between which and Calvinism Dr. Ely is so anxious to *narrow existing differences*?

The term used by Dr. M'Auley reminds us that there are great varieties among Hopkinsians, some moderate, and some immoderate. Being generally intoxicated with a conceit of their unlimited powers, and considering it beneath their dignity to walk in the footsteps of the flock, each choice spirit among them feels it incumbent upon him to invent a religion of his own; at least, in some brilliant feature of the scheme. Hence arose the account which Dr. Green gave the Presbytery of *Hopkinsianism*, and *Emmonism*, and *Murdockism*, and *New Havenism*, otherwise called *Fitchism*, or *Taylorism*. Strictly speaking, Hopkinsianism is a very *moderate* heresy compared with these others; but *generally* speaking, it embraces them all: so that a man may be said to be a *Hopkinsian* in the *larger* sense of the word, and not a Hopkinsian in its *stricter* sense; because, he is far worse than Dr. Hopkins himself was. Taking

advantage of this ambiguity of language, Dr. Ely denies that Mr. Barnes is a Hopkinsian, while, in reality, he is much worse than Dr. Hopkins ever was. He tells us that "many parts of his sermon are directly opposed to the peculiarities inculcated by" Dr. Hopkins; leaving us to conclude that they are *less* offensive; whereas they are far *more* so. Dr. Hopkins admitted that Christ bore the penalty of the law in the sinners stead, and that the *penalty* and *curse* of the law are the same thing. Speaking of Christ's effecting the *atonement*, he says, "*This can be done by nothing but suffering the penalty.*" But Mr. Barnes denies that Christ endured the penalty of the law, and thus *denies the atonement*; Dr. Hopkins himself being judge, and Dr. Ely being witness, in the 91st page of whose Contrast this testimony is found. In the conclusion of his Contrast, he calls *Hopkinsians* HERETICS, and ranks them with "*Sabellians, Arians, and Socinians*;" and in his Theological Review he defends our Synod for guarding the churches against the Hopkinsian *heresy*; but now these must all be gathered into the Calvinistic fold by the *narrowing of differences*.

If Mr. Barnes be an old school man, where was the necessity of pleading so manfully for a new sort of liberality in interpreting creeds? Where was the necessity of writing a new creed throughout, insipid enough for him to swallow? Why did the creed-maker himself advise Mr. Barnes not to confess that he was the author of the sermon, and to desist, in future, from preaching its peculiar views? If he were already orthodox, why did he flatter the Presbytery with a hope of his changing? Did they wish him to exchange his orthodoxy for heterodoxy?

The church has often been betrayed, but its salvation is ensured. May we and ours be found among the faithful at the coming of our Lord.

[F In part of the edition, in the Narrative, the following error escaped, which the reader will please correct: In the note of page 8, line 10 from bottom, for "*exposes*" read "*expresses*."

18242