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THE REVIEW.—In the Philadelphia Observer of the 31st of August, we find the following paragraph:

"Every one knows that the Rev. William M. Engles, editor of the Presbyterian, began the present contention in the church, by publicly reviewing, with great asperity, the Rev. Mr. Barnes's sermon "on the way of salvation."

The Review alluded to, was published in the *Philadelphian*, (Dr. Ely, Editor,) in the year 1830, and as it has frequently been spoken of as manifesting a most unchristian spirit, we have concluded to lay it before our readers, (not one in fifty of whom perhaps ever saw it,) that they may judge for themselves, whether it is written "with great asperity."

REVIEW.

THE WAY OF SALVATION; *a Sermon delivered at Morristown, New Jersey, February* 8th 1829. *By Albert Barnes. Printed* 1830.

This discourse was delivered by its author "in the midst of an extensive revival of religion," it having occurred to him, "that it might be of use to bring together in a single discourse, the leading doctrines of the Bible, respecting God's way of saving men." It comes therefore before the public with these pretensions; but as its author foresaw the difficulty of compressing within the limits of a single sermon even a summary of "leading doctrines," he felt the necessity "of no ordinary degree of attention on the part of his hearers to obtain and do justice to the views he should present and perhaps no ordinary candour to necessary obscurity of statement and barrenness of illustration." The courtesy, which was thus politely asked, was no doubt as kindly rendered by his auditors, and is perhaps equally due from his readers. That there are obscurities arising from brevity in the statements or from some other cause, is manifest, but these are pardonable failings when compared with other features of the discourse, which are set forth in sufficiently bold relief. It is difficult to imagine why in a summary of this kind no space was allowed for the introduction of 'justification by Faith through the imputed righteousness of Christ," which we have always been instructed to believe was a doctrine in some way connected with God's method of saving sinners. Perhaps we have lost sight of it under some new phraseology, but if so, it is to be regretted that any mode of expression should have been adopted by which even an unlettered christian should be defrauded of "a doctrine by which the Church must stand or fall." An abatement of rhetoric would have left sufficient room for its introduction, and by this nothing substantial would have been lost, whilst something important would have been gained.

But perhaps we may be interrogated at this stage of our remarks, upon our reasons for bringing this discourse under review. It might be alleged that what is published becomes the property of the public, and this kind of transfer conveys to all, the right of canvassing its merits. But in addition to this, we urge, that this sermon has of late obtained considerable notoriety by a pretty extensive circulation in this city and that it professes to present a statement of the Calvinistic, or Presbyterian faith, on certain doctrinal points justly deemed cardinal. Did we believe the representation to be just we would have commended it, but as we imagine we have detected discrepancies between the statements of Mr. Barnes and those of Holy Writ, and the standards of our Church, duty obliges us to censure; and this we are the more disposed to do as there is a tone of confidence pervading the whole performance which is calculated to awe an unwary reader, and consequently to gain an undue ascendency over his judgment. "For the views themselves," he remarks, "if fairly understood, I ask no indulgence. They are if I mistake not, the views of God." And again, "To your consciences I put it, whether this is not the scheme of the Bible? If it is, and what *rebellious man* here can deny it, if it is the plan of God, then reject it at your peril." We fear we must be reckoned among the rebellious, who question the divine warrant of this scheme; at least, while professing to be consistent Presbyterians we must be permitted to suggest a doubt that it is not of Westminster fabric. This we will endeavour to evince in a few particulars.

1st. The first topic of discourse is thus expressed; "God's plan of saving men is based on the fact that the race is destitute of holiness." Whilst the fact here alluded to is stated with sufficient amplitude and explictness, there is a lack of perspicuity in accounting for the existence of the fact. All men are sinners; but how and why? Mr. Barnes replies, "christianity affirms the fact that in connexion with the sin of Adam, or as a result, all moral agents in this world will sin and sinning will die; it does not affirm, however, any thing about the mode in which that would be done." This is vague and unsatisfactory in the extreme. We are to rest satisfied with the explanation, if it may be so called, that we sin because we were in some undefined mode connected with Adam. To assure us however, that he is no advocate of the antiquated doctrine of original sin, he tells us that Christianity does not say "that the sinner is held to be personally answerable for the transgression of Adam or of any other man;" "that the notion of imputed sin is an invention of modern times." In relation to the first of these assertions, we would humbly inquire, upon what principle the sufferings and death of infants are to be explained, if they are not in some sense liable to penalty for Adam's transgression? Not having arrived at that age which constitutes them moral agents, they are acquitted of personal transgression, and yet to suppose they suffer innocently would be a disparagement of God's government, so that the only explication left will directly confute Mr. Barnes' assertions, and place them, in the language of the Catechism, under "the guilt of Adam's first sin." They must be involved by a personal responsibility in Adam's transgression, or their sufferings must be left among the unexplained mysteries. But in addition to this, an Apostle has taught us, that "by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin, and so death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Here it is affirmed, that death hath entered into the world as the consequence of sin, and that death is universal, because sin is universal: and the corollary is, that as infants are comprehended under the universal death, they must be included under the universal sin which is its cause, and that too, before they are capable of moral action. Mr. Barnes will administer the rite of baptism to infants as significant of the application of Christ's blood for purification from sin; but with what propriety, if he disclaims the doctrine of their being personally involved in the guilt of Adam's sin? He certainly would not administer it to a perfectly holy being, and by the hypothesis, they are not supposed to have committed actual sin.

But there is still another difficulty resting upon this scheme. If infants are not personally liable for Adam's sin, and have committed no actual sin, they are entirely independent of Christ's atonement, for an atonement cannot apply where there is no sin; and consequently if they die in this state they may claim heaven as their right, in defiance of that record, "there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved," than the name of Christ Jesus.

In relation to his second assertion "that the notion of imputed sin is an invention of modern times," we would merely remark, that it is at least as old as the date of his ordination when he publicly, voluntarily and solemnly declared his belief in and adherence to the standards of our church which say, "They, (that is our first parents) 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 decending from them by ordinary generation." Con. of F. Chap. VI. 3. If the sin is not imputed as being the sin of our federal head; it is impossible that the guilt of that sin should be. Rejecting this very simple and satisfactory mode of accounting for the universal sinfulness of mankind, Mr. B. seems to have satisfied himself with the following illustration, argument he does not pretend to style it; "the drunkard commonly secures as a result the fact that his family will be beggared, illiterate, perhaps profane or intemperate," and concluding that this is a case perfectly parallel with and illustrative of our connexion with Adam, proceeds to say, "neither the facts nor any proper inferences from the facts affirm that I am, in either case personally responsible for what another man did before I had an existence." We doubt the aptitude of the comparison altogether; but if we should admit it, to what conclusion will it lead us? To this, as we regard the family of a drunkard the innocent and pitiable victims of a parent's crime, so we must regard the human family so unfortunately connected with Adam, as objects of pity and compassion, and as being far from obnoxious to his displeasure, although God regards them as being "by nature children of wrath!"

But we will leave this part of the subject, by quoting the answer to the 22d question of the larger Catechism, as explanatory of the *Presbyterian* belief on this point. "The covenant being made with Adam as a *public person*, not for himself only but for his *posterity*, all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation *sinned in him* and fell with him in that *first transgression*."

2d. The Second topic will introduce us to Mr. B's views on the atonement. A full expression and demonstration of these were not to be expected in the limits of a single head of discourse, but he has managed by a few touches of his pencil to sketch the most objectionable features of what is usually termed the new divinity. Let us hear his statement on the designs of the atonement; "It was an opening of the way of pardon; a making forgiveness consistent; a preserving of truth; a magnifying of the law." But for whom was it designed. He proceeds to tell us, that "the 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 had no particular reference to any class of men." But what was the nature of Christ's sufferings in effecting this atonement? He acknowledges that Christ did suffer but "he did not endure indeed the penalty of the law, for his sufferings were not eternal;" and again "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 pains of many millions." Once more we inquire, what certainty of effect might be supposed to be connected with the atonement? He replies, "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 the travail of his soul, and except on the condition of faith and repentance." The reader with these quotations before him will remark, 1st, That according to these views, the Lord Jesus was not substituted in the place of his people to make a full and proper satisfaction to God for their sins. He suffered it is true, but why and from what cause is unexplained. Did he suffer in consequence of personal transgression? This is abhorrent. Did he suffer as a legal substitute for the sins of others? This is denied, and consequently the anomaly is presented of a being in every respect innocent, and in no sense chargeable with sin, enduring the heaviest inflictions of pain. If Christ was not regarded as a personal transgressor, nor as one on whom sin was laid, and to whom it was not imputed, how could his death, according to Mr. B. "evince the hatred of God against sin, vindicate his justice and assert the honor of the law?" How could God show his hatred against sin, by inflicting suffering upon one in every view free from the charge of sin? What claims had justice upon such an one? Or how could the honour of the law be secured by his sacrifice? We confess we are unable to see. But we think we can very clearly discern how there could be "an opening of the way of pardon, a making of forgiveness consistent, a preserving of truth, a magnifying of the law," upon a very different scheme, which may be thus stated; "He bore *our sins* in his own body on the tree;" "he was wounded for *our transgressions*, he was bruised for *our iniquities*, the *chastisement* of *our* peace was upon him and by his stripes we are healed." He was made *sin for us*, though he knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Or according to the Confession of Faith Chap. XI. 3. "Christ by his obedience and death did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified, and did make a *proper, real* and *full satisfaction to his Father's justice in their behalf.*"

More explicit terms than these could not be selected to affirm Christ's substitution, and his actual subjection to the penalty of the law. But Mr. Barnes exclaims with sufficient temerity that it is "not possible to conceive that the sufferings of a *few hours* however severe, could equal pains, though far less intense, eternally prolonged." We must acknowledge that the entire phraseology of Mr. Barnes on this subject, produced in us the most painful revulsion of feeling. We had been accustomed to regard the sufferings of the Lord Jesus as inconceivably intense, not those of a "*few hours* only," not those of a common "*human nature*" merely, but of a mediator in whom it was requisite that he "should be *God* that he might sustain and keep the human nature from sinking under the *infinite wrath of God.*" Larger Cat. 2. 38. Bring into contrast with Mr. Barnes' language on this subject, the exclamations of Christ, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," "my soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death;" "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and decide reader, if the amount of Christ's suffering is to be depreciated. 2dly. From the preceding quotations it may be perceived, that Mr. Barnes admits nothing definite in the nature of the atonement and nothing certain in its results. We have already seen, that Mr. Barnes does not connect with it, the idea of proper satisfaction for sin, but represents it as such an exhibition from God, as to render forgiveness consistent, &c. Of consequence, it has a reference to the whole race; it has in itself no more special reference to the elect than to the non-elect, to them who shall be saved than to those who shall be lost, for it had, he affirms, "no particular reference to any class of men." And are we then really to believe, that the intention of Christ in his sufferings was the same towards those who shall eternally love and those who shall eternally hate him? Must we admit that the design of his atonement will absolutely be frustrated in relation to a very large portion of mankind? Or was there no design in the atonement?

Is there nothing in the atonement which certainly secures the salvation of a single individual? Mr. Barnes replies, no, "the atonement secured the salvation of no one, except as God has promised his Son that he shall see the travil of his soul, and except on the condition of faith and repentance." That is, it has no virtue, *per se*, but only *ab extra;* it is only because God has promised, and in case sinners repent and believe, and not from any inherent merit, that the salvation of any is secured by it. This in our opinion is a sentiment unworthy of a Christian divine. Whilst the application of the atonement attests its virtue, we are of opinion, that its own virtue secures its application; it is not left to take the chances of probability, but absolutely and without failure *secures* the salvation of those for whom it was intended. It was a ransom, and some must be ransomed, if the ransom was really sufficient and competent: it was an atonement, and if deserving of the name, some sins *must* be expiated; so that the work of Christ in itself considered, was an absolute security for the accomplishment of its own intention. Those venerable standards of our Church which will remain imperishable monuments of wisdom and correct theology, but in deviating from which many consider themselves as deserving praise for their ingenuity and spirit of high and daring magnimity, place this subject as relating to *the intention* and *certainty* of the atonement in its true light.

"The Lord Jesus Christ, 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 the 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." Confession of Faith Chap. VIII. 5. And again, "*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." Lar. Cat. 2. 59.

3dly. The ability of the sinner to believe and embrace the Gospel, is the next consideration.

The author of the discourse advances the following opinions. "The law requiring love to God, supreme and unqualified, and love to man, is supposed to be equitable, fully within the reach of every mortal, if there was first a willing mind." "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 hath given them, he is unjust." "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." In a word, every sinner in himself, and unaided by the Holy Spirit, "has the requisite power to comply" with the terms of the Gospel. Now in reply to all this, we promptly acknowledge the equitableness of the divine law which obliges the sinner to universal obedience; the indisposition of the sinner to all holy actions, and his manifest criminality in this indisposition; but we would be slow to acknowledge that the sinner's unwillingness is the *only* obstacle in the way of his salvation, when anterior operations of mind cause that unwillingness; or that he has in an unregenerate state, without any strivings of the Spirit, all the requisite ability to repent, believe, and perform all holy actions. If a willing mind existed, power to will aright would be present indeed, but that willingness is absent. The effect of conversion is not as Mr. Barnes represents, solely on the will, but is proportioned to the universality of man's depravity, and begins to operate on the *regent*, rather than the *dependent* powers of the human mind. The fall has radically disordered our whole animal and moral nature, and its effects are perceptible in each and every part. There is an obliquity of the will, a corruption of the affections, a perversion of the judgment, an obscuration of perception, a sensual propension, and all these are obstacles in the way of salvation. The Holy Spirit in conversion does not merely operate on the will, but illuminates the mind, repairing its faculties, and sanctifies the heart, imparting healthful tone to its affections.

To say that we have only to will to be saved, and we shall be saved, and that we can thus will without divine illumination, is placing the distinguishing mercy of God as displayed in our redemption too much in the back ground; and to say, that we have an ability to do all that is necessary to our salvation, is very much like making man independent of constraining grace. But let us consider the nature of that ability with which Mr. Barnes invests the fallen creature. He affirms that we have sufficient *physical* strength to hate God and that it requires a less proportion to love him. That physical strength should be employed in raising a weight or casting a stone is a perfectly intelligible application of its uses, but that it should be exerted in the production of a moral affection, is a perfect confusion of terms. Perhaps it may be explained as meaning, that we have certain natural mental *faculties*, which may be exerted in this way; or in other words, that we have a heart, naturally full of enmity to God, but in which, divine and supernatural grace may produce love: this we admit; but how does the admission help the scheme? The ability is one which is not native but derived from the grace of God. With all the parade of man's ability, we must come to this at last, "God worketh in us both to *will* and *to do*;" and although Mr. Barnes affirms, that the reason why all men are not saved is because "all do not *choose* to be saved and *will* not come;" yet he acknowledges the indispensable necessity of the Holy Spirit's agency, and that "God does not himself repent but gives grace (that is ability of the only genuine kind) to man, to do it for himself."

We have but one word more on the scheme of man's ability, (which has been adopted with the very questionable intention of relieving the Gospel of its difficulties,) and it shall be in the shape of testimony from the standards of our Church.

In the answer to the 95th question of the Larg. Cat. one of the uses of the moral law is said to be to convince men of their "*disability* to keep it." and more explicitly in the Confession of Faith Cap. VI. 4. "From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly *indisposed*, *disabled* and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions."

The free use we have made of the testimony of our standards, may be derided by him, who speaking of his particular conviction of truth, remarks that "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 round the Bible;" but let Mr. Barnes be told, that honour, consistency and good faith, are all concerned in his maintaining the doctrines of that church to which he has declared his adherence, so long as his connexion with that church remains undissolved. In this notice we have not adverted to what may be considered as the excellencies of Mr. Barnes' discourse; these will speak for themselves; our province has been to point out what we conceived to be his errors; and we think it has been sufficiently evinced that the tone of his sentiments is neither Calvinistic nor Presbyterian. W.

PERJURY.

"I tremble to think that it should be but barely possible, for all these doctrines are clearly contained in the Confession of Faith which every minister in Scotland has subscribed. If, therefore there be any one among us who doth not teach the doctrine of original sin, of Christ's imputed righteousness, justification by free grace, the necessity of regeneration, and the operations of the Spirit, he is guilty of perjury of the worst kind, for which I know no excuse. Such a person is not only chargeable with departing from the faith, but with an absolute prostitution of conscience, and a whole life of hypocrisy and deceit."—*Dr. Witherspoon.*

From the Watchman of the South.

DR. MILLER'S LETTER TO THE REV. W. S. PLUMER.

To the Rev. William S. Plumer:

Rev. and dear Brother—I received and read with peculiar interest your communication of the 3d instant. I had been before informed of the enterprise of publishing a new weekly paper, in which you have engaged, and do most cordially wish you success in your undertaking. You are, no doubt, well aware that the undertaking is an arduous one; but, in the present state of things, it appears to me indispensably necessary. The influence of the press is, at this day, so potent, and is plied with so much zeal by the enemies of truth and order, that the friends of both cannot afford to be deprived of an agency so essential.

When you request me to appear, under my own name, as one of the friends of your enterprize, I am sensible that you entirely overrate the value of my opinions, both in regard to their correctness and their influence. But this is not a time to bandy compliments or to adjust the precise limits of friendly partialities. I have no doubt that you are engaged in a righteous cause; and, such as I am, I am quite willing to take my stand among the number of its friends. I consider the publication in which you are embarked, as urgently called for, and as eminently adapted to do good at the present crisis, if conducted as I am confident it will be. The Southern States (in which your paper will chiefly circulate) at all times important and interesting—have become peculiarly so, in an ecclesastical view, in consequence of the measures of the last General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. It is due to that noble judicatory; to the best interests of truth and righteousness; to the Southern Churches; to yourself, and to the venerable brethren who acted with you, to explain and vindicate the great principles maintained, and the decisive, but wise and necessary measures, adopted by that Assembly. I am too old to do much more than to "bid you God speed," and to pray for you. But if you consider these as of the least value, they will be unreservedly at your service.

I have expressed entire confidence that the *Watchman of the South*, while it will ever be marked with firmness, and with undeviating fidelity to orthodoxy and Presbyterial order, will be conducted in such a manner as to exemplify the meek and benevolent spirit of the gospel. Yet it cannot have escaped any one's notice that many of the publications of those who side with the minority of the last Assembly, bear a character which it is difficult to meet with a calm, unruffled temper. Still let us endeavour, even with such antagonists, to "speak the truth in love," and to "overcome evil with good."

Among the various positions assumed by the brethren of that party, none has surprised me more than this—that the Assembly, by declaring four Synods to be no longer connected with the Presbyterian Church, virtually *dissolved itself;* that that Church has ceased to exist; that, as an organized body, it is dead; and that, if ever brought into a state of action again, it must be in virtue of a new organization. This, if I understand it, is contended for, and proposed to be acted upon by the New-school party: and, if we may consider them as serious in their statements, very high expectations are entertained of being able to maintain this ground. I repeat, that among all the arguments and claims of those brethren, none have filled me with more surprise than this. It strikes me as one of the most untenable and even absurd positions ever assumed by sensible men. Even admitting, for a moment, that the measure in question was altogether unconstitutional, rash, and irregular; what then? No such consequence would follow as is here supposed. As well might it be alleged, that, when an individual member of a church is unjustly and irregularly excluded from its communion, the church is thereby dissolved, and that the excluded member may sue for a portion of its property. As reasonable would it be to say, that when a Presbytery unjustly deposes one or more of its members, or rashly withdraws all connexion with one of its congregations, it is by that act of discipline dissolved as a Presbytery, and liable to a civil prosecution. Did any man in his senses, ever dream of such a consequence? I have always supposed that a *majority* of every ecclesiastical body must govern; and that, even when that majority committed mistakes in deciding on its measures, either disciplinary or prudential, so long as it infringed no law of the land, it was not liable to the interposition of civil courts. The General Assembly existed long before those Synods were formed or thought of. Why should it cease to exist because they are disowned? Surely it may be "the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America," as well now, when it embraces only nineteen Synods, as four months ago, when it embraced twenty-three. And this appears to have been at the time the opinion of the brethren themselves forming the minority of the Assembly. For, after the four Synods were disowned, those brethren continued to sit in the Assembly for a number of days, and to transact business, arguing, remonstrating, and offering *protests*, as if they considered the body as still in existence. At what subsequent period did they make the discovery that the Assembly all this time was dead; that their own acts were null and void; and that the closing scene, dissolving that Assembly, and calling another in 1838, was a solemn nullity, enacted by a number of individuals, who ceased, ten days before, to have any organized existence?

The foregoing remarks are made on the supposition, which I have admitted for argument sake, that the measure of the General Assembly in disowning four Synods, was altogether unconstitutional. But I am persuaded that it was not so; nay, that it was the only measure which the General Assembly could have taken for effectually purifying and tranquilizing the Church; and that it was, in every point of view, consistent with the spirit of our ecclesiastical constitution. Can any one doubt that, if any one Presbytery or Synod now connected with the General Assembly should be persuaded that a majority of our churches had become corrupt and disorderly, and that it was no longer for their edification to remain connected with us—they would have a right *peaceably to withdraw?* There is no clause of our Constitution, indeed, which provides for such a case; but the essential and indefeasable rights of conscience, must ever be considered as claiming and establishing such a privilege.

And, in fact, the "Preliminary Principles" prefixed to our Form of Government can only be interpreted as including and securing this privilege. Here a *minority* withdraws, and has a right to withdraw from the *majority*. But suppose the converse of this case; suppose the General Assembly to be, on good ground, perfectly satisfied that one or more of her Presbyteries or Synods were radically corrupt and disorderly; that any longer connection with them would endanger the purity and peace of the whole Church; and that the disease was so deep and extended, that the ordinary forms of process could not reach or remove it. Shall we deny to a *majority* a right which a *minority* is acknowledged to possess—the right of *peaceably withdrawing* from all connexion with such corrupt and dangerous member or members? If the General Assembly had deposed the ministers belonging to those Synods, or excluded their congregations from the Christian Church, there might have been some complaint against the act of withdrawing from them. But nothing of this kind was done or attempted. The contrary is expressly declared. Their ministerial character is left untouched. Their ecclesiastical organization is not invaded. They are still left in possession of their names and powers as Presbyteries and Synods. All that has been done is to declare that we can no longer co-operate with them as Presbyterians. Suppose that, instead of being disowned, they had been cited to answer for their irregularities, and to correct them. Does not every one see that an overwhelming majority of all those Synods, and of all the Presbyteries which composed them, being Congregationalists, would have delayed and evaded, and given rise to another six years' conflict; in the meantime, gaining strength every year, and making more certain our ultimate subjugation to their will? On the other hand, if regular process had been commenced against each minister and ruling elder, or committee man, composing these bodies, is it not manifest that there must have been several hundred cases of process; and that a series of conflicts would have been commenced adapted to keep the Church in a state of litigation and turmoil for ten, perphaps twenty years to come? How much better; how much more in conformity with the spirit of our constitution, to take the summary course which was adopted—a course which, though not in so many words, laid down in our "Form of Government, is in perfect harmony with its whole spirit: and which deprived the disowned Synods of no privilege but the unfair and unrighteous one of governing real Presbyterians, while they refuse to submit to the government which they imposed—the privilege of departing every day, *themselves*, from essential Presbsterian principles; and at the same time, of being the most clamourous about imaginary departures from the system on the part of those who really love and obey it!

We hear much about the organization of our Church being dissolved, and its charter forfeited. This charter was obtained from the Legislature of Pennsylvania thirty-eight years ago. I have often examined it, and have recently given it a fresh perusal; and feel utterly at a loss to imagine the ground of the allegations so frequently and confidently made. What clause in that charter has been violated? Which of its provisions has not been strictly complied with? I am compelled to believe, that those who have indulged in the greatest license of language on this subject, have never seen the document in question.

We hear also of the minority of the last Assembly commencing suits for their share of the *permanent funds*, held by the Trustees of the Assembly. These funds are of two sorts; those which have been given for the support of the Theological Seminary at Princeton; and those which were collected thirty years ago, if not more, to be held in trust by the General Assembly forever, and the interest expended, under the direction of that body, in conducting *domestic missions*. Of course, the moment those funds pass out of the hands which received, and at present hold them, a breach of trust, and a forfeiture will be incurred. Besides, an appeal may here be made to the just and honourable feelings of those brethren. Not one dollar of those funds, of either class, was ever contributed by any member of any of the Synods in question. Would they be willing to *accept*, much less to *demand* a dollar of them in such circumstances as these?

Another thing staggers me. Our brethren of the minority gave out that they mean to retain their ecclesiastical organization, and to come up in force to the next Assembly and demand their seat, and, of course, a re-union with that body. I am not sure what name ought to be given to a feeling of instinctive abhorrence in my breast, which would forever keep me back from such a movement; a movement having for its object to *force* a connection with a Christian body who did not wish to receive me, and who believed that they would be more united and more happy without me. Whether the object were to *spite them*, or to *govern them*, the prosecution of it would be equally repugnant to my principles and feelings. As to the tendency of such movement to promote *Christian harmony and love*, I cannot imagine any one to be so far gone in absurdity as to dream of it.

Iam Rev. and dear Sir, most cordially, your brother in Christ.

SAMUEL MILLER.

Princeton, August 14, 1837.

MR GUTZLAFF'S LETTER,

On the Preparation of Tracts for China.

"*Macao, March* 26, 1837.

Rev. W. A. HALLOCK, *Cor. Sec. Amer. Tract Soc.*

"*Dear Sir*—Since the generosity of Christians has enabled us to perform on the coast of China successive voyages, it is now our duty to concert with you such plans as will in future *facilitate the publication of Chinese Tracts.*

"Humanly speaking, much will depend upon *suitable publications being put into the hands of the Chinese*, to promote the cause of the Gospel in this country. The care, therefore, bestowed for rendering them as perfect as possible can never be too great, nor will the labour be in vain.

As far as *the subject to be dwelt upon* is concerned, the choice can soon be made. The pure Gospel of Christ presents a wide field, whence, under divine guidance, a proper theme may be selected. The writer of Tracts, however, is not formed in the study, but *amongst the people* themselves. He must learn from their own mouths their prejudices, witness their vices, and hear their defence, in order to meet them effectually; he ought to behold the detestable rites of idolatry, in order to write about the living God; he must learn to feel the wretched state of those who are without Christ, in order to speak or to compose a treatise upon the unsearchable love of the Redeemer with heart-felt sympathy. Thus subjects will never be wanting: but they must be fixed upon in this manner, or else they will not engage the attention of the readers.

In *style* we ought to conform entirely to the *Chinese taste;* for otherwise, if we reject this single rule, by displaying a superior knowledge of the art of writing, we shall not benefit our readers by our lucubrations. This point has been contested, and the advocates for adopting a foreign idiom in our books will probably retain their opinion, until they are taught by sore experience that works of this description, how plain soever to the foreign reader, are little read and still less understood. To clothe our ideas in a genuine Chinese style, is however, the study of a whole life; and notwithstanding the greatest zeal to expunge foreignisms, they cleave to us until the last. Gladly should we leave the principal work to instructed natives, but their thoughts are confined, their mind a stranger to logic, and their expression often savor too much of paganism; they do not comprehend the *whole Gospel*, and are therefore not able to write upon the subject.

Our great business in this department will consist in substituting genuine Chinese phrases for new coined expressions. In point of orthodoxy you have nothing to fear. After having perused nearly all the treatises of the Protestant missionaries, I *do not remember to have seen one single heterodox sentiment;* but I have found many passages where the expressions, from want of a full knowledge of the language, conveyed other ideas than those intended. Those, therefore, who are engaged in the revision ought to be well versed in the language: they ought to correct and not to reject. If a single expression is to be made the criterion of the suitableness of a Tract, no performance, how excellent soever, will stand the test. Unsuitable Tracts are not to be printed, but more objectionable expressions ought carefully to be corrected, and not the whole, on their account, condemned.

Tracts in point of style may be divided into the following classes.

1. *Scriptural Tracts*, which either contain parallel passages upon the same doctrine, with or without remarks: or the biography of the holy men of God. Of this description are most treatises now in the course of publication at Singapore. They are, in my opinion, the most important books, being derived from the source of eternal truth.

2. Tracts in *the classical, sententious style of the works of Chinese sages.* Their execution is the most difficult. One ought to have mastered the language, be well acquainted with the rythmus and possess a good knowledge of Chinese apothegms. This style is most adapted for conveying sententious maxims, but entirely unfit for discursive treatises. Only two Tracts in this style have hitherto been published by a late Chinese scholar, and even these require numerous corrections. But as works of this description are much valued, we ought to endeavour to excel in this species of writing.

3. *Tracts in the common style.* In this most of our productions are written, and it is the most easy. After a diligent perusal of the principal native historical works, the code of laws, and other standard books, we ought to choose our model, and study variety. We ought to have Tracts of every description, which present our holy religion in the most varied manner, in order to make it plain to the darkened heathen mind. This point has not yet sufficiently been attended to, and requires our earnest consideration.

4. *Tracts in the conversational style.* In this the greatest laditude is permitted, the stiff language becomes more pliant, and we can represent the subject under a great many forms. Narrative is the most acceptable shape of a book to the generality of readers. Such is the greater part of the divine volume, dictated by unerring wisdom, and such the greater part of our writings ought to be. Very little has hitherto been done in this department, but both the venerable Morrison and Mr. Bridgman consider it the most profitable way of conveying divine truth, fixing the attention of the reader, and making a lasting impression upon the mind.

5. *Miscellaneous works*—Amongst these the *dialogue* holds the first place, as the most easy mode both to convince and to argue. We have very few Tracts of this description.

Poetical effusions—Few of us will ever arrive to such a perfect knowledge of the language, as to write good Chinese poetry; nor have we hitherto had a single missionary endowed with a poetical genius. Those few hymns composed by natives, and the metrical version of some psalms are very inferior productions. Yet the Lord will also provide in this important matter.

Letters—Of these we have a single pamphlet, composed exactly according to the model of Chinese epistolary writings. This Tract was well received.

The Parable—Something in the shape of Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. Nothing of this nature has been attempted, and that excellent work would scarcely admit of a translation.

We possess two Tracts containing *Sermons*, but they have been little read by the Chinese, and it would be advisable not to publish more.

Translations in general are very stiff, and little understood. We possess two specimens which have found few readers. If a work is to be conveyed into Chinese, the best method will be to throw the ideas into a chinese mould, for otherwise the translation will be an Anglo-Chinese jargon.

No second edition of a Tract should be made without a thorough revision. If possible, a new supply of Tracts should always be provided, in order to insure a constant improvement in our labours: whilst inferior works, of which the blocks are worn out, are better consigned to oblivion.

The Holy Spirit will grant us grace to perform our duty to the glory of our blessed Redeemer. Though we are not all called to become authors, yet those who possess a talent for writing, and humbly wait at the foot of the cross, will be taught by their heavenly Master, and by unwearied application be enabled to convey the divine word into this mechanical language.

As far as it regards the shape and bulk of our publications, I should never advise to publish a work of more than three volumes. Small books, in the duodecimo shape, for instance, are little esteemed by the Chinese, because they place them on a par with their novels.* We want a number of good sheet Tracts, and also a supply of handbills, which can be easily obtained.

With the assistance of the Almighty, we shall endeavour to be unwearied in our exertions and work according to the measure of grace given unto us. Whilst having a single eye upon the glorious work, we shall be endowed with power from on high, and do the work according to the pleasure of our divine Master.

This letter is already too long, and I therefore conclude by recommending myself to your prayers, and remain, Dear Sir, Yours, truly,

CHARLES GUTZLAFF.

*Rev. Mr. Bridgman suggests that this prejudice is not universal; but that even pocket editions are frequently in demand.

[From the Harrisburg Keystone, August 16.]

THANKSGIVING.

A correspondent of the Baltimore American has, not long since, suggested the propriety of a day of general thanksgiving to Almighty God for the bountiful harvest with which he has blessed our land. We think there is much force and propriety in the suggestion, especially at the present time, and hope it will meet with general approbation, and that a day may be appointed by the proper authorities, or agreed upon by the different denominations of Christians.

The practice of public thanksgiving for the fruits of the earth, is as ancient and universal as any other act of religious worship. All nations, whether Jewish, Pagan, or Christian, have offered up adoration or sacrifice to their Deity for the blessings of a bountiful harvest, and the annual supply of the food with which they were nurtured.

In the course of the Providencee of God, and in the fulfillment of his gracious promise, *seed time and harvest* have again succeeded each other; and, as if to make us more grateful, in the midst of a general depression, arising from the scanty harvest of the past year, our own extravagance, and other causes, our barns are filled with plenty, our hills are clothed with the rich offerings of the earth, and our valleys are groaning under their heavy burden of luxuriance. In the different sections of our widely extended country, and among its diversified productions, there may have been a slight failure of some of the crops; but as a general thing, the present season has witnessed a remarkable fruitfulness throughout the length and breadth of this free and happy Union. Whatever other calamities, arising from our own follies or misconduct, Providence may suffer to fall upon us, famine with her haggard eye and emaciated form will find no resting place here, but will be driven to other and less favoured lands, to rear her terrible front and hold her ghastly revels. For all these rich blessings we are indebted to Him who is the fountain of life, the giver of every good and every perfect gift, who paints his bow upon the clouds as the seal of his covenant, and who

"Sends his showers of blessings down,
To cheer the plains below;
Who makes the grass the mountains crown,
And corn in valleys grow."

We are not only revelling in the lap of plenty, but our climate and country is, and has been, throughout this present year, remarkably healthful. Although Death, the fell destroyer, has been permitted to send among us his usual warnings, has called tottering age to its account, snatched infant innocence from a polluting world—showed his power by cutting down ardent youth and arresting vigorous manhood in their onward course, yet no prevailing epidemic has been suffered to sweep over our land, or pestilence to desolate our shores. This also demands our warmest thanks to God, who notwithstanding our individual and national sins, has stayed the ministers of his vengeance and given us time to repent—to return unto him and his service.

Having thus received, and being in the enjoyment of such distinguished blessings, ought we not to be grateful; and as a people professing Christianity, ought we not, without distinction of sect or party, with one heart to offer unto God a public acknowledgment of his overflowing goodness, in having crowned our land with plenty, and spared us in health to enjoy the unnumbered gifts, which we are receiving from his bountiful hand.