

L I F E

OF THE

REV. DAVID McDILL, D.D.,

MINISTER OF THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

CONTAINING A

SUCCINCT ACCOUNT OF HIS LABORS AS
PASTOR, EDITOR, AND REFORMER:

TOGETHER WITH

APPROPRIATE SELECTIONS
FROM HIS VOLUMINOUS WRITINGS.

EDITED BY

REV. MARION MORRISON.



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PREFACE.

THIS volume has been prepared at the request of the friends of its subject. An apology is due to those friends for the tardiness of its appearance. But such an apology would be out of place here, and I will only say that a peculiar combination of circumstances prevented me from prosecuting the work at an earlier date.

In preparing the Biographical part of the volume, I have found it difficult to get such facts as I desired. A few friends have aided me in this, for which they have my thanks. I have done the best I could, under the circumstances. It is not what I would desire, in presenting the life of one whose services have been of such value to the church and the country.

In preparing the remaining part of the volume, the difficulty has been to make choice, when so much was before me. I have endeavored to present that which would show his power as a writer, and at the same time be of general interest to the reader.

The volume, such as it is, is presented to the public, hoping that it may do some good. If the Master blesses it to that end, the Editor will be compensated.

M. M.

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LIFE OF THE REV. DAVID McDILL, D.D.

. PART I. BIOGRAPHY.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY LIFE, UNTIL LICENSED TO PREACH IN 1817.

Early life of David McDill, and Incidents until he was licensed to preach in 1817—Incident as an Errand Boy—Inability to get satisfactory Information of his early Life—Parentage—Taken from the midst of Slavery Influence—Removal West—Difficulties of Removal—Occupation in his new Home—Prosecuting his Education—College Attachments—Theological Training—Licensure.

NEARLY three-quarters of a century ago might have been seen, in the State of South Carolina, a lad of ten or twelve years. There was nothing in his personal appearance to indicate that he differed from other lads of his age, except it was an expression of honesty of purpose depicted on every feature of his countenance. He had been in the employ of some man of wealth and business; perhaps in the capacity of an errand boy. Such was his honesty and determination of purpose, that he had won the entire confidence of his employer. That

employer was willing to trust to his care any treasure he could properly guard, or any business his extreme youthfulness would enable him to transact, feeling assured that every cent of that treasure was perfectly secure in his hands, unless overcome by some superior physical force, and thus deprived of his treasure.

Hence that youth might have been seen, on a certain occasion, wending his way through the crowded street with a large amount of money, to be handed over, for his employer, to a third party. Older hands could have grasped that treasure, stronger arms could have been employed to guard it; but its owner felt that with none was it safer than with little David. Feeling the importance of the trust placed in his hand, a determination of purpose, which characterized him during a long career in after life, urged him forward on his important mission. He turned not to the right hand or to the left until his mission was accomplished.

This lad was he who afterwards became the Rev. David McDill, D.D., the subject of this sketch.

It is a fact much to be lamented, that we are able to gather so little information relating to the early life and boyhood of this eminent and godly man. When we read the life of one who has done much to benefit his race, we naturally wish to know something of his early life. What kind of a boy was this great man? This is a question that naturally arises in the mind when we become acquainted with, or read the history of one who has done much for the good of men and the glory of God. We are unable to do much in the way of answering this question.

David McDill was born in the Northern District of

South Carolina, December 27th, 1790. His parents were Scotch-Irish Presbyterians. His father's name was David McDill, and his mother's maiden name was Isabella McQuiston. At that time Scotch-Irish Presbyterians constituted the principal portion of the population in that part of the State. Hence they had their churches, their schools, and their academies. These institutions were far more common then than at a later period in the slave States.

Young David had evidently made a good improvement of the opportunities of mental culture thus afforded him. I well remember having heard him assert that, at the age of sixteen, he had studied as much mathematics in a common school as was then usually studied in colleges. Although raised to labor on a farm, he evidently had a love for books and a thirst for knowledge.

There were, at that time, but few slaves in that part of South Carolina, and consequently for the white man to labor was not so degrading as it afterwards became. But the invention of the cotton-gin, which occurred about that time, made the raising of cotton much more profitable than it had been, and consequently created a demand for slave labor. Often have I heard Dr. McDill, in his lifetime, refer to the invention of the cotton-gin as that which gave power to slavery.

The father of Dr. McDill, then raising a family in that community, with these surroundings, saw that one of three things he must do : Either he must raise cotton, and consequently purchase newly-imported slaves ; or see his family sink down to the condition of slaves ; or remove to the West. He was unwilling to choose

the first of these alternatives. For, although slavery was not then regarded as the great crime it afterwards came to be regarded, still it was repugnant to his nobler feelings to buy with his money his fellow-mortals. Hence he determined not to entangle himself with that peculiar institution.

A regard for the comfort and well-being of his family made him unwilling to choose the second alternative, and see his family sink down to the position of the slave. Hence he made choice of the last resort, and resolved to remove his family to what was then regarded as "the far West." This resolution formed, he determined to look out for a place where he might enjoy religious and educational privileges. He was not willing, like Lot, to choose a goodly land where his family would be without these privileges, and exposed to every evil and demoralizing influence. There were other South Carolinians, like himself, who wished to escape from the snares of slavery, and they had selected a location in the then wilderness of Western Ohio. They pitched their tents, or built their cabins, in the dense beech forests of Preble county, Ohio. Thither the McDill family resolved to go. These early emigrants brought with them their church and school privileges.

But to remove from South Carolina to Western Ohio in those days was no easy or quickly accomplished task. There were no railroads, with their whizzing locomotives, to carry them with almost lightning speed to their place of destination. Those who would move must load all into their wagon, and thus wend their way over the mountains, across the swamps, and through the wilderness.

In 1806, David McDill removed his family into the bounds of what is now the United Presbyterian congregation of Hopewell, in Preble county, Ohio. Weary weeks were spent on their journey by day and around their camp-fire by night. At length their destination was reached. There they saw their forest home. The log cabin must be built, and the forest of beech must be removed ere they could cultivate the rich soil they there found. Any who saw that forest in its primitive glory, or any who may now see the unconquered portions of it, will at once realize that it was no liliputian task to fit it for the plow. But young David, like his namesake, when he went forth to meet the giant Goliath, feeling secure in the justice of his cause and the arm of his God, gave himself with all his energy to the work of aiding his father in making a home for the family. Again and again were those mighty giants of the forest attacked, and as often conquered. But having improved well the opportunities afforded him in his old home, and perhaps being thus better fitted than others of his age, he taught school three months each summer during those three years of toil.

When he formed the purpose of receiving a liberal education and entering the work of the ministry is unknown to the writer. It is probable, from the character of his education, that this purpose was formed years before leaving his old home in the South.

After spending three years as above, we find him leaving his father's home for the purpose of completing his education. Colleges and academies were then scarce in that new country. On this account he commenced the study of the languages under Rev. William Robert-

son, Lebanon, Ohio. After spending some time under this private training, he went to Transylvania University, in the State of Kentucky, where he finished his literary course. How many years he spent in the university I cannot say. I have often heard him speak of his college life there and his associates, but can now have no recourse to data as to his place in his class, or attainments as a scholar. From the position which early in his after life he took in the literary world, he had certainly made most devoted improvement of the privileges there enjoyed.

He had for his classmates in college Rev. Dr. John Finley Crowe, the founder of the College of South Hanover; Rev. David Monfort, D.D.; and Rev. S. P. McGaw. A strong attachment was formed between him and all the above-named persons. He often spoke of them in after life in such terms as to manifest this friendship. There is an attachment which is formed between students who as classmates are intimate, more endearing, even, than that of two brothers. Their literary toils and struggles in acquiring an education have drawn them very closely together. Such seems to have been the character of the intimacy between Dr. McDill and his above-named classmates.

Just how long he spent in private study under Mr. Robertson in Lebanon, Ohio, I do not know. The length of time he was in Transylvania University is also unknown. He left home for Lebanon in 1809, and in the fall of 1813 he started for New York to attend the Theological Seminary. He probably graduated during the summer of 1813. This would give four years to be divided between his private training

under Mr. Robertson and his college life at Transylvania.

To go to New York city from Western Ohio in those days to attend a Theological Seminary was no small undertaking. There were no railroads to land the students there in twenty-four to thirty-six hours. Weary weeks must be spent on the way. The journey must be made on horseback or in the stage-coach.

The Theological Seminary of the Associate Reformed Church was then located at New York, and was under the care of Dr. J. M. Mason, as its professor. There David McDill spent four annual sessions. I think he did not return home until he had completed his studies in the seminary. He spent the summer vacations teaching in the vicinity of New York. The standing he had attained in the seminary is indicated in the fact that he was chosen to deliver the Valedictory Address to his class when it had completed its course in the seminary. This address will appear in another part of this work. How the appointment to deliver it was made we know not. If by the students, it showed their appreciation of his fitness for the position. If by the professor, it was a still higher compliment to him.

He closed his four annual sessions in the seminary in the spring of 1817. He was licensed the same year by the Associate Reformed Presbytery of Ohio, under the care of the Synod of Sciota, August 6th, 1817. He then returned to his father's home in Western Ohio. Near that home he found his long and useful field of labor. He commenced preaching in Hamilton, Ohio, in October, 1817, and continued to labor there for more than thirty years.

CHAPTER II.

DR. M'DILL AS A MINISTER AND PASTOR.

His style of Preaching—Settlement in Hamilton, Ohio—His Endearment to that People—Moulding Power over them—His laborious Life—Influence in the Country around—Incidents connected with his Ministry—Removal to Sparta, Illinois—Labors there—Removal to Monmouth, Illinois—Influence in his Denomination—Missionary Work—Incidents—Promptness in meeting Engagements—Attendance on Meetings of Church Courts—Separation of Sciota Synod from General Synod.

TO speak of Dr. McDill as a minister of Jesus Christ and a pastor, and do justice to his memory, will be a very difficult work to perform. Many who heard him preach for the first time were sorely disappointed. There was nothing showy in his manner of preaching. The plain, simple telling of the story of the Cross was his favorite way of presenting the great truths of the Gospel. Perhaps his influence for good might have been increased if he had given more attention to his manner of presenting those truths. But certainly, if he went to an extreme in this direction, it was better than an extreme in the other direction. Many ministers hide those great truths under a beautiful dress. The dress is highly admired, but the truths are unseen and unappreciated. Hence many sinners hear and are delighted, while few hear and repent. He often spoke with sorrow of the effort at display, at the expense of

Gospel truth, manifested by so many ministers. I once saw his written advice to a young minister, given in a private letter, about twenty years ago. It was in substance this : "Give your people plain Bible truth. The church is cursed with big preachers and big preaching."

Some time in the year 1817, the same year he was licensed, he commenced preaching at Hamilton and Concord, Ohio. A call from these congregations was presented to him in April, 1818. This call he held for a time, that he might have opportunity to consider the matter. He manifested his willingness to accept it in August, 1818. After laboring there until October 1st, 1818, he was ordained and installed pastor of these congregations by the Presbytery of Ohio. He continued in charge of these two congregations eight or ten years, when he demitted the Concord branch. He continued to labor as pastor of the Hamilton congregation for more than thirty years. I cannot speak with strict accuracy as to the amount of salary he received for his services as pastor of this charge. For the first few years it did not amount to more than \$250 per annum. Afterwards something was added to it from time to time. The year or two before leaving, it may have been as high as \$1000; certainly never more than that.

To his people in this charge, who knew him so intimately, he was very much endeared. A leading member of Hamilton congregation writes me : "I believe I only express the common, if not universal, opinion of those who knew him best, when I say he appeared to us a man of far more than ordinary common sense, wisdom, and prudence. These excellencies were coupled with an active, enterprising spirit, untiring industry,

and burning zeal in the cause of Christ. He furnished the happiest combination of strong masculine virtues with modesty, gentleness, and kindness."

Dr. McDill moulded the minds of the people of his congregation to a very great extent. His practical wisdom, his prudence, and his piety were stamped to a large extent on the minds and characters of his people. As an evidence of this it is stated that "there has not the scratch of a pen gone from the Hamilton congregation or session to a higher court, except merely to ask for the moderation of a call for his successor, for the space of fifty years." Now, he was pastor of that congregation for the first thirty of those fifty years. During that time he so moulded their thoughts and feelings that for more than twenty years after he left them it could truly be said, "He being dead yet speaketh."

Although constitutionally feeble, physically he performed a great amount of labor. For many years he preached three times during each Sabbath—twice in the church, and once in some school-house or unoccupied church. It is said there was not a school-house within five miles of Hamilton in which he had not preached. He continued to the close of his life to be an advocate of ministers preaching one sermon each Sabbath in some neighboring school-house. At one time, in the Presbytery of Monmouth, he strongly advocated the policy of each of the ministers preaching but one sermon in their churches and one each Sabbath afternoon in the surrounding country.

The fruit of his untiring labors in and about Hamilton, Ohio, is not all seen in the congregation he there collected, or the number of persons brought into that

branch of the church of which he was a member. As evidence of this, the writer once spent a night some twenty-three years ago with an individual living some ten or twelve miles south of Hamilton, who was a leading member of another branch of the church. I think it was a Lutheran church. There was a large congregation of his brethren in his neighborhood. Conversation ran on religious interests. He spoke of the prosperity of their congregation. He traced its origin to Dr. McDill. Seemed anxious to give him all the credit of it. Said they were all skeptics in the neighborhood. Dr. McDill made an appointment to preach in their school-house. It was something new. The people turned out, from curiosity, and filled the house. The Doctor had evidently learned the sentiments prevailing among them. He was kind and mild, but plain and firm. He stated their principles fairly, and more clearly and forcibly than they could have done it themselves. They were satisfied he had no disposition to misrepresent them. He then, in his plain honest manner, refuted those positions one after another. They soon saw they had no foundation on which to rest. He then presented plainly the claims of the Bible for truthfulness; pressed home upon them the simple story of the Cross, their ruined condition as sinners, and their only hope of salvation, as found in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And, to use this man's own words: "We felt we must secure an interest in Jesus or perish. A neighboring minister of our church heard of the religious interest in our community, and commenced preaching for us. The Lutheran Church was not quite so rigid as the Associate Reformed Church; hence we united with it and orga-

nized our congregation. But I always have traced the origin of our congregation to Dr. McDill."

Thus the influence of Dr. McDill was felt all over that country. He doubtless rejoiced that sinners were saved through his instrumentality, although they should find their way into another branch of the church.

There was perhaps no man in Butler county who did more to mould public opinion for good than Dr. McDill. He was ever on the lookout for opportunities of doing good to men, and advancing the glory of God. At one time, while pastor of the Associate Reformed congregation in Hamilton, Ohio, he had noticed a large number of persons on Sabbath afternoon strolling over the bridge, across the Miami river, which united the two parts of the town. He determined to throw himself across their path with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The market-house was close to the street, at one end of the bridge. He appointed preaching there, and kept it up for some time. Many would stop and hear of Jesus. Others, after passing by once, would not repeat it, but spend their Sabbaths at home, or somewhere else. This was before the days when "street preaching" had become common.

After living and laboring in the ministry for more than thirty years, in Hamilton, Ohio, he removed to Randolph county, Illinois, near Sparta, in 1848. The enfeebled state of his health was the main reason for this move. His congregation in Hamilton, to which he became so much endeared by his long and toilsome labors among them, were very reluctant that he should leave them. They felt they were truly losing a father. It was not his intention to again take charge of a con-

gregation ; but he was prevailed upon, after arriving at Sparta, to take the pastoral charge of the then congregation of Union. This congregation has since been divided, and now forms two charges ; viz., the United Presbyterian congregations of Sparta and Union. That congregation increased under his labors, until he felt that it was entirely too large to be cared for by one of his age, and he resigned his charge of it, after having labored as its pastor about nine years. This was his last pastoral charge.

He was then nearly "three-score and ten," that period in life which sums up man's career on this earth. Not long after giving up his charge of the Union congregation at Sparta he removed to Monmouth, Illinois, to enter upon another field of labor, as editor of the *Western United Presbyterian*. Of his labors in this field I will speak in another part of this work.

Although he did not again take charge of a congregation as pastor, he still continued to preach the greater part of the time in vacancies, in the Presbytery of Monmouth, for several years after his removal to its bounds. He regularly supplied a small congregation in Oquawka, Illinois, for a length of time. It was his joy to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to his fellow sinners ; or, as he often termed it, "to talk to the people about their salvation."

Few ministers have lived who have exerted a wider influence in the denominations with which they have been connected. He was not a popular preacher, in the common acceptation of that term ; but his counsel was always sought by his brethren in the ministry, and God's people were always willing and anxious to listen

to him when preaching. He settled in Western Ohio, at Hamilton, when it was a very new country, and when society needed just such men to shape its future.

He was first elected Moderator of the Presbytery of Ohio, in the spring of 1820. He made a good presiding officer of a church court. I have already spoken of his influence as a pastor and minister, in moulding the character of society in the town of Hamilton and the surrounding country. But his influence did not stop with that community. It was felt hundreds of miles from his home. The presbytery of which he was then a member had a very wide field to occupy. It embraced all the western part of Ohio, and all west of Ohio. In fact, the territory now occupied by the Second Synod of the West, Synod of Illinois, Synod of Iowa, and Synod of Kansas, was the district it had to occupy. New congregations were springing up over the country desiring preaching. Older congregations were often made vacant by the death of pastors. True, congregations were then seldom made vacant, except by the death of their pastors. It was a very rare occurrence for a pastor to offer the resignation of his pastoral charge. When he did, it was usually accompanied with a suspicion that something was wrong. Still, pastors died, and their congregations were thus made vacant. In that then western country, ministers were few; hence they had to endure much labor in travelling to preach to vacancies and new stations.

I well remember an incident of this kind which occurred in my early life. The congregation of Cherry Fork, Adams county, Ohio, in which my father lived, was made vacant by the death of its pastor, Rev. William

Baldrige. It was in the winter. The congregation was shrouded in gloom. They felt that they were as sheep without a shepherd. A number of them when gathered together were mourning over their loss, and discussing their discouragements. One suggested that he would write to Dr. McDill and ask him to come and preach for them a day or two, and he thought he would come. He did write, and was successful: Dr. McDill came without any appointment from presbytery, and spent two Sabbaths, one in each branch of Mr. Baldrige's charge. It was no small undertaking to travel eighty miles at that season of the year, and make the journey on horseback. The roads were terrible. Ministers now, accustomed as many of them are, when they go to preach in a neighboring congregation, to getting on the cars, and in a short time being at their journey's end, would think it a very sore trial if they had to ride on horseback from eighty to one hundred miles, in mid winter, over Ohio roads as they then were. I often heard Dr. McDill in after life refer to that journey, and to the spell of sickness he endured as its results. But Dr. McDill, and the few noble men associated with him in the then great West, were willing to endure this toil in the service of their Master, and for the good of the then growing church.

Faithfulness and promptness in meeting all engagements was a peculiar trait in the character of Dr. McDill. When he had an appointment to attend to any ministerial duty, nothing but sickness kept him from meeting that appointment. To attend the meetings of church courts was regarded by him as a special appointment. He knew that when he entered the ministry,

and took upon himself its sacred obligations, one of those obligations was to attend all the meetings of the various church courts. He was accustomed to reason thus: If I stay away from the meetings of presbytery and synod for a slight excuse, each one of my brethren may do the same, and hence there will be no meeting. On looking over the proceedings of the First Presbytery of Ohio, by which he was licensed and ordained in 1818, until he removed from its bounds in 1848, during these thirty years he was not absent from more than three or four meetings of that presbytery. I see his name nearly always on the list of ministers present. The same may be said with reference to his attendance on the meetings of the synod. It was a rare thing when his name was called, if it was not answered with "Present." In all the minutes of the several synods with which he was connected from time to time, I find the * attached to his name but twice, until by age and infirmity he ceased to take an active part in the church's work.

Here we find one secret of the power which he wielded in the various church courts with which he was connected. Other things being equal, that man will wield the greatest influence in any deliberative body who is always at his post.

Another fact, in connection with his promptness in meeting appointments, is to be noted. The minutes of his presbytery show, that when appointed by presbytery to preach at any station, or perform any duty, the duty was almost certain to be performed.

Still another instance of his promptness. When living at Hamilton, Ohio, he was long a member of the Board of Trustees of Miami University, Oxford, Ohio.

By that Board a committee to attend the examinations of the students was appointed, and Dr. McDill was a member of that committee. No matter who else of that committee were absent, the students and professors always expected him to be present. Their expectations were met. He was sure to be present.

It would be a happy thing for the church if all her ministers were characterized by his promptness and regularity in attending the meetings of its courts. Many allow this duty to pass unperformed. They seem to reason that others will be there; the business will be as well transacted without them as with them; hence they will remain at home, and thus save time and expense. As we take it, no minister has a right, under ordinary circumstances, to form any such conclusion. By so doing he fails to perform a duty he has vowed to perform, and is depriving himself of an influence he might otherwise exert. I would say to every minister, and especially to every young man in the ministry, be ye followers of him in this particular. Let no slight hindrance keep you from attending the meetings of your presbytery and synod. See that your seat there is always filled. See that your name when called is always answered by "Present." Pursuing this course, your influence in the church will grow, and more and more be felt. On the other hand, attend the meetings of church courts only occasionally, and although you may do much good in your neighborhood and congregation, still you will limit your sphere of influence very much.

Few ministers were more looked up to by their brethren in church courts than Dr. McDill. I well remem-

ber, when I entered the ministry and met with brethren in the Second Synod of the West, he was a leading spirit there. When any important matter came before synod, all were anxious to hear his opinion. And especially did he wield a powerful influence among the eldership.

When he entered the ministry the Synod of Sciota, with which the Presbytery of Ohio was connected, was in connection with the old Associate Reformed General Synod. For a number of years there had been a contention in that General Synod with reference to certain questions that were in some measure distracting the peace of the church. These questions were, "Ministerial and Christian Communion," and "Psalmody." The General Synod consisted of four subordinate synods. From about the year 1811, the Eastern portion of the church, at least many of the ministers in it, held and advocated views and practices on the above subjects that were disapproved by most of the members of the Synod of Sciota. Against such views and practices the said Synod of Sciota and the several presbyteries of which it was composed frequently remonstrated. But their remonstrances proved unavailing.

Another source of grievance, on the part of the Synod of Sciota, was the place where the General Synod had long been holding its meetings. It had been meeting in the city of Philadelphia. This made it almost impracticable for the Western Synod to have its full representation in the meetings of the General Synod. For although the church did not then extend beyond the western part of Ohio, still it must be borne in mind, that it was at that time a far greater undertaking for

the delegates even from Western Pennsylvania to go to Philadelphia, than it now is for the delegates from Nebraska and Kansas to reach the same point. Long weeks of weary travelling on horseback, or in stage coach, must be endured in order to make the journey. Now the delegates in Nebraska or Kansas can get into the cars, and in about forty-eight hours they can land in Philadelphia or New York. The expense was then greater to pass from Western Ohio to Philadelphia than it now is to go from Nebraska to Philadelphia.

On account of this difficulty, the Synod of Sciota earnestly memorialized the General Synod to meet at some point more central. Their desires in this respect were entirely unheeded. This increased the difficulties that had for years been gathering, arising from the questions of Communion and Psalmody.

When these difficulties had well-nigh culminated in a separation by the Western Synod from the General Synod, Dr. McDill was ordained, and became a member of the Synod of Sciota. He was just fresh from the Theological Seminary at New York, which was under the care of Dr. J. M. Mason, as professor. Dr. Mason was a leading spirit of the General Synod, and personally the ground of complaint with reference to his conduct in connection with the Communion question. He was a popular man, and one well qualified to gain the affections of his students. Dr. McDill entertained a very high opinion of him as an instructor. This opinion he held as long as he lived. He was never slow to express it. Hence some of the older members of the Synod of Sciota were disposed to look upon him, and one or two other young men, with some degree of sus-

picion. In fact, it was at one time proposed in his presbytery, that an investigation of his course, and that of his class-mate, Rev. S. P. McGaw, should take place. This proposition for an investigation was so managed that at the meeting held for that purpose it was agreed that they should have a kind of experience meeting, each one of the presbytery giving an account of his course of conduct concerning the questions that were agitating the church. In the course of this free interchange of views, it became manifest that some of the older members of presbytery had been at least as unguarded in their expressions on these questions as the young men. Hence the whole matter was dropped. But Dr. McDill proved, by a long life of devotion to the welfare of the Associate Reformed Church in the West, that it had no firmer friend to its interests.

After repeated efforts, by memorial and otherwise, the Synod of Sciota resolved, in the fall of 1819, to constitute itself into a separate and independent synod. Hence it met according to appointment in April, 1820, and constituted itself into a separate and independent synod, known as the "Associate Reformed Synod of the West." In this synod, Dr. McDill was then one of its young ministers. He had been ordained a little over one year when it was organized. He was located on what was then its extreme western border, in a new and rapidly filling up country. Hence there were heavy demands on him, with all the other ministers, in the way of supplying new stations with preaching.

That synod afterwards became the First and Second Synods of the West, and was constituted into the "General Synod of the Associate Reformed Church in the

West." Afterwards the Synod of Illinois was formed, and became a part of this General Synod. I think it will be conceded by all in any way connected with the Associate Reformed Church in the West, that no one man had more to do in moulding the character and securing the prosperity of this branch of the Church of Christ, than David McDill.

He labored all his life for a small compensation. I have already spoken of the amount of salary he received as pastor of the Hamilton congregation. When acting as editor of the *Western United Presbyterian*, at Monmouth, Illinois, he received a salary of \$300 annually. Often when mention was made in his presence of the pittance he was receiving, his reply would be that he "never was accustomed to get a large salary, and if that small amount was paid him promptly, he could get along." While there was nothing little or mean about him, in his business transactions, he had formed habits of economy that enabled him to live on a much smaller salary than most men.

As evidence of the hold he had on the affections of the people of his first pastoral charge, I will give an expression of an influential member of that congregation. His language was: "Let me say, that I never loved and venerated a man as I did Dr. McDill."

A leading minister in another branch of the church thus speaks of him as a minister: "Dr. McDill was one of the ablest and best ministers this country has ever produced. His delivery was slow and not impressive, but his sermons were models of rich, pure, accurate, and sound thought. For fifteen years, from 1820, we heard him preach almost every other Sabbath, in

Hamilton, Ohio, and no other minister has so excited our higher affections and veneration. His reputation where he lived and labored is a sweet perfume." Thus speaks Dr. Monfort, editor of the *Herald and Presbyterian*, Cincinnati, Ohio.

But the Judgment Day alone can reveal what good Rev. David McDill, D. D., did, while in this world, in the capacity of Minister and Pastor. Many, on that day, will rise up and call him blessed. Many will point to him as their spiritual father, to whom, under God, they owe their eternal salvation.

CHAPTER III.

DR. M'DILL AS AN EDITOR AND WRITER.

Difficulty of doing Justice to his Memory in this Capacity—Editorial Life commenced, January, 1829—Cause of starting the *Christian Intelligencer*—Abundant Labors—Difficulty of starting a Religious Journal—Opinions of cotemporary Editors—Sabbath Mail Controversy—Extracts from Articles on Sabbath Mails—Writings after retiring from the Editor's Chair—Stent's *Western United Presbyterian*—Continued to write until his Eyesight failed.

HERE I enter upon a part of the career of Dr. McDill to which I feel an utter inability to do justice. I feel satisfied that here was where his great strength lay. Great as was his influence as a pastor of his congregation;—great as was his influence in the various neighborhoods in which he lived;—great as was his influence in moulding the action taken by presbyteries and synods of which he was a member; still greater was his influence in the department Editorial. His cares as an Editor commenced in January, 1829. He had been in the ministry about ten years previous to this. In the Autumn of the previous year, the idea was formed of entering upon the publication of a monthly periodical, devoted to religion in general, but particularly to the interests of the Associate Reformed Church in the West. The Prospectus of the *Christian Intelligencer*, of which David McDill was the Editor,

was written by him while stopping at a hotel, on his return from attending the meeting of synod in the fall of 1828. The immediate cause of the resolution formed to enter upon its publication was a discussion had in the Synod of the West, at its late meeting, on the Slavery question. Of this discussion, and the part taken in it by Dr. McDill, I will speak in another part of this work.

Religious periodicals and papers did not then abound as they do now. If there were religious weeklies in any of the branches of the church, they were very few. A monthly was the most that was thought of, as a general thing. Prior to this, the Associate Reformed Church in the West had no religious paper, either weekly or monthly. It required a good degree of resolution to enter upon such a work. Dr. McDill was preaching three sermons each Sabbath, when at home;—was necessarily frequently from home, supplying in vacancies, and attending to other duties;—was a member of the Board of Trustees of Miami University, the duties of which position occupied a considerable portion of his time. In addition to all these duties, he undertook that of editing a religious journal, as the organ of the church to which he belonged.

Congregations in the bounds of the Synod of the West were not very large; the enterprise of a religious journal was new; its support was something to which families were not accustomed,—hence the circulation, at first, would doubtless be quite limited, and, it is probable, a few of its friends would have to make pecuniary sacrifices in order to secure its success.

The *Christian Intelligencer* was published monthly,

and consisted of thirty-two pages to each number, making a volume each year of 384 pages. It was published at Hamilton, Ohio. There were others aiding in the work by contributing valuable articles to its columns. The pens wielded by McGaw, Claybaugh, Reynolds, and others, contributed regularly to its columns many very valuable articles, and added much to its interest. But its moving spirit was its editor. For eighteen years he continued to manage its editorial department, and it was sought after with eagerness by all who knew anything of its editor.

A cotemporary editor, who has long filled that important position, thus speaks of him and the monthly he so ably edited: "As a writer he had few superiors. He was a skilful and cultivated logician; a profound and vigorous thinker; a general and accurate scholar; and a courteous and attractive Christian gentleman. The *Christian Intelligencer*, conducted by Dr. McDill, was a very valuable monthly magazine. The Editor's Notices of Current Events and Questions are among the liveliest and best specimens of thought and style anywhere to be found. It contains many very able and profound discussions of subjects in theology and morals. We would esteem it a great acquisition to the library of Lane Seminary if any having the volumes would donate or sell them. If we had access to them we should reproduce in our paper many of their best articles." Thus spake a fellow-editor of Dr. McDill as a writer, and of the monthly he so long edited.

In looking over the old volumes of the *Christian Intelligencer*, I notice the following characteristic introduction to vol. ii.:

“*Introduction.*—Our pages may be more profitably occupied than with a tedious introduction. We shall therefore only state, that to the utmost of our ability we will endeavor to defend the institutions of Christianity and the doctrines of our Lord against all attacks, from whatever quarter, or under whatever colors.”

This is all there is of it. Still it embraces everything that needed to be embraced in such a document.

About the time the *Christian Intelligencer* made its appearance, the question of carrying the United States mails on the Sabbath Day was agitating the Christian public. Petitions, largely signed, were sent to Congress, asking that the carrying of said mails on the Sabbath be discontinued. Dr. McDill took a very active part in the discussions on this subject through the columns of his paper. Many articles written by him, and published in the *Christian Intelligencer*, attracted general attention, and were frequently copied into other papers.

Like almost every movement that would tend to better man's moral and spiritual condition, this one met with decided opposition. Men combined together for the purpose of preventing this needed reform in our national government. They raised everywhere the cry of “union of Church and State.” Satan always suggests to his emissaries the most cunning methods of accomplishing his ends. In the public mind in this country there was a great aversion to anything like a union between the powers civil and ecclesiastical. The evil effects of such union as witnessed in the old country were still fresh in the minds of many. Hence Satan, ever watchful for an opportunity to accomplish his ends, saw that here was a plausible pretext, and an

opportunity to work upon the minds of men, and defeat the cause of godliness with reference to this important subject.

Dr. McDill threw himself with all his energy on the side of truth and godliness. His pen and voice were used with all their power to place this nation on the side of righteousness in reference to the holy Sabbath. He delivered a public address on this subject in Hamilton, Ohio, in December, 1829, occasioned by the opposition which originated in Cincinnati, Ohio, against the attempt to stop the Sabbath mails. This address will appear in another part of this work.

But it may not be amiss here to present some of the editorials and other articles written by him, and published from time to time in the *Christian Intelligencer*. These quotations will show something of the position which the question assumed in that day, and also something of the power with which Dr. McDill could wield the pen even at that early age.

In the *Christian Intelligencer* of January, 1830, I find the following article on the "union of Church and State :"

"An example of the unhallowed union of Church and State has lately been witnessed in the city, which ought to alarm the community. Some persons got up a meeting in opposition to the Sabbath Mail petitions. When the meeting convened, it was by the plastic word of a certain gentleman formed into some such thing as a *Christian* meeting. It was opened with prayer by the city *postmaster*, in other words, by an *officer of the General Government*, officiating as a clergyman, thus *uniting Church and State* in his own proper person. After

what manner he prayed the public have not been informed, and we cannot conjecture. We hope he did not pray that a Divine influence might be shed down upon our people and our rulers, to keep them constant to the purpose of retaining several thousand persons in the employment of carrying the mails on the Sabbath; thus barring them of every opportunity of receiving religious instruction and worshipping God. The chief officer of the municipal authorities of the city presided as chairman. One of the principal decrees of the council was to condemn '*every connection between Church and State.*' Well, if the doctrines of Christianity, which are the doctrines of the Church of Christ, influence men as citizens and as rulers to '*live soberly, righteously, and godly,*' here is a connection between Church and State. The work of the meeting is only half done; and they should again assemble promptly to devise some practicable method of avoiding this connection so '*dangerous to civil and religious liberty.*'

"But if this is to be a standing council to preserve the liberties of our country, we should like it to have the eyes of an Argus. Hitherto it has exhibited no proof of any uncommon degree of discernment. To see what every person thinks or says he sees, is easy; but to ferret out latent evils and dangers from the nooks and corners where, like mice, they hide themselves, this is the difficulty. Should the council assemble again, we would wish it to search the churches with candles. One point may be mentioned, to which it is proper that inquiry be directed. There is, perhaps, no just ground of objection against a minister accepting a civil office who is disabled by age or infirmity from attending to his proper

duties; but if they find any denominations of Christians who do not preserve so much good order by their own internal regulations as to prevent their ministers from becoming civil officers to the great injury of secular men, of whom there are a sufficient number well qualified, let them apply the remedy. Let them down with every such connection of Church and State, and let all the people say, Amen. In the Associate Reformed Church we know, in the General Assembly we hope, that no minister of the Gospel would retain his character among the people or with his brethren for one month should he accept a civil appointment which would draw off his attention from his appropriate duties. How stands the fact among some who have joined in the hue and cry, 'Union of Church and State?'

"By another decree, the *Christian* meeting approved a 'voluntary appropriation of the first day of the week to the purpose of rest, religious instruction, and the worship of God.' Well; if there were present at the meeting, and assenting to this proposition, any practical atheists of the Fanny Wright school, who affirm that virtue and vice are but names, and that the Lord cannot do good, neither will He inflict evil—and we have some reason for supposing such a case—they will henceforth maintain a prudent reserve in publishing their libels on Christianity; for they cannot wish to do any overt act or thing by which they may be convicted of having spoken 'lies in hypocrisy,' for the purpose of deceiving and dividing the friends of religion and morality. Who do they find saying that such appropriation should be other than voluntary? But if they are in earnest in this decree, why is it their wish that the General Gov-

ernment should continue to hold several thousand persons who are engaged in carrying the mails bound by contracts, which render it impossible for them to devote the first day of the week to such purposes? Why was the clerical postmaster unwilling that the Government should permit the men in his office to practise in a voluntary manner the duties of the Sabbath? We have met with few cases which more need explanations.

“We would suggest another thing. We have no doubt there were present at the meeting some intelligent and patriotic gentlemen. Do they not know, or have they never been led to apprehend, that there are some influences busily at work to eradicate, if possible, from the minds of the community every impression of moral obligations and accountability to the Supreme Being; and thus prepare their subjects for the acting of other deeds than those which mark the stillness and order of a Sabbath? They are no doubt acquainted with the history of countries where such influences have succeeded; and cannot wish to see a similar drama acted in our own. A destruction of both Church and State must be nearly as disastrous an event as a union of Church and State. Have they never suspected that such influences might be strengthened by an *apparent* opposition to a Christian institution, which, after all their declarations to the contrary, some people, without any natural confusion of their ideas, may *mistake* and others *report* for a *real* opposition to Christianity itself? If the Sabbath Mail petitions are dangerous to the liberties of the State, we presume they may be opposed coolly, and temperately, by *strong* arguments and *lucid* reasonings; without calling in the aid of a popular ex-

citement, and without relying on a 'glowing exhibition of those feelings' which mark an Independent day celebration, or which animate the ranks of freemen, while marching at the sound of martial music to fight their country's battles.

"The unreflecting portion of mankind may be excused; but it behooves those who exert an influence on the destinies of society to act in soberness in all important conjunctures. Granting all that the opponents of the Sabbath Mail petitions can justly claim, or that they have claimed, when they have been so singular as to *reason* on the subject, still, a moment's consideration, we should think, must convince them that the liberties of a virtuous and intelligent people are not likely to be overthrown by some misdirected petitions, or even by a few misguided acts of legislation. Examine the history of all those nations the sun of whose glory arose, shone brightly on the world for a season, and then set to rise no more, and we apprehend it will appear that the decay of liberty arises from other causes. The catastrophe has always been preceded by a fearful degeneracy, a frightful corruption of morals among all ranks in society. The causes of this degeneracy are distinctly traced on the historic page. And if any respectable men, who oppose the Sabbath Mail petitions, are among the advocates of these causes—rather if they are not among their firm opposers—little credit is due to them for a glow of feeling which sometimes animates other bosoms than those which are decidedly patriotic."

Also in the February Number of the same year, we find the following Editorial :

"Judge Story's Opinion.—Judge Story, in his inau-

gural address, as Professor of Law in Harvard University, has the following remarks: 'One of the most beautiful boasts of our municipal jurisprudence is, that Christianity is a part of the common law, from which it seeks the sanction of its rights, and by which it endeavors to regulate its doctrines. And notwithstanding the specious objection of one of our distinguished statesmen, the boast is as true as it is beautiful. There never has been a period in which the common law did not recognize Christianity as lying at its foundation. For many ages it was almost exclusively administered by those who held its ecclesiastical dignities. It now repudiates every act done in violation of its duties of perfect obligation. It pronounces illegal every contract offensive to its morals. It recognizes with profound humility its holidays and festivals, and obeys them as *dies non juridici*. It still attaches to persons believing in its Divine authority the highest degree of competency as witnesses; and until a comparatively recent period, infidels and pagans were banished from the halls of justice as unworthy of credit.'

"Judge Story is a member of the Federal Court of the United States, and a severe castigat^{or} of religious intolerance. It will not be denied, we presume, that the Constitution of the United States recognizes the common law. We shall ask a plain question. If the Federal Court of the Union were called to sit in judgment on the constitutionality of the present law of Congress, which requires the ordinary labors of the Post-office department to be performed on the Sabbath, what would *probably* be Judge Story's decision? A little reflection on this question would perhaps serve to

abate the ardor of reasonable men, in charging the opponents of Sabbath Mails with designs hostile to the liberties of the country. We say *reasonable men*;—and we trust the majority of our people are of this description;—from those of a different character nothing is to be hoped.

“Ever since we have been capable of reflecting on this subject, our opinion has been something like the following. The Government of the United States is pledged by the Constitution to observe a kind of *neutrality* in relation to the religion of the people. While no law can be framed under our Constitution to bind the conscience of the citizen, or to enforce any mode of faith or worship, no law ought to be enacted which would require the citizen to violate any known or recognized precept of Christianity, or which, in its operation, would encourage such violation. Every attempt therefore ought to be resisted, which would influence the Government to depart from this, which perhaps the great body of the American people will sanction as its true position. That the first day of the week has been recognized by the Government from its formation as a day of rest from secular labor, or as a *Sabbath*, it is idle to dispute. The men who toiled for our liberties, and exerted their wisdom to secure the inheritance for their children, saw no danger in the adoption of this principle. The majority of them understood too well the healthful influence of the Sabbath and the duties and religious instructions of the Sabbath on the morals of the community. And how any man’s just liberties can be restrained, or his conscience wounded by it, is, we confess, to this hour a mystery too stupendous for our faculties.”

“The attention of our readers is invited to a pamphlet entitled, ‘An Examination of certain Doctrines of the Friends of Sabbath Mails, by the *Spirit of Seventy-six*,’ which we have commenced publishing in our present number, and expect to finish in our next. The reader of discernment need not be told that the author is a man of powerful intellect, and that he is said to possess ‘great legal attainments.’ The essay has been extensively read in the United States, and deserves the careful perusal of every friend of his country, and of that sound morality without which his country cannot prosper. To prevent misconceptions, it may not be improper to remark that the phrase, ‘friends of Sabbath Mails,’ does not embrace all who in the present state of their minds are unfavorable to petitioning Congress on the subject. Many whom we are bound to consider on the whole friendly to Christianity, have been led by artful misrepresentations to suppose that the Sabbath Mails cannot be stopped without introducing some new principle into our Government, or setting a dangerous precedent. Assure them that this is not the case, and they say, and we believe sincerely, that they would wish the cause to prevail. The friends of Sabbath Mails are those who wish the mails to continue running on the Sabbath, because, and for no other reason than because, they are pleased with the disrespect which is thus shown to an institution of Christianity, and hope that the example of the Government will have a powerful effect in prostrating the cause of godliness which they hate. We hope there are few of this description; but that there are some such, and that they are the originators of the fearful outcry which has been made against the petitioners,

does not admit of a moment's doubt. No arguments; nothing will silence their ceaseless loquacity, unless God is pleased to convert them from the error of their ways."

In the March Number of the same year, we find this Editorial:

"Sabbath Mails.—Reports have been made on this subject in Congress. We have no means of knowing what number in either house look favorably on the cause of the petitions. We however never have had, and have not at present, much expectation that they will be granted. It is not indeed to be thought a matter of course that the decision of a question in such a body as Congress must depend on the number of petitioners; for though we subscribe to the doctrine that the majority must rule, yet a single individual is sometimes the means of pointing out errors, and of having them corrected. A petition, if it be thought proper, is often granted though it have but few signers. A petition merely brings a subject before the body to which it is presented, and submits it to their consideration; and the decision is influenced, or ought to be influenced, by the reason and propriety of the case. But still, when there are counter petitions, it must be expected that the decision will in fact be according to the wishes of the majority. We do not know whether a majority have petitioned against any change in the present Post-office law, but we suppose it not unlikely. By this it is not meant to say that a majority of our people are opposed to the existence of the Sabbath. We believe the fact to be far otherwise; but legislation on the subject of religion is, as it ought to be, strenuously opposed by all;

and thousands have not had the means of knowing that it is not legislation that is sought by the petitioners, but that the legislation which in their apprehension has unhappily taken place on the subject may be done away, and that there may be no more of it.

“The labor of petitioning, however, is not lost—will not be lost, though the desired change should never take place. For,

“1. Christians have borne a testimony in favor of the Sabbath as a divine institution. To every one to whom a petition has been presented, it has been practically said: ‘Remember the Sabbath Day.’ And it has been said to our Senators and Representatives in Congress: ‘Remember the Sabbath Day.’ Though some mock, it was so at Athens, when Paul preached.

“2. Many have been, and we trust more will yet be led to examine the subject, and pay a greater regard to the Sabbath than formerly.

“3. It is hoped that the agitation of the question will, by the blessing of God, be a means of stirring up Christians of every denomination to make more earnest and prayerful efforts to increase and extend the influence of Christianity.”

“Since the above was written, we have seen the reports of the House of Representatives; one by Mr. Johnson, chairman of the committee, against, and another by Mr. McCreery, from a minority of the committee, in favor of the prayer of the petitioners. We had prepared a short article on the report of Mr. Johnson, but found that our remaining space would not admit of its insertion. Our regret is the less, as Mr. Mc-

Creery's view of the question, which accompanies it, is a very good antidote against its evils; and our readers will have little difficulty in discerning and appreciating the difference between the effervescence of anti-Christian rage, and a plain, unvarnished, temperate and dignified statement of facts and principles. We only add—and we do it in the softest terms which the case admits—that Mr. Johnson's report *utterly perverts* the prayer of the petitioners."

Again, in the April Number of the same year, is the following Editorial:

"*Sabbath Mails*.—Our first impression on reading the reports on the Sabbath Mail question, was, that Mr. Johnson's report would either be passed over without comment by the more respectable class of political editors, or noticed not with entire approbation. In this we have not been altogether disappointed.

"Mr. Walsh, editor of the *United States Literary Gazette*, and of the *National Gazette*, though opposed to the petitions, gives a decided preference to the report of Mr. McCreery. But he shall speak for himself.

"The report of the minority of the committee on Post-offices and Post-roads, in relation to the Sunday Mail question, possesses more merit, on the whole, as a composition, than that of the majority; but we continue to dissent from its purport. Even if the measure of stopping the mail and closing the Post-offices could be deemed absolutely right and constitutional, we should deprecate it, because we believe that the success of the petitioners on this side might generate much ill-blood throughout the Union—much jealousy and alarm with regard to religious freedom and equity—more unchristian-

tian spirit and strife than would be compensated by any probable advantage.'

"Now we certainly do not wish to see a greater abundance of these evil things generated. But we may be permitted to ask: If a measure 'could be deemed absolutely right and constitutional,' *ought* it to produce such consequences? In that event, could not Mr. Walsh tell his readers that it is not the character of American liberty to be impaired by acting on right and constitutional principles? The opinion of a man who ranks among the presiding geniuses of the literature of our country would have some weight. And considering the gratuitous pains which have been used by some actually to excite 'jealousy and alarm,' not to say 'ill-blood,' is there not some danger, should it once come to be understood, that every attempt must be abandoned, when there exists such reasons as Mr. Walsh alleges, that this ready method of opposing the most salutary measures might become too fashionable? We are not sure where it would end. But we should like to see the grounds of Mr. Walsh's dissent from Mr. McCreery's report. We would endeavor to weigh them with candor.

"Though we have seen some discussion on that side of the question which contained more reason and argument than Mr. Johnson's report, yet in most of them we thought we perceived a studious aim, not so much to enlighten and convince, as to arouse jealousies, and strengthen previously existing prejudices.

"Remarks are frequently to be met with, in public prints, bearing that Mr. Johnson's report ought to satisfy the petitioners, and that if they persevere, they must excite the suspicions of those who have hitherto

admitted the purity of their motives. We cannot pledge the course which may hereafter be pursued. As the wishes of the petitioners are now before the representatives of the nation, and as it is understood, we presume, that the principle contained in the petitions, namely : That no legislature on earth has any right or power to encroach on the sacredness of the Sabbath by positive legislation, will be adhered to by the great body of the friends of Christian morality, they may, for aught we know, leave it to time, and future deliberation and discussion, to do away the objections which lie against them in the minds of many, without renewing the petitions. But really, those who have made themselves acquainted with the grounds and reasons on which the friends of the Sabbath proceed, will, we apprehend, see little in Mr. Johnson's report to satisfy or convince them.

"We question whether the idea of convincing any person was once present to the mind of the writer of that report. And we apprehend further, that were the petitioners to drop the matter, and say no more about it, discerning men would see some cause for suspicion. Those who act on no fixed principles can afford to advance and retreat as policy may dictate. They may be loud in their demands for a measure, and they may presently consent to drop the subject, and bury it in a profound and uninterrupted silence, whenever it becomes necessary to save their popularity. But if men act on principle the matter is not quite so easy. Besides, what is the amount of this advice? Simply this: 'Desist, or we will answer your arguments with "suspicions," we will call your "motives" in question, and this you must know, would be injurious to you.'

“It is stated in a respectable journal that Mr. Madison is one of the signers of the petitions for stopping Sunday Mails. It is also stated that Judge Marshall (Chief Justice Marshall, we presume) has become a member of the American Sabbath School Union. These old-fashioned politicians appear to apprehend no danger to the liberties of our country from the moral influence of the Sabbath and the prevalence of Christianity. But no one can tell what change may take place in their views when they shall have read the letter of the Rev. John Leland, Preserved Fish’s second manifesto, and the ‘second edition’ of Mr. Johnson’s able ‘report about the Congressional appointment of Sabbaths.’”

“The Rev. John Leland, our readers must know, wrote a letter to the Honorable Richard M. Johnson, with his own hand, and in his old age, and under a presentiment of his approaching dissolution, when, if ever in his life, a man will speak out his honest convictions. From this famous letter it really does not appear that the Rev. John Leland ‘possesses the high and rare merit of being opposed to intolerance and persecution, and that he is not behind even Col. Johnson himself in his dread of that popish manufactory of saints—the Inquisition. This is well; for just at this time they tell some strange and almost incredible things about the reviviscency in our own country of this same Romish affair. The history of Asa king of Israel, he seems to think, is fraught with warnings to the American people. Asa, though a good man, he tells us, ‘made a law that those who would not seek the Lord should be put to death.’ Our acquaintance with the records of the In-

quisition does not enable us to say whether this story is found there or not. It is in the Bible. But no matter for that; some men do not read the Bible much—these must possess a great amount of oracular wisdom on religious subjects, or they would not have so much to communicate—and among these, the Rev. John Leland will find his warmest admirers. Well, after telling this ugly story on good old Asa, who is not alive to defend himself, he goes on to inform us, or perhaps he informed us first, that Asa oppressed some of the people. This is true. Towards the close of his life, and long after a transaction of the people which the Rev. Mr. Leland perhaps mistook for a cruel law of the king, he did several things which are not approved. One of these was his making a league with the king of Syria. Whether in this matter he symbolized a professed minister of Christ holding a correspondence with a certain Honorable, and doling his pious regrets that so much honor should have been done the Sabbath by the fathers of our Government as to provide for the celebration of religious worship in the Capitol on that day, we shall not determine. Be this as it may, the affair displeased the God of Israel. The seer Hanani was sent to reprove the king—*not to flatter him*. His majesty took offence, as great men are apt to do when told the truth from God. The seer was cast into prison, ‘and Asa oppressed some of the people the same time.’ A spirit of insubordination to the authority of God is very apt to lead to oppression.

“But Asa was a good man, and he made that dreadful law, and he oppressed. The moral of the fable is, that liberty is in most danger from those who are reputed

good men—from men ‘eminent for holiness.’ Ergo, a blind man may almost see the way to avoid suspicion, and become a *pillar* of civil and religious liberty. But this is by the way. To this discovery of the Rev. John Leland, we seem to be indebted for certain happy arguments and illustrations in Mr. Johnson’s second report, which, like its predecessor, aims at the high destiny of ‘satin, velvet, vellum, and tavern ornaments.’

“Concerning the Rev. John Leland we have farther learned that he is a most excellent man, liberal in his sentiments, above the suspicion of a wish to gain any advantage to his views by flattering great men, or by pre-occupying their ears, and that he has spent a great part of a long, laborious, and useful life among a very *bigoted* and *sectarian* people. Of course they must be pretty well rubbed down by this time. Some ‘priests,’ it will be confessed, have been doing great good. And to do farther justice to this much injured and traduced class of mankind, it may not be improper to add, by way of episode, that some of the friends of Mr. Johnson’s reports seem determined that he shall not have the honor of their authorship. They are so uncommonly good that they must be, and are confidently conjectured to be, the productions of a certain priest. And so the Rev. John Leland wrote a letter to the Hon. Richard M. Johnson.”

Again, in the July Number is the following editorial :

“*Sabbath Mails*.—The editor of the *New York Observer*, being the executor of the estate of the late Dr. Morse, has found among his papers a memorial to Congress, drawn up in the year 1811 by an association of ministers, of which leading Unitarians, as Doctors Holy and Chan-

ning were members, remonstrating against the Post-office law of 1810, and praying for the repeal of so much of it as requires the violation of the Sabbath. The petitioners used the following excellent language: 'Your memorialists cannot, in justice to their own feelings, refrain from observing that the violation of the salutary and long revered institution of the Sabbath, when sanctioned by the most powerful influence in the Union, cannot fail of having a tendency to endanger that respect for all the laws of religion and morality on which the peace and happiness of society must ultimately repose.'

"From a letter of a member of Congress to Dr. Morse, also found among his papers, it appears the memorial was presented."

These quotations show that from month to month this important subject was kept before the readers of the *Christian Intelligencer*. They also show that Dr. McDill was a writer who did not shrink from expressing his opinion in condemnation of the conduct of those in high places, as well as those in more humble life. The report of Col. Richard M. Johnson on the Sabbath Mail question is as severely handled as if it had been the production of an obscure country editor like himself. Other subjects of equal importance with the one to which I have referred were discussed from time to time in the *Christian Intelligencer*.

After editing the *Christian Intelligencer* for three years, viz., 1829, 1830, and 1831, it was then suspended for a time, but resumed again in March, 1833. At this time the fourth volume commenced.

At the close of the thirteenth volume, a change of the

name of the periodical took place, and it was called the *Evangelical Guardian*. Under this name it continued until 1847, when it was again changed to that of the *United Presbyterian*. At this time Rev. James Prestley, then of Cincinnati, Ohio, was associated with Dr. McDill as publisher and assistant editor.

At the close of the eighteenth volume, having concluded to remove from Hamilton, Ohio, where he had long lived and labored, to the then growing West, he retired from his position as Editor, and Rev. J. Claybaugh, D.D., took his place. On retiring, we have the following valedictory from his pen :

“ *Valedictory*.—The present Number closes the first volume of the *United Presbyterian*. As formerly stated, the senior Editor now retires, and Dr. Claybaugh will take his place.

“ At an earlier stage of his editorial career, he might, on retiring, have presented his readers with a long valedictory ; but as one advances in life such things lose much of their interest. Suffice it to say, that he wishes continued success to the *United Presbyterian*, and that all its patrons and readers receive much profit from its pages. Let it be borne in mind, that to supply the place of those who are removed by death, and of those who grow weary in paying for, and reading a periodical, a constant attention is necessary, on the part of those who desire its continuance, that it may be a blessing to the church.

“ It is hoped that a frequent cause of editorial difficulty, and of the failure of such publications—the want of prompt and punctual payment—will be carefully avoided. With the commencement of a new era, let

all who patronize the work begin on this only correct and honorable plan, and continue it till it becomes habitual.

“And may that Infinite One, who is the hope of His people, have both the writer and the reader in His holy keeping.”

Although Dr. McDill had retired from his position as Editor of that journal, which he had so ably conducted through eighteen volumes, he did not cease to write for it and other papers of the church. His articles, written from Sparta, Illinois, appeared in every number. These articles secured to him the designation of the “Sparta Chief.” They were always eagerly read, even by those who differed from him on certain subjects. There was a certain something about his style of writing which made you desire to read everything he wrote, even though you did not approve of it. It is the intention to insert in another part of this volume selections from his articles entitled “BRIEF REMARKS.”

So rapidly had the Associate Reformed Church of the West, of which the Doctor was so active a minister, grown, that a Western paper was felt to be important. Hence the Associate Reformed Synod of Illinois, which held its meeting in Chicago in 1855, resolved on starting a religious weekly within its bounds. The same synod, at its meeting in Keokuk, Iowa, in 1856, completed its arrangements for commencing such a paper, and determined that Monmouth, Illinois, should be the place where it would be published. Dr. McDill was selected as its Editor.

He was then living near Sparta, in the southern part

of the State of Illinois. His appointment to this position by the synod made it necessary for him to remove to Monmouth, Illinois, which he did some time in the winter or spring of 1857.

The first issue of the *Western United Presbyterian* was January, 1857. It continued to be issued in Monmouth, Illinois, for about five and a half years. About July, 1862, it was united with the *Christian Instructor* published in Philadelphia.

Two things combined to make this necessary. First. Dr. McDill's feebleness of health, and the infirmities of old age, made it necessary for him to resign his position as Editor.

Second. The United Presbyterian Church in the West was then too weak to afford a sufficient circulation to support a religious paper, unless by a very united effort. Many families of our church were lately from somewhere East. There were then three weekly papers, at that time published by our church in different parts of the East, and they preferred taking some one of these because it came from their old home.

Another difficulty arose. The war broke out in 1861. Many young families were broken up by the husband going into the army. These families were taking the *Western United Presbyterian*, and consequently ceased to take it. For the above reasons, it was found at that time to be impracticable to continue the publication of a religious weekly in the West, and it was united with the *Instructor*, as above stated.

It has often since been regretted by Western brethren that it was discontinued. There is a felt need of a Western paper. To establish and conduct a religious

paper, making a financial success, is a far greater work than many suppose. Hence the mass even of the ministers in the church do not realize the necessity of exertion on their part in order to success.

Dr. McDill's connection with this enterprise afforded a very poor compensation for his labor. He received but \$300 a year, as his salary as Editor, and the publisher closed up his connection with it, suffering a pecuniary loss of about \$1000, besides his time given to it gratis.

Still the *Western United Presbyterian* accomplished an important mission. It had its influence in establishing the church and its institutions in the West. Its Editor stood high among the editors of the land. The leading religious papers of different denominations were glad to have it on the list of their exchanges. When the Doctor resigned his position as Editor, there were many very flattering notices of him and his work by the editors of other religious papers. I remember particularly a very flattering notice indeed from the editor of the *New York Independent*.

Dr. McDill continued to write frequently for the papers of the church as long as his eyesight would permit. Even when he could not see to read a word, he wrote. He would get his paper and have it placed in proper position by some one, and he would thus write brief articles for the papers.

But as a writer his labors were not confined to what he wrote for the papers of our own church. He was a paid contributor of some of the leading religious papers of other denominations. He declined repeated offers to give his time in that way when it would have

paid him financially much better than editing the *Western United Presbyterian*.

As an Editor Dr. McDill had but few equals. Few men who took up the pen, in controversy with him, but were very willing to drop it again on as good terms as they could. He had a way of *putting things* so as to shield himself against attack. He never left a vulnerable point unprotected. He seemed to anticipate where the blow would come, and had his shield ready to ward it off.

He was an excellent draftsman, hence was often appointed by synods and other church courts to draft important documents. This was true of him, even in his younger days.

CHAPTER IV.

DR. M'DILL AS AN ANTI-SLAVERY MAN.

Born on Slave Territory—Escaped its Influence by his Father's Removal—Early Action of the Associate Reformed Church on Slavery—His Agency in securing that Action—His Joy when all the Oppressed were made Free.

HE was born on slave territory and reared up in its midst. But his father left South Carolina, and emigrated to western Ohio, to escape the effects of slavery on himself and family. David grew up to despise, not the men who held slaves, but the system, and much of his energy was devoted to its overthrow. He was not an extreme man, but moderate, and yet determined in his views.

I know that he was sometimes charged in the later years of his life, with being more favorable than opposed to slavery. But this was usually by that class of men who, having changed from being pro-slavery, and gone to the opposite extreme, held that a man could not be a slaveholder and a Christian.

The Associate Reformed Church, of which he was a member, was among the first, if not the first church in the land, that took decided action making the voluntary holding of slaves a sin so great as to exclude from the Communion table those who held them. And in the controversy which resulted in that action Dr. McDill

took a very decided part. In fact, he was one of the leaders in synod on the anti-slavery side of the question. As early as the year 1826 memorials were sent up from different congregations to the Associate Reformed Synod of the West on this subject. I well remember seeing among the papers of a member of the Associate Reformed Congregation of Cherry Fork, Ohio, a letter from Dr. McDill, accompanying a memorial to the synod, and requesting the individual to whom it was written to have it circulated among the members of the congregation, with a view to having it largely signed by them. I do not remember the exact date of this letter, but it was about the time the subject was first brought up in the synod.

In May, 1826, a committee was appointed to report on the subject of slavery, "particularly as to the propriety of making it a term of communion." Of this committee, if I am not misinformed, David McDill was the chairman. In April, 1827, this committee reported in an elaborate and thorough argument, showing that slavery, as it existed in this country, instead of being supported by Scripture, was at war with the Law and Gospel of God, contrary to the standards of the Associate Reformed Church, and enjoined on presbyteries and sessions to take action accordingly. This report was overtured to presbyteries that they might report their views on it.

As Dr. McDill acted a very important part in the controversy on this subject, it may not be out of place to note it somewhat at length here. A minority paper was read by Mr. Steele of Xenia, Ohio. McDill, McGaw, Claybaugh and Graham were the principal

supporters in the synod of the report. But as it was a matter of grave importance, it was thought best to send it down in overture to the presbyteries, that there might be ample time for all to carefully deliberate upon the subject. The Synod of 1828 did not meet until in October, the time being changed from spring to fall. Thus a year and a half was given to all the members, that they might calmly form their opinions. The subject was discussed somewhat in 1828, but more fully in 1829. At that meeting a committee on petitions and reports was appointed, and this report was referred to that committee. That committee presented the following report:

"1. *Resolved*, That this synod will, and hereby do, condemn slavery as it exists in the slave-holding States of these United States, as contrary to the word of God and our Confession of Faith.

"2. *Resolved*, That suitable measures shall be taken for the speedy removal of this evil from our church.

"3. *Resolved*, That sessions shall require of slave owners in their congregations, when there are such, to liberate their slaves, where no civil disabilities exist to prevent their liberation; and where such do exist, to liberate them as soon as God in His providence shall afford them an opportunity.

"4. *Resolved*, That synod recommend to her members who own slaves, to aid in their transportation to Liberia, or elsewhere; and in case of a deficiency of pecuniary means to effect this purpose, to hire them out, or permit them to hire themselves, until a sufficient sum is procured, which shall be applied exclusively to this end.

"5th Resolution provides for the support, kind treatment, and religious instruction of aged, infirm, or juvenile slaves.

"6th Resolution provides for the kind treatment and religious instruction of all slaves until they are emancipated.

"7th Resolution enjoins sessions to enforce the foregoing resolutions."

A few vigorously opposed this report, and the following substitute was moved :

"*Resolved*, That all such measures as tend to increase the evils of slavery, by augmenting the number of slaves, or by rendering their civil and religious condition still more oppressive and injurious, and the neglect to use proper measures for the diminution and final removal of these evils, such as forbearing unnecessary threatening and all abuse, and as some equivalent for their services, rendering their bodily condition comfortable, and affording them opportunities of saving light and knowledge,—that these things are contrary to the word of God and the profession of this church founded thereon ; that to avoid these evils is within the natural power and gracious attainments of believers in Jesus Christ ; and that synod hereby require sessions to take notice accordingly."

After a long discussion on this substitute, it was laid over by the following resolution :

"*Whereas*, Harmony of sentiment in a decision on a question of such magnitude as that of slavery is highly desirable ; and,

"*Whereas*, Synod are unanimous in the opinion that slavery as it exists in the slave-holding States of the

United States, is a great political and moral evil, and that the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ calls upon all Christians to remove the evil as soon as it can be done without worse consequences to society and to the slaves themselves; and as it is believed that more time for consideration and maturing of plans would offer a fairer prospect of happy results than to adopt any measures at present; Therefore,

“Resolved, That the discussion of this question be postponed until the next meeting of synod.”

This gave time to mature plans, and brought the subject up before the synod in 1830, when the following preamble and resolutions were adopted:

“Whereas, The religion of Jesus Christ recognizes the original equality of mankind, and considers as evil everything in the practices of men which unnecessarily disturbs the rights of their fellow men; and, also, the practices of men may often disturb the natural rights or welfare of others from the necessity of their circumstances, when the sin is in some antecedent cause, which inflicted upon them such a state of things; and as slavery is believed to be in many cases such an evil, and further, as it would not comport with the laws of Christ’s house to exclude the slave-owner in such circumstances from the communion of the church; Therefore,

“1. Resolved, That the religion of Jesus Christ requires that involuntary slavery should be removed from the church, as soon as an opportunity in the providence of God is afforded to slave owners for the liberation of their slaves.

“2. Resolved, That when there are no regulations of the State to prohibit it, when provision can be made

for the support of the freedmen, when they can be placed in circumstances to support the rank, enjoy the rights, and discharge the duties of freemen, it shall be considered that such an opportunity is afforded in the providence of God.

“3. *Resolved*, That synod will, as it hereby does, recommend it to all its members to aid in placing the slaves that are within the jurisdiction of this synod in the possession of their rights as freemen, and that it be recommended to them especially to take up annual collections to aid the American Society for colonizing the free people of color of the United States.

“4. *Resolved*, That the practice of buying and selling slaves for gain, by any member of this church, be disapproved, and that slave owners under the jurisdiction of this synod be, and they hereby are, forbidden all aggravations of the evils of slavery by violating the ties of nature in the separation of husband and wife, parents and children, or by cruel or unkind treatment; and that they shall not only treat them well, but also instruct them in useful knowledge and the principles of the Christian religion; and in all respects treat them as enjoined upon masters toward their servants, by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

A letter of warning was issued by the synod in 1832, more fully to explain and confirm its action on this subject.

“*Letter of Warning.*—To the congregations and people under the care of the Associate Reformed Synod of the West, emitted by said synod at its meeting in Chillicothe, Ohio, October, 1832.

LETTER IV.—ON SLAVERY.

“Though the subject of slavery has been for several years agitated in our church, and very recently decided, yet there are several reasons why we should make it a matter of public testimony at this time.

“Owing to the rebellion and massacre which occurred in Virginia a little more than a year ago, the subject has become one of great interest and anxiety to the whole nation, but particularly to the southern and slaveholding States. In these, slavery is more than ever felt to be a great political evil, fraught with danger. A feeling of excitement and alarm has become general; and in some of these States the public mind has been aroused to consider the best measures for the final removal of the evil; and the subject of the abolition of slavery has been publicly discussed. But in all this, slavery has been viewed almost entirely in its civil and political bearings. Its moral iniquity needs to be pointed out. People should be called to look upon their sin before God in this matter, and taught to consider those alarming consequences of slavery as the retributive visitations of the Lord, who ‘executeth righteousness and judgment for all the oppressed.’ Now, if this is not done by the Church of God, by whom shall it be done? and what juncture so favorable as the present, when slavery is felt to be an evil, and a desire to be delivered from it so generally prevails? So far then as our influence extends, it behooves us as one branch of the Church of God, to do our duty.

“God is visiting our land with one of his ‘sore judgments,’—the *pestilence*. This visitation is a call from the Supreme Ruler to our nation to consider their ways

and repent ; and when such a call is given it is the duty of the church, whose business it is to sustain the cause of God and righteousness on earth, to point out those national sins for which the righteous Lord inflicts national judgments. Now one prominent national sin, on account of which, as well as on account of Sabbath breaking, intemperance, and evil speaking, the Lord is visiting our country, is slavery.

“Another is, that the resolutions which we have passed are by many considered too indefinite, and it appears that they are differently construed by different persons. We, therefore, consider it our duty to declare in language not to be misunderstood, our views of the moral turpitude of slavery, and of the duty of Christians concerning it.

“In framing these resolutions, two objects were kept in view. The *first* was the condemnation of slavery, and of every person who wilfully persisted in the practice of it. The *second* was to spare those persons who were convinced of the immorality of slavery, and desirous to free themselves from all connection with it, but who were, by the force of circumstances which they could not control, prevented from liberating their slaves ; and instead of excluding them from the church immediately and on the simple ground of their having slaves, to give them time to effect their emancipation.

“Accordingly, the preamble to these resolutions first declares the original equality of men, and the consequent iniquity of that system which deprives those persons who are held as slaves of their rights. The language of the preamble is : ‘The religion of Jesus Christ recognizes the original equality of mankind, and considers as

evil everything in the practices of men which unnecessarily disturbs the rights of their fellow men.' In using the term '*unnecessarily*,' the synod had not the remotest idea of sustaining the tyrant's plea of necessity for justifying the voluntary slaveholder.

"No; the synod had, at its previous meeting, which was a full one, declared that it was 'unanimous in the opinion that slavery as it exists in the slave-holding States of these United States, is a great (not only) political (but) *moral* evil, and that the religion of Jesus Christ calls upon all Christians to remove the evil as soon as it can be done without worse consequences to society and to the slaves themselves.' Here, slavery, not as a mere abstraction which has no existence, but as it exists in these United States, is declared by the unanimous voice of the synod to be a *moral evil*, and therefore to be removed from the church. The only difference in views was 'as to the measures which are proper to remove the evil,' and the ultimate decision was deferred in order that more time might be had, not for investigating the moral character of the evil, but for 'consideration and maturing of plans' for its removal.

"The synod is, therefore, to be considered as condemning slavery as a moral evil, which the religion of the Bible requires all Christians to remove as soon as practicable, and as pledged to devise and execute the best plans for its removal.

"Against slavery as a flagrant moral evil the synod does now testify:

"1st. Because it deprives men of their inalienable rights.—'God has made of one blood all men to dwell on the face of the earth.' The African is created equal

with the white man, and endowed with the same rights. These rights involve everything. Stript of them he is unprotected and exposed, without the power of redress, to the cruelty, cupidity, and caprice of others. It is, therefore, the highest imaginable injustice. It wrongs its unhappy subject of his all. These rights do not cease upon the man's being reduced to slavery, but continue while he lives; so that *he* is guilty who wilfully holds him deprived of them, as well as he who first took them away.

"2d. Because of its *attendant cruelties*.—It separates the nearest relations; even those whom God hath joined together in marriage, and whom no man may put asunder. By placing men in the power of covetous, wrathful, implacable, and unmerciful men, it subjects them to the worst injuries and hardships and woes, as the annals of slavery can show. It is admitted that there are those who treat their slaves humanely; but it is essential to the system that many treat them inhumanely; and no man can hold slaves without their being liable, either in their own persons or in their descendants, or both, in the event of his decease or insolvency, to pass into other hands, and so become exposed to the worst ills of their condition.

"3d. Because of its *immoral tendency*.—It discourages marriage and encourages prostitution and promiscuous concubinage among the slaves. It, therefore, poisons their morals at the fountain. It forbids their education, and keeps them sunk in ignorance. It precludes the parental instruction of children. It generates in the slave an abject and degraded spirit. It leads to the practice of remorseless theft, which is almost uni-

versal, and to the very general breach of the Sabbath. With the master it promotes idleness, luxury; and pride; it fosters an overbearing and tyrannical temper, together with anger and resentment, and encourages profligacy. Such being the tendency of slavery, it opposes the progress of the Gospel, the growth and prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom and the salvation of souls.

"4th. Because of *the connection of slavery with the slave-trade*.—It is our domestic slavery that keeps up the slave-trade, both foreign and inter-territorial. If slavery were to cease the demand for slaves would cease—the market, the smuggling, the capture would cease. It deserves consideration that, in spite of the laws of the civilized world, the slave-trade is very extensively carried on, and slaves are smuggled in wherever there is a demand for them. And, in order to conceal themselves from detection, the masters of slave-ships practise more shocking barbarities now than ever. Now, that which lies at the foundation of all this is slavery; and it has been as good as demonstrated that the slave-trade and its horrors will cease only with slavery. The inter-territorial slave-trade is carried on very extensively from the Southeastern to the Southwestern States, and is attended with much not only degrading, but revolting to humanity. Every man who holds slaves lends the force of his example in favor of the system, and he employs whatever amount he possesses in this species of property to keep up the demand which supports the slave-trade. He may not do so *intentionally*—probably very few do—but he does so *in effect*. And shall Christians do this? Shall the church permit them to do this when they can possibly help themselves? By no means.

“Therefore, because slavery deprives men of their inalienable rights; because of its attendant cruelties; because of its immoral tendency; and because of its supporting the slave-trade, with all its iniquity and horrors, we do condemn it as contrary to the word of God and the spirit of the Christian religion, by which we are taught to consider all men as made of one blood, and created equal—to render all their due—to deal justly and love mercy—to be kind and tender-hearted—to do good to all men—to give to servants that which is just and equal—to cherish that love which worketh no ill to his neighbor—to love our neighbor as ourselves—and above all things, whatsoever we would that men should do to us, to do even the same to them. When God commands to ‘loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and break every yoke’ (Isa. lviii. 6); when he cries, ‘Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; that useth his neighbor’s service without wages, and giveth him not for his work’ (Jer. xxii. 13); and when he threatens to ‘come and be a swift witness against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, and turn aside the stranger from his right’ (Mal. iii. 5)—he deserves attention from both slaveholding individuals and slaveholding communities.

“While these things are so, we can yet conceive of persons who are in possession of slaves, contrary to their will and desire, and from the necessity of circumstances which they cannot control, who are sincerely desirous of embracing the first opportunity of emancipating their slaves in a manner consistent with their

welfare and the good of society. Such persons we would not condemn as guilty of slaveholding—we would not exclude them on the simple ground that they are in possession of slaves—we would give them a reasonable time to effect their emancipation. But, such persons will manifest their desire—they will treat their slaves with kindness and humanity—they will use care in instructing them in useful and religious knowledge—they will endeavor to prepare them for freedom—they will sedulously strive to overcome all obstacles to their emancipation, to effect which they will show a willingness to incur personal and pecuniary sacrifices. When a man sets about the work of emancipating his slaves, it can hardly be concealed. Now, it is in this sense that the synod understand, and desire to be understood, the latter clause of the preamble, which reads thus: ‘The practices of men may often disturb the natural rights or welfare of others from the necessity of their circumstances, when the sin is in some antecedent cause which inflicted on them such a state of things; and slavery is, in many cases, such an evil—and it would not comport with the laws of Christ’s house to exclude the slave-owner in such circumstances from the communion of the church.’ Now, this very exception in favor of those who are ‘slave-owners from the necessity of their circumstances,’ infers the condemnation of every voluntary slaveholder, who buys, sells, or holds slaves *for the sake of gain, or profit, or ease, or any other selfish purpose*, when he can restore his slaves to freedom.

“Accordingly, the first resolution declares: ‘That the religion of Jesus Christ requires involuntary slavery *should be* removed from the church as soon as an oppor-

tunity, in the providence of God, is afforded to slave-owners for the liberation of their slaves.' Here we declare it to be the duty of all slave-owners under our jurisdiction to embrace the first opportunity which is offered to them to liberate their slaves, that the evil of slavery may, as soon as practicable, be removed from the church.

"We then declare when it will be considered that such an opportunity is afforded—viz.: 'When there are no regulations of the State to prohibit it; when provision can be made for the support of the freedmen; when they can be placed in circumstances to support the rank, enjoy the rights, and discharge the duties of freemen.' Now, although many of the States have thrown obstacles in the way of emancipation, in order to prevent the increase of free blacks, yet slaves are every year emancipated and colonized from those whose laws are most rigid on the subject. In the colony of Liberia, the emancipated are placed in circumstances to support the rank, enjoy the rights, and discharge the duties of freemen, and that colony could soon receive all the slaves within the jurisdiction of this synod; and provision can be made for their transportation and support there for the first six months (after which they can support themselves), in part, perhaps, from the funds of the Colonization Society; in part from the liberality of the Associate Reformed congregations, by directing their annual contributions for colonization purposes to that object; in part, sometimes, out of the abundance of the slave-owner; and, if necessary, the whole by hiring out the slave until he would earn enough.

"In the third resolution, the synod recommends it to

all its members to aid slaveholders under its jurisdiction, in placing their ~~slaves~~ in the possession of their rights as freemen; and to contribute to the cause of colonization in general.

“ The fourth and last resolution formally condemns the practice of buying or selling slaves for gain; and then provides for the humane treatment, religious instruction, etc., of slaves until they can be liberated. A man may buy a slave for the purpose of delivering him from a cruel master, or of placing him along with his wife and children, or of emancipating him; but all buying for *gain* is condemned. And there are some instances in which a man may sell, and not for gain; but all selling of slaves as an article of traffic, of speculation, or of gain, is disapproved.

“ Now, brethren, it is expected that these resolutions shall not lie as a dead letter, but be respected and reduced to practice. It is expected that presbyteries and sessions will see them enforced. It is expected that slave-owners in the church will make conscience of seeking and improving opportunities, and the very first which offer, of liberating their slaves. It is expected that, in the meantime, they will give satisfactory evidence to their respective sessions, that they do consider slavery a moral evil; that they do truly desire to get rid of it as soon as they can, and that it is their intention to embrace the first opportunity which God in his providence shall give them for so doing. It is expected of sessions that they will require this of slave-owning church members or applicants. It is likewise expected that all the members of the church will take an interest in restoring the slaves which are within our jurisdiction

to the enjoyment of their rights as freemen, and will aid their brethren, who are in possession of them, in this good work. It is expected that no member of the church will continue the iniquitous sin of slavery, by buying or selling for gain; and especially, that no one will sell to an ungodly master or trader. It is expected that no one will separate husband and wife, or parents and children, or exercise cruel or unkind treatment; but that all will instruct their slaves, until they can effectuate their liberty, in useful knowledge and in the principles of the Gospel. It is expected that church sessions will see that these things are duly observed."

As already stated, David McDill, although then but a young man, took a very active part, in fact was a leader in the discussions which led to the final action of the synod on this subject, which was then beginning to agitate the Christian public. The discussion on this subject in synod was one of the combination of circumstances which placed him in the position of an Editor. A monthly conducted in the interests of the Associate Reformed Church in the West had been talked of before. But when on their way from the meeting of synod in October, 1828, a number of the members, (and among them McDill,) determined that an organ should be started, in which the slavery question might be discussed. While stopping at a hotel the prospectus for it was written by David McDill. And any one who will read the first volumes of that Monthly, will find the Bible argument on that subject well-nigh exhausted by the Doctor and others.

He thus in synod, by his pen, and in various other

ways, did much toward the settling of that vexed question in the Associate Reformed Church. It was happily settled thus early. Men could then look more calmly at it as a great *religious* and *moral* question, from the fact that it had not yet assumed the form of a political organization. The congregations of the Associate Reformed Church were thus saved from much division and distraction which would have followed its decision at a later period. A storm was approaching, and our little Zion happily got into port before it came on. No other one man did so much, it is believed, towards having it securely harbored as David McDill.

I am well aware that in after years many persons were ready to charge him with not being an anti-slavery man. They felt that he was too conservative on that question. He did not, it is true, go to that extreme that many semi-infidel lecturers on the subject advocated. He thought it not wise, at that day, that it should be carried so wildly into politics as it was. He had very little confidence in the anti-slavery pretensions of some of the leading men in the political party that had now been organized on anti-slavery principles. Hence he did not fully co-operate with that party. On this account, many were ready to charge him with being pro-slavery. To my knowledge, some men, who, when he was laboring with all his energy to have the question settled in the church to which he belonged, so as to make the voluntary holding of slaves a ground of exclusion from the privileges of the church, were in full sympathy with the slaveholding interests, afterwards became so zealous in their opposition to slavery, that they denounced him as a pro-slavery man. When

many were denouncing Abraham Lincoln, near the beginning of the war, for his tardiness in proclaiming all the slaves as freemen, he was confident that the President was pursuing the wisest policy. Like the President, he was satisfied that the people must first be educated up to the point of readiness for that important act, before it could be successfully accomplished. The events of the war furnished a terrible school where this educating process was being rapidly carried on. When that education was complete, no man rejoiced more in the Emancipation Proclamation than he. No man in the whole church more earnestly longed and prayed for the time when man should cease to oppress his fellow men. None labored more earnestly, and we believe more successfully, for this than he. Before the war closed he ceased to be able, by active service, to either write or speak much on behalf of the oppressed and down-trodden slave. But few, if any, in the whole land, were more rejoiced than he, when everywhere in this land the slaves were made freedmen. It was that for which in his vigor he had labored with so much earnestness; that for which during his whole life he had prayed with so much zeal; that for which he had written with so much power, that had brought down many an anathema upon his head from the friends of oppression. Often have I heard him speak of the system of slavery, especially as it existed in South Carolina, as a relic of the views of those who held that a kingly government was superior to a republic. Let due credit be given his memory as an anti-slavery man. The Judgment Day alone can reveal to the full what human liberty owes to his efforts.

CHAPTER V.

DR. M'DILL AS A REFORMER.

A Reformer in the true Sense—Regarded the Gospel as the great Reforming Agent—Welcomed Reform Measures as Assistants of the Church—Labored much in Temperance Reform.

HERE it may be necessary to define what constitutes a reformer. Webster defines the reformer as "one who effects a reformation or amendment." With this definition before us, we conclude that the subject of this sketch was a reformer in the highest sense of that term. A wise reformer is one who devises the best means, and the most appropriate instruments for effecting that "reformation or amendment." Dr. McDill was in the habit of regarding the Gospel of Jesus as the great reformatory means placed in the hands of man, and the authorized ministers of the Gospel as the heaven-appointed, as well as most appropriate instruments to use this means. He believed the Gospel of Jesus, in its purity and simplicity, was the great engine of power which was to reform the world; that when the pure principles of the Gospel shall be proclaimed in every land, then will the kingdoms of this world be revolutionized; then will darkness give place to light; then will truth supplement error; then will the wickedness of men flee before the righteousness of God; then will the glorious light of the Sun of Righteousness shine in the dark places of our world;

then will hard hearts be softened ; then will cold hearts be warmed up with the love of God ; then, instead of heathen altars, where are offered the bloody victims to dumb idols, will be seen the altar of the living and the true God, on which will be offered the pleasing sacrifice of broken hearts and contrite spirits ; then shall our world, now a world filled with perishing sinners, become a world of saved sinners.

He felt that the only way to make this world a moral, virtuous, and happy world, was by reconciling its inhabitants to God in Christ Jesus. He had but little sympathy with many of the "infidel reformers" of his day. He felt that such reformers were instead of blessing their race, pursuing that course that must inevitably bring down God's curse on our world. He considered it an ominous fact, that so many of the would-be reformers were infidels. He often used his pen, with all that skill he could command, against their infidel plans of reform. In doing this, he was charged with opposing reform. Many could not see that, when he wrote against the infidel, who assumed the attitude of a reformer, that he might gain a more favorable position for attacking Christianity, he was not opposing the reform, but the infidel method of prosecuting it. He saw that such reformers were aiming to render this world a moral, virtuous, and happy world, while it remained in a state of open rebellion against God. He saw that the principle involved in this method of reform was impracticable, and in active hostility to the revelation of grace. He saw that ministers of the Gospel, and other godly men, gave quite too much countenance to all this, because such reformers seemed to be doing some good. Oppos-

ing, as he often did, this method of reform, he was sometimes considered, even by some good Christian people, as throwing his influence against all reform movements. Such, however, was very far from the fact.

While he ever regarded the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ as the great reformatory power; while he felt assured that any reform that ignored this Gospel would never accomplish anything for man's real good; still when any reform measures were proposed that did not either openly or secretly attack Christianity, he was ready to welcome it as a handmaiden to the Church of God and the Gospel of Jesus, fitted to cooperate in the great work of the world's reformation.

The great Temperance Reform found in him an advocate of no ordinary character. Both his voice and pen were frequently wielded with power in endeavoring to stay the ravages of the demon of intemperance. As long as that reform was conducted so as not to interfere with the true claims of the Gospel, so long did it enlist the sympathies of his heart, so long did he work for its success. But when infidels and semi-infidels undertook to manage its workings, and on their own plans; when it was evident they must be leaders in the work; then he felt that if it must be so managed as to interfere with the true spirit of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, it must be managed without his aid.

Repeatedly was his editorial pen wielded with that peculiar power which he possessed, in the cause of "total abstinence, except as a medicine." He wrote no long articles on temperance. He never wrote long articles on any subject. A few sentences were generally so framed as to put to silence the enemies of temperance.

But especially, when men and women took it into their heads that the temperance reform must be carried on by means of secret organizations, being opposed to all such organizations, he could not cooperate with them in this method of warfare against the great enemy of man. He felt that if this reform could not be conducted on such principles that all enemies to intemperance could cooperate, he could not bid them God speed. Because he sometimes spoke and wrote against this method of carrying on the war against the demon of intemperance, he was branded as being an enemy to the Temperance cause.

But the wisdom of his views as to the method of conducting this reform will be seen in the fact that from the day the Temperance cause was taken in charge by the various secret organizations that were formed for that purpose, that cause began to decline. It would seem that it required no prophet's eye to see that such would be the result. Many of the very best friends of the Temperance cause were from principle opposed to secret organizations, and could not, of course, engage in this work, in this way. Losing its best supporters, it necessarily declined. And so we most sincerely believe it will be with any good work undertaken in a way so exclusive.

The cause of the American Bible Society ever found in him one of its firmest friends. This he regarded as the handmaid of the church, in carrying on the reform which the world needs. These could fully cooperate in reforming men, and lifting them from that low state of degradation and sin in which all men are found by nature, and placing them on the higher level of devotion

to God. They cooperated perfectly in transferring men from the kingdom of Satan to the kingdom of God.

In short, every means and agency that could be brought to harmonize and cooperate with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which he regarded as the great reformatory power by which the world is to be lifted from its low state of degradation in sin and restored to the favor of God, found in him a most devoted supporter. But those reformers who ignored the Gospel, and claimed that some outside organization could do more than the Church of God in this great work of benefiting mankind, met with no sympathy from him.

CHAPTER VI.

DR. M'DILL ON "CHURCH UNION."

Felt that the Terms of Union should be brief and simple—Invitation to Negotiation in 1836—Union completed in 1858—Wrote many brief Articles on Union—Counselled to "hasten slowly"—Rejoiced in the Union—Worked heartily in the United Presbyterian Church.

HERE I feel as if I entered on a subject to which it would be difficult to do justice to the memory of one who had at heart the work of uniting God's people of different denominations in the great work of bringing this world back to its former allegiance to God. During the years spent in endeavoring to unite in one those branches of the Presbyterian Church very nearly related, he sometimes took grounds which led some of the ardent friends of union to suppose that he was opposed to it. But being very intimately connected with him, as a near neighbor, and as a co-worker in managing one of the religious newspapers in connection with that branch of the church of which he was a member, I feel as if I could speak knowingly on this subject.

He felt that the Associate, the Associate Reformed, and the Reformed churches were so nearly related in their doctrine and usages that they ought to be one body. The differences between them were so small that he would have been ready at any time to have sat down at the communion table with members of either the

Associate or Reformed Church. He was frequently a delegate from the Associate Reformed Church to the conventions held by delegates from the churches in their negotiations for union. After returning from the convention for union, held in Pittsburgh, in 1843, he uses this language in an editorial in the *Christian Intelligencer* :

“*Convention.*—The Convention of Reformed Churches met at Pittsburgh according to adjournment. The delegates from the General Associate Reformed Synod of the West were Messrs. Sharpe, Reynolds, and the present writer. There was a full delegation from the Associate and Reformed Synods. The discussions in the convention were earnest and frank, but kind and courteous. A basis of union was prepared and referred to the churches concerned for their consideration. . . . Whether the contemplated union will ultimately be effected, is a question on which it would be improper at this time to give an opinion. One thing, however, is certain, and may with propriety be said, we differ in nothing which is of sufficient importance to keep us apart. And there are indications which encourage the hope that a union will ultimately be effected. But to come together before the parties fully understand each other is not desirable, and might have unhappy consequences. The object is worth time and labor.

“In the society of the brethren representing our sister churches we enjoyed much satisfaction. The convention adjourned to meet in the Associate Church in Alleghany City, on the second Tuesday of May, 1844.”

About the year 1838 negotiations for union were initiated between the Associate Reformed General Synod

of the West, the Associate Reformed Synod of New York, the Associate Synod and the General Synod of the Reformed Church of North America. The invitation to enter into negotiation for union came from the Reformed Church in 1836. After some years of negotiation the Reformed Synod ceased to send delegations to the convention. In the year 1858 the Associate Reformed General Synod and the Associate Synod very happily completed a union in the city of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

During the twenty years spent in negotiating on the subject of union, Dr. McDill wrote many articles on *union*. He always advocated the union, if it could be so accomplished as to secure harmony in the united body. He sometimes feared, and expressed his fears, that more attention was given to fixing the terms of union than was necessary.

He felt that it would be better for the cause of Christ that the different branches of the church should each work in their separate capacities, than have an organic union without such sympathy with each other as would enable all to work in harmony in Christ's cause. He always advocated that the terms of union should be brief and simple. When he seemingly opposed the adoption of some of the bases of union presented to the churches, it was always on the ground that these bases contained too much. Believing, as he did, that the churches seeking union were so nearly one that they should not remain apart, he felt that the articles of union should be brief and simple, such as were practicable, and easily understood. In an editorial on this subject, in March, 1845, he uses the following language :

“*The Convention of Reformed Churches.*—The time is approaching when a meeting of this body is to be held in Philadelphia. It is hoped that something decisive will be done. As we have already remarked more than once, the points of difference between the churches concerned is of little or no practical importance. What then hinders union? Why, indeed, nothing; if all would consent to waive some lesser matters, satisfied that agreement in the Confession and Catechisms, Form of Church Government, and Directories of Worship (in which all are now agreed) laid a broad enough foundation for Christian union and communion. If this cannot be done, then it will be a matter of some difficulty to state a vexed question in such terms that all can sincerely say they believe it, or at least have no insuperable objection to it. Perhaps the greatest difficulty now relates to what, in language rather undefined, is called covenanting. For our own part, we could cordially unite with our brethren of the other churches, and let them keep each their peculiar views on this subject. But while we could cheerfully exercise this forbearance (not greater forbearance however than in our apprehension each of the churches has to exercise towards many of its own members), we are not prepared to have the peculiar views of any of them imposed on us as a term of communion. That is quite another affair. No Christian can give his solemn assent to matters of doubtful disputation even for the sake of union.

“We hope the time is near at hand when all the churches concerned will see their way clear to unite on the ground above stated, or at least essentially on that ground; passing by those questions which in times

past derived a factitious importance from local or temporary causes. If the time has not yet arrived, then we must wait till all shall have farther time to try what success they can have in getting people to believe that things which do not affect the Christian's faith or hope or duty are of insufficient importance to keep kindred churches apart."

In July of the same year we have this editorial :

"Present state of the proposed Union of the Reformed Churches.—A general view of the proposed basis of union agreed on by the Convention of Reformed Churches at their late meeting in Philadelphia, as reported by one of our delegates, will be found in the Minutes of Synod published in this Number. We have received a pamphlet published by order of the Convention, containing the entire basis, and will lay it before our readers in our next. At present we shall drop but a remark or two on the subject.

"All must agree that these churches ought to be united, that there is sin in their remaining separate, and that for all practical purposes union is important and desirable, if it can be had without the sacrifice of truth, and without embarrassing the united church with too many terms of communion, which must operate against the farther extension of union among the different branches of the great Presbyterian family, or, we might say, among the members of the great body of evangelical Christians. The plan of having a testimony embraced in our terms of communion, in addition to the Confession of Faith, whether as an appendix to the chapters of the Confession of Faith, or in a separate book, is not the plan of our choice ; yet the testimony

on which the Convention has agreed is very brief, plain, and simple. In this respect it is as unexceptionable as anything of the kind can well be. And in matters of form, where truth or principle is not involved, we must often, for the sake of peace and union, take the next best if we cannot get the very best. Without this forbearance society cannot possibly exist among men. We are, therefore, not prepared to say that we shall feel ourselves bound to make any decided opposition to the proposed Testimony, though we could wish to see it slightly altered or amended in a few of its articles.

“Our synod very cordially, and, we believe, without a dissenting vote, sent the basis down to the presbyteries as an overture, that they may report their judgment on it at the next meeting. In the meantime, we would say to the more ardent friends of union: Exercise patience and long-suffering, by which good may come, much may be lost by precipitancy. And those who may not be as anxious that the union take place as others, should be careful not to commit themselves against it, but consult with their brethren and observe the leadings of Providence.”

In the October Number of 1846 we find the following. It was written while attending the Convention of Reformed Churches on union, held in Pittsburgh, September, 1846.

“*From the Editor.*

“*Pittsburgh, September 15th, 1846.*

“The Convention of Reformed Churches has now been seven days in session, and will probably adjourn tomorrow. The plan pursued was:

"1. The delegates of the respective churches were required to bring in written statements of their views on the supposed points of difference.

"2. These statements were referred to a committee, whose instructions were to report definite propositions, showing how far they agreed or disagreed.

"3. These reports were considered in convention.

"We are now nearly through this labor, one or two minor points only remaining to be considered. Where the greatest difficulty was anticipated we have found a very great degree of harmony, the difference consisting rather in shades of thought than in matters of importance. On a cool, careful and candid comparison of views, supposed differences, in many cases, entirely disappeared. On a few points, however, two or three members of the convention could not coincide with the rest. But I think that any friend of union looking on would be obliged to admit, that if the represented churches should not unite, it must be because marriage is unlawful within the forbidden degrees of kindred. The prospect is once more favorable; but I am not sanguine as to the result. The work of uniting kindred and orthodox churches which have been unhappily separated is too God-like not to be opposed by Satan with all his power and cunning. But we must try not to 'give place to the devil.'"

As years rolled on, and one effort after another failed to accomplish the desired end, he still felt that the end would be ultimately accomplished, when the Master saw best to accomplish it.

He sometimes counselled to "hasten slowly" in the

efforts made to accomplish this end. But when he did so, it was because he felt that the ardent desires of some of his brethren were urging them on to consummate the union before all could heartily enter into it. When the desired and long sought for end had been accomplished, and the Associate and Associate Reformed Churches had become one, and constituted the United Presbyterian Church, he truly rejoiced that the end had been secured. No minister in the United Presbyterian Church entered with more earnestness into the proper work of that branch of the church. None were more anxious for its prosperity and success in doing the Master's work. None labored more devotedly to secure its purity. A few months after the union had been consummated he wrote this editorial in the *Western United Presbyterian* :

“ ‘*It works well.*’—We hear from all quarters the remark: ‘The union works well,’ and so far as our own observation extends, we believe it is working well. And we have no reason to doubt but that it will continue to work well, if all will only allow themselves to believe that, as the union was at last virtually consummated on the ground of the ‘faith and practice held in common by the two churches’ (which effectually excludes any corruption in doctrine, worship, or practice which both have always opposed with about equal zeal and fidelity), there is no special reason to fear that the United Church will be more lax or latitudinarian than either of the churches was in a separate state. So it is not to be expected that the United Church will attain to a greater degree of purity than formerly belonged to them in common, except by more earnest endeavors,

and more earnest and persevering prayer in the Spirit, that of God, Jesus Christ may be made to all her ministers, and all her members, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption."

But I will not add on this topic. It is sufficient to know, that as long as he was able to work in the Master's cause, he worked heartily in the interests of the United Presbyterian Church. It was ever his joy to see her doing good to men, and promoting the glory of God. It was ever matter of regret when he saw anything, either in the ministers or people, that manifested a want of interest in her welfare, or a want of devotion to the great work of saving souls.

CHAPTER VII.

DR. M'DILL'S GENERAL CHARACTER.

A ripe Scholar—Elected President of Ripley College—His Employment not calculated to exhibit his Literary Attainments—He aimed at Results, not Exhibitions—Wrote many Volumes—Intimate Knowledge of Human Nature—Illustration—Eminently a Wise Man—Illustration—Power as an Antagonist—Losing his Sight—Extent of his Ministry—What he lived to see—How he died.

IN the previous chapters I have spoken of Dr. McDill as a young man preparing for the great and glorious work of preaching the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; as a Minister of Jesus and a Pastor over God's people; as an Editor and Writer; as an Anti-slavery man; as a Reformer; and as favorable to Church Union on a scriptural basis. But there are some things which I wish to say concerning him that did not seem to come in very appropriately in any of the above chapters, and which I have reserved for this closing one of this Part.

He was a ripe scholar. True it is, that his literary attainments were never brought out prominently in his life, since his spheres of operation did not tend to bring him prominently before the observing world. As an editor and preacher, the results of these attainments were brought into constant use. But their possession was not manifested to the observing world, as would have been the case if he had been disposed to take a

position in some literary institution. A minister may preach the Gospel in its simplicity and purity all his life, and but few will detect his literary attainments or realize that these pulpit efforts are the results of long years of toilsome study. In fact, the man that preaches the Gospel most successfully is the man who, with all his literary attainments, is so completely hidden behind his Saviour that those who listen to his preaching can see nothing but Jesus in it all. When a man preaches Christ that those who hear him so readily perceive the great truths presented that they wonder why any one might not so preach, it is then that the Gospel takes hold of the hearts of men, and so influences their lives that they are induced to live for Jesus.

The same is true of him who writes with success. The more simple and clear he can make the truths he presents appear, the more successful will he be in moulding the character of those who read the productions of his pen; and the more eagerly will he be read by the masses of the people. While, on the contrary, the man who writes in such manner as to bring out prominently his literary attainments, and exhibit his deep research into men and things, will be eagerly read by the few who delight in literary excellence and who read chiefly that they may see and enjoy that excellence.

Dr. McDill preached that he might save souls, and he wrote that he might influence the conduct of his readers. If these ends were gained he was satisfied.

But while it is true that his sphere of action did not exhibit his scholarship, he was nevertheless a ripe scholar. As evidence of this, he was elected, in 1832, to fill the position of President of a college located at

Ripley, Ohio. This position he declined, although the salary offered was more than double that which he was receiving as pastor of his congregation. There is a guiding Providence controlling the destinies of men. Had he accepted this position, it might have developed more fully his literary talent. But the Master had another sphere for him to occupy, and one which that Master saw he had the tact to fill, so as to accomplish a great work for mankind. Hence he so ordered that during a long lifetime he should occupy that sphere. Had he entered upon a literary career, such as the Presidency of a college was calculated to develop, it is not likely that he would have wielded that same power for good that he did as the editor of a religious journal. The man who makes a success of that department of life's work, as all admit he did, wields a power which few others can wield.

Dr. McDill was not an author in the sense that he wrote and had published many large volumes. But he was an extensive author in the sense that he wrote editorial and other short articles sufficient to fill many volumes. During his editorial career of some twenty-three years, he wrote for the press what in the aggregate would have filled not less than twenty volumes, 12mo., of 500 pages each. The labors of such a position are very great. The power for good or evil wielded by one who occupies it is great beyond all conception.

But, laborious as was his position as an Editor and Pastor, there was a multitude of other duties claiming his time and attention. These calls always met a favorable response, when it was at all possible.

But on his general character as a pastor, editor, and a

citizen, I desire to introduce here a witness well qualified to bear testimony.

"I will ever consider it one of the most fortunate events of my life, speaking after the manner of men, that I was thrown into intimate relations with him, in the early part of my ministry. For however little I have profited by it, I received more knowledge of men and things from my intercourse with him, than from any other source. For nearly ten years, from 1849 to 1854, and from 1855 to 1860, as member of the same presbytery, and pastor of an adjoining congregation, often enjoying his cordial hospitality, and often during casual interviews, I had opportunities of observing him, which few others possessed.

"I will attempt no extended analysis of his character. That would be an infringement of the prerogatives of the biographer. But I desire to call attention to a few of the more marked features of his character as I observed them.

"I mention, first, *his intimate knowledge of human nature*. In his estimate of individual character he was rarely mistaken. I cannot recall an instance in which he was at fault during the time of my intimate association with him. After some opportunities of observation he could predict how an individual would act in given circumstances, with more precision and certainty than any other man I ever knew. If the theory I have seen somewhere advanced is correct, that the power of prophecy consisted merely in a super-ordinary sagacity and foresight, an eminent knowledge of human nature and of nature's laws, then Dr. McDill was a prophet of no ordinary merit. I often thought him

wrong, but always found him right, at least I remember no exception. One instance occurs to me worthy of specific mention. A member of Congress from the district, and indeed the town in which Dr. McDill had formerly lived, in Ohio, was conspicuous for his bold and bitter opposition to the slave-holding interest, when such a course was not universally popular, even in the North. Once in conversation with Dr. McDill I spoke in terms of high commendation of the course of this man. To my surprise, almost indignation, he intimated his want of confidence in his motives and principles, and his conviction that the prospect of personal advantage would induce him to take the contrary course. I did not believe it, though I watched the man. And now, after some fifteen years, the correctness of his judgment is verified. The same man is elected to represent the same district in the ranks of the opposing party.

“He was *eminently a wise man*. I remember an occasion in which several ministers were in company, and speaking of Dr. McDill one of them said, ‘He is the wisest man I ever knew.’ This was my own judgment, and is so still, with no derogation from the standing of many I now know. Always calm, cool, collected, never speaking in haste nor under the impulse of passion, and with his knowledge of men and things, he was eminently a safe counsellor, always able to point out the proper course at the right time. In difficult circumstances he was eminently a safe leader and counsellor. Where younger or more impulsive men would have been entrapped or involved in serious difficulties, he was on the alert, and like a skilful pilot steered clear

of rocks and shoals. An instance occurs to my recollection. About 1847 or '48, shortly after his removal to Randolph county, something like a combined attack on the part of some rival parties was made upon him to undermine his influence, in view of his well-known conservatism in reference to the anti-slavery agitation. As it was (and is) believed at the instigation of some of these parties, some members of the then Associate Reformed Church prepared a paper to be presented to the First Associate Reformed Presbytery of Illinois, to meet at Sparta in May, 1847, containing certain inquiries, to which the memorialists requested a categorical answer. These inquiries were of a general character, but involving a reference to certain persons and facts about which there had been much talk and excitement. To reply in one way would have involved condemnation without trial; the contrary would have exposed the presbytery to general odium. Either way it would seem was dangerous. The paper was brought in, accompanied by a crowd who expected to hear a heated discussion, and some, at least, a decision which would injure him and the Associate Reformed Church no little. The paper was presented and read. Silence ensued for a few moments; some of us would have entered upon the consideration at once. But Dr. McDill knew better. His eagle eye, though apparently discovering nothing more than ordinary, saw the trap, knew who had set it, and knew how to avoid it. 'In vain was the net spread.' Quietly he arose and moved that the paper be referred to a select committee to *report at the next meeting* of presbytery, which was to be at Clayton. It was carried, the committee appointed, and

of course Dr. McDill was chairman, and the presbytery proceeded to other business. A more crestfallen set of men were rarely seen, as they slipped away by ones and twos to their business. At the next meeting a masterly report was presented and published. Some efforts were made to weaken its force, but without effect, and henceforth Dr. McDill was comparatively unmolested. Yet there was no tendency to dogmatism or overbearing: nor, when his suggestions or propositions were not adopted, was there the least appearance of dissatisfaction. But I must hasten, though it is a labor of love. I only mention in passing his sympathy with younger men, his progress *pari passu* with the spirit of the age, his catholicity of feeling towards other Christian denominations, his freedom from extreme and ultra principles and measures, his self-sacrificing regard for the interests of the church and of religion. He might also have well adopted the sentiment of Cicero, '*Nil humanum alienum puto.*'

"Of his power as a writer I need not speak. The whole church knew and appreciated it. It was recognized beyond the limits of our own branch of the church, and some of the leading religious journals employed him as a paid contributor to their columns. His habits of close and keen observation and of reflection, and a vigorous and racy style of thought and expression, rendered the productions of his pen interesting, attractive and profitable. His articles signed 'D' were always sought for and most eagerly read. This power, together with his shrewdness, tact, prudence and foresight, rendered him the successful Editor, first of the *Christian Intelligencer* and *Evangelical Guardian* for

some seventeen or eighteen years, and afterwards of the *Western United Presbyterian*. The former was the principal agency by which the sentiments of the ministry and membership of the Associate Reformed Church was so educated or cultivated as to secure the passage of the Act in 1833 (?) making voluntary continuance in slaveholding the ground of exclusion from the church. And though the pens of such men as Claybaugh, McGaw, Graham and Reynolds did good work, the Editor, doubtless, was the master mind and spirit of all. As an *antagonist* few men have ever wielded a more trenchant pen. In fact, he was *terrible*. While Editor of the *Christian Intelligencer*, published at Hamilton, Ohio, editors of newspapers, organs of larger denominations in the cities ventured to attack him, little knowing of what metal this country editor of an unpretending monthly pamphlet, the organ of a small and despised denomination, was composed. It is believed that few if any ever ventured upon the experiment the second time. Logic, learning, wit, sarcasm would flash and glow, and the unhappy victim, writhing and wishing he were some one else, could not complain, for all was characterized by a faultless courtesy. A study of his editorials is necessary to a full understanding of his character, and a collection of the scintillations of his wit and humor would form a volume rivalling in interest the 'Star Papers' or 'Gems from Spurgeon.' His wit had a singularity that its point was not at first perceptible, but was the more penetrating and pungent when perceived. As one remarked of it once, 'It penetrates to the hilt before it is felt.' Of his influence in the promotion of the union which produced the United

Presbyterian Church I need not speak, nor to you need I say his position was not understood. *He did not oppose union*, but he did oppose union on what he considered a wrong basis, introducing articles not intended to be enforced, while possessing the character of terms of communion. He seemed toward the close of his life to have this understood, and communicated facts to friends (yourself among them), setting this matter in its true light.

"But I forgot that I am not writing his biography, only communicating items which may be of interest and value in its construction.

"Farewell, friend, father, counsellor, genial companion, philosopher, divine, Christian! May thy virtues be recognized and appreciated, and receive the sincerest applause and *imitation*. 'We shall not soon look upon thy like again.'"

The above description of his character is well drawn. With all his power there was deep humility. It was not that humility which caused him so much to feel his inferiority, when compared with his fellow men, as that which caused him to feel his nothingness, when compared with his Master. As a writer he evidently felt his power among men. So completely was this the case, that when a sense of duty urged him to write, it is thought he had little fear of an antagonist. He made his points, and so guarded them as to feel the security of soldiers in a well-constructed fort.

The following testimonial of the Hamilton congregation to Dr. McDill's character may be appropriately

inserted here. A few days after his death a committee was appointed by the consistory of the United Presbyterian Church of Hamilton, Ohio, to make a report commemorative of his life and services. The report was unanimously approved by the congregation, and by the representatives from the Presbyterian, Methodist, and Baptist Churches of the town and surrounding district. It is a pleasing testimony on the part of those who knew him well to his worth and usefulness :

“We meet to-day because of the death, both of a father and a prophet. Fourscore years of life, a half century of paternal care for others, and of faithful service in proclaiming the counsel of God,—these are his claims to our reverence and to these titles.

“To this congregation his life and death are peculiarly of interest, and in it his memory should always be hallowed. He was its first pastor, and for more than thirty years he continued to go in and out, breaking to the people the bread of life, instructing them by words of wisdom and by an example remarkable for its consistency and beauty.

“In industry and sound learning he was excelled by few. His classical and theological learning entitled him to a station among the learned. He excelled in his knowledge of history, especially of the current events in church and state. His writings were noticeable for purity, clearness and condensation, and for accuracy both of fact and statement. In writing and speaking his sole aim seemed to be to state convincing facts and arguments in the most direct and intelligible manner. His intellectual qualities are noticeable, in connection with the simplicity of his character and the

humility with which he laid them at the feet of the Saviour.

“He was eminent in piety. Reverence for God and duty to Him guided his feet, and hallowed his thoughts and motives.

“He was a wise man. He was thoughtful, dispassionate, unpretending, a close observer, and over all was his piety, and in all was the directing influence of the Spirit of God. Hence, men found little to criticise in his example, and that his opinions were weightier than other men’s arguments. When he spoke, few found cause to answer again.

“He was a man of peace. Anger, jealousy, envy, strife and fault-finding,—for these he had no taste. Not that he was an indifferent or idle spectator in the world or the church. He was unyielding in duty, alert to all that came within his notice, a keen observer of men and things, and during his active years, was much engaged in controversy. But he was free from self-seeking, had much of charity, was no wrangler, no brawler. His controversial writings were often trenchant and incisive; but never deformed with epithets or invective. They did not arouse resentment, or drive men into violent antagonism; but rather led to reflection, and vindicated themselves by dignity and moderation of expression. He was a fine example of the development which Christianity seeks to produce,—a man of clear and positive opinions, well matured and founded upon sound principles, and ready at all times to defend and enforce them; but giving to others the same liberty, and doing all in the spirit of charity.

“As a congregation, we should give thanks to-day

that our first pastor was such a man. He laid its foundations in peace. For thirty years it was his labor and his prayer, to lead the fathers and their children by the still waters, and through green pastures. During that time, peace became the common law and the tradition of our congregation. And hence, these walls that have so often resounded with the voice of prayer and praise, have never echoed an angry debate. In this let us rejoice and give thanks to-day, but let us join trembling with our mirth, lest we forget his example and forfeit the blessing.

"In all things he was a temperate man. He was strong with inward strength. His self-control and equanimity were remarkable. No appetite or passion influenced him. No hasty expression put him at a disadvantage. Whether in the statement of facts or opinions, he was careful and conscientious that his facts should be accurate and his opinions well matured. He was strong in controversy, because he was master of himself, and master of his subject before he ventured upon controversy.

"His deliberate and thoughtful habit made him at times seem slow to more impetuous natures; and, although his character disarmed resentment, he was sometimes criticised for his caution and conservatism. But in all cases, so far as we know, time and events justified him. If called upon to state the most striking features of his character, we could not name one in which he shone with dazzling splendor. Others have been more eloquent, more learned, more captivating in manner, more conspicuous in any one of the characteristics in which he was noted. And yet he was truly a great

man. But his greatness consisted in the happy blending of many good qualities, in due proportion, in one symmetrical character. He was a noble, unselfish, discreet, wise, amiable, temperate, industrious, honest, sagacious, God-fearing man. The proportions of the noble structure were so exact, that its magnitude did not strike the observer.

“His influence will be lasting. We cannot sum up the influence of such calm, thoughtful busy men. It seems at first limited; but it widens and deepens, from friend to friend, from sire to son, and flows on for ever.

“His death is not the proper occasion for sorrow. A long life nobly spent,—learning, ability and industry consecrated to God, and through him, to humanity,—hosts of men made better for his life,—a noble testimony in a glorious cause, and all these rounded with a Christian’s hope,—these are not themes for sorrow. It is rather the time for reflection, that we may, if possible, rise to a proper appreciation of such a character, and to a fitting improvement by his example.

“We have met to-day to speak of the virtues of a noble man, and to build him a monument in the annals of our church. Let not our inconsistency make it our reproach and shame, that we build the tombs of the prophets and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous.”

For several years before his death he had lost his eyesight. In May, 1866, he wrote a friend saying, “My eyesight is fast failing. I cannot now read what I write.” He anticipated this loss of sight. Before it failed he was a year or two that he could read any ordinary print without the use of spectacles. I have often

heard him say during the time of his enjoying his second sight, that he expected if he lived long enough for his sight to fail again, he would lose it altogether. This sore affliction did not come upon him unexpectedly.

To one accustomed, as he was, to a long lifetime of reading and writing, it was a sore trial to be deprived of the means of continuing these life-long habits. Still he bore his great affliction with much cheerfulness. When mention was made of it, in his presence, he would invariably reply that God had taken from him that one of his senses which he would rather lose than any other one. That although he could not see, still when his friends called to see him, he could have the great satisfaction of conversation with them. He continued to enjoy to the last the company and conversation of his friends and brethren in the ministry.

Long after he was unable to see or read anything he could write, he continued to write occasional articles for the press. He would get some one to place his paper on the stand, and then, with his pencil, he would by the sense of touch trace his thoughts on paper so they could be read. After he ceased to write altogether, I told him he should have some one to act as amanuensis, to prepare his thoughts for the press. His reply was, he had so long been accustomed to think with the pen in his hand, that he could not make much headway without it. It is believed that the last article he wrote for the press appeared in the *Christian Instructor*, and was written by his daughter, at his dictation.

He had preached but very little for several years before his death. Not many months prior to his death he was present at a communion, and addressed the com-

municants while at the table. This, it is believed, was his last public address, and it was a fitting occasion for closing his eventful ministry.

Dr. McDill's ministry extended over a period of more than half a century. He was licensed in 1817, and died June 15th, 1870. He lived to witness great changes in the church and the country. He lived to see what was one small presbytery, when he was licensed by it, grow into four very respectable synods; viz.: the Second Synod of the West; the Synod of Illinois; the Synod of Iowa; and the Synod of Kansas. These four synods embraced, at the time of his death, twenty-six (26) presbyteries, two hundred and fourteen (214) congregations, two hundred and forty-five (245) ministers, twenty-two thousand two hundred and sixty-eight (22,268) communicants.

He lived, during his ministerial life, long enough to spend two thousand seven hundred and fifty-six (2756) Sabbaths in his Master's service. During these Sabbaths he preached the Gospel in all probability about five thousand (5000) times. He wrote editorial articles for two hundred and eighteen (218) Numbers of the *Christian Intelligencer* and two hundred and eighty-six (286) copies of the *Western United Presbyterian*. He wrote very many articles at other times, for different religious papers and magazines. Many of these articles were of more than transient merit, and were largely copied into other papers and magazines. So that it may of a truth be said that "he being dead yet speaketh."

Having done his Master's work, and done it well, in the various fields of labor in which during his long life he was called to work; having done that work, and

accomplished that will, no less in the few last years of his life, by his patient suffering, than during his active years, he was gathered to his fathers, and his mortal remains laid in the grave to await the glories of the resurrection morn.

But while weeping earthly friends were standing around him in his last moments on earth, ready to close his eyes when the spirit should have taken its flight, rejoicing angels were doubtless hovering around, ready to conduct that spirit to those mansions on high, to which he had so often directed the minds of his fellow mortals. And ere those earthly friends had performed their last work, and done their last homage to his mortal remains, these angel messengers had placed in his spirit hand the welcome invitation of his Master, "Come up higher," and on their swift wings borne that spirit to the immediate presence of his Redeemer, there to enjoy complete bliss until again summoned to reunite with that body spiritualized and fitted for eternal bliss at the right hand of the throne.

David McDill died, as already stated, on June 15th, 1870, and his remains were laid in the cemetery at Monmouth, Illinois.

Farewell, father; farewell, faithful minister of Jesus. May we, who are left behind in the ministry to do the Master's work in which you were engaged for more than half a century, be earnest followers of that Master, and with more earnest zeal and energy in the great battle of life, fighting and finally triumphing under the banner of Jesus, as the Captain of our Salvation.

PART II.

SELECTIONS FROM DR. M'DILL'S WRITINGS.

CHAPTER I.

VALEDICTORY ADDRESS.

Delivered before the Students of the Theological Seminary of New York, at the close of the Session of 1816-17.

"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."—HEBREWS xiii. 5 (last clause).

THERE is no question more frequently put by the world than that which the Psalmist observes was the anxious inquiry of many in his day: "O who will shew me any good?" There is something in being without God in the world, which, whether he resolves it into its true cause or not, renders the condition of a human being most deplorable and forlorn. We can all form some idea of what must be the gloomy state of his mind who is absolutely friendless. This is the misfortune of a very few. But though a man may have some friends on earth who care for him, this only ministers some enjoyment to the social principle; and, being a sinner, if he have no pledge of the friendship of Him who is the sinner's friend, he has nothing of what he wants. When the conscience accuses of sin, the heart can only find solace in the friendship and sympathy of one who enters into its secret, and who has power to ease its sorrows. Add to this, the darkness, the doubt,

and the uncertainty, which must hover over the prospects of such an one,—he knows that God will dispose of all things, but knows not how He will dispose of him,—the hopelessness also which enters into his condition, and then you will have some idea of the sinfully agitated state of his mind.

Perplexity, then, is inseparable from a sinful state. "Men's hearts failing them for fear," is a natural consequence of sin. Now, though Jesus Christ appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, yet He did not entirely destroy it as to its natural effects upon His people in this life. And though not without God, never without His friendship, yet they are sometimes without the sense of His presence and the assurance of His favor. Then do they most experience the effects of sin—then is their heart in perplexity, and their soul cast down within them. Where do they look for some one to show them good? From God they cannot go; they cannot go from Him who is the source of life and blessedness. They know that in Him only can they find rest for their souls, peace for their minds, and strength for their hearts. But where do they go that they may find Him? To His word, where He offers Himself—to His promises, upon which they may take hold and rest.

We, brethren, are in a world where the effects of sin are visible on every hand. With these effects we have to contend—these effects we feel. It is, therefore, necessary for us to know what we have to rely upon to bear us up and carry us through the struggle. The text contains a promise, upon which, as they who have taken hold of God's covenant, we are warranted to take hold for an anchor of the soul. Let us, then, ponder its import, and the encouragement which it is calculated to give us.

"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." God is

everywhere. He is the omnipresent God. As to His essential presence, He can never leave any of His creatures for a moment. Says the Psalmist: "If I ascend up to heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." But this presence of God, while as it cannot be withdrawn from any being, and, therefore, its continuance could never be a matter of promise, so it can never be a matter of joy and confidence to any of His people. It is no consolation to them to know that He is present with them as He is present with the spirits of the pit. It is, therefore, in a different sense that He promises to continue with them. It is in a peculiar sense that He promises never to leave them nor forsake them. It is as reconciled to them in Christ Jesus—engaged to protect, direct, support, and bless them.

1. He promises never to leave them as their protecting God.—The world is full of evils of pernicious consequence to the people of God. Its spirit, its views, its pursuits, its maxims, are at enmity with their God, and therefore in hostility to them. It wages a war of extermination against the life of godliness. Its current sets in directly against the current of the desires, the affections, the joys and the aims of the new creature. Hence, as the apostle says, Christians are often troubled on every side, perplexed, persecuted, cast down. But God promises that in six troubles He will be with them, and in seven He will deliver them; so that they can say God lives, blessed be the Rock of our salvation. Yea, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. Besides, the things that are without, they have within them a more dangerous and deadly foe—a heart deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. There is within their

members a law warring against the law of their minds, and bringing them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members. In consequence of this, temptations from without find something within them suited for them to work upon; and mere trials and troubles, such as flesh is heir to, become powerful temptations to sin. Hence they not unfrequently detect thoughts passing through their minds, and purposes ready to spring up in their hearts, which fill their souls with just dismay, and give them reason to fear that they have forgotten their calling, their hope, and their God. And but for the defence of the Shepherd of Israel, why should not their fears be realized? Who else can set bounds to the ocean of sin within them, beyond which its troubled waves cannot pass? Who else can keep it from overflowing so as to wear an impassable channel between them and hope, and poison and pollute all their springs of action with its turbid flood? All blessing be to Him who hath promised that He will not withdraw His grace from us, nor turn our prayer from Him. When we call on Him, He hath said, He will deliver us, and will be with us still. So that when we are forced to cry out, "O wretched men that we are! who shall deliver us from the body of this death?"—we can presently shout, "Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

2. He promises to continue with us His gracious presence to direct us.—"What man is he that feareth the Lord?" saith the Psalmist, "him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose." The meek will He guide in judgment, and the meek will He teach His way. He hath written unto us the great things of His law. His oracles contain directions for the regulation of our conduct in every supposable circumstance under which we can be placed. But amidst the endless variety of expedients

which present themselves for promoting the same end, in the unceasing change of human things, and in the unnumbered difficulties into which we may be thrown by conflicting passions and prejudices, it is often difficult for such fallible and short-sighted creatures as we to know where to stand, to what hand to turn, and what line of conduct to pursue, that evil may be avoided and good secured, because difficult to know what particular direction to apply. Hence it is that Christians are so often in darkness as to their duty; and for those who are, or who expect to be charged with the interests of Zion, if their hearts tremble for the ark of God, to be in such a situation is peculiarly perplexing, because a wrong step of theirs may be followed by consequences so serious. But to the upright there ariseth light in darkness; and if they study to walk conscientiously according to the light which is given them, and continue their trust in God, they shall be blessed of Him to guide their affairs with discretion to the end. "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world," said the ascending Saviour to his pensive disciples. He still walks amidst the golden candlesticks, and holds the stars in His right hand. How many instances does the history of the church afford of those who are her overseers having been determined by a single word or promise of God, forcibly impressed on their minds they knew not how, determined, in situations of the greatest difficulty and doubt, to adopt and pursue a particular measure before unthought of, which delivered them from all that they feared, and accomplished for them all that they wished.

3. He promises us the continuance of His gracious presence to support us.—"He giveth power to the faint; to them that have no might he increaseth strength." This is His peculiar prerogative. "Fear thou not, for I am

with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. I, the Lord, will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, fear not, I will help thee." Having such promises, can we claim them, and yet doubt of sufficient strength and reasonable support? Let us remember all our strength is in God; and the strength which we derive from Him is our best strength. His saints have no ability in themselves to work out their own salvation; but He worketh in them both to will and to do of His own good pleasure. His ministers are not sufficient of themselves to think anything as of themselves, but their sufficiency is of God, and He makes them able ministers of the New Testament. Their own exaltation and popularity are incompatible with those lowly feelings which they should possess, and that sense of dependence on His grace and strength which they should always cherish. And as they are but His instruments, He forms them for Himself in His own way—not as flesh and blood would have it. He gives them a thorn in the flesh—a messenger of Satan to buffet them—or refuses for a time to create the fruit of the lips, so that they are covered with confusion, and it may be, much cast out of the hearts of His people—or puts them through a course of discipline, till He makes them even take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake;—but then, even then, when they are weak they are strong—for His grace is sufficient for them, and His strength is made perfect in weakness. So that truly the works of an apostle are wrought in His churches. If some of these things happen to us now, let us observe the pointing of God's finger, nor let us ever overlook their cause and their design.

4. In the last place, He promises the continuance of His

blessing presence with His people.—All happiness and blessedness consist in nearness to God, and in the light of His countenance. “Thy favor is life, and thy loving-kindness is better than life,” said one with whom had long been the secret of the Lord. His people know no peace, no comfort, no gladness of heart, but that which arises from His causing the light of His countenance to shine on them. The word which He causes them to take hold of, for a ground of their sure hope—His everlasting covenant which He establishes with their souls—is all their salvation and all their desire. On His smiles, as their covenant-God, their hopes hang, and at His frown they drop. What else but the consciousness of His approbation, and the hope they have that He will establish the work of their hands, can give His ambassadors, rejoicing in themselves, comfort in their souls, peace in their minds, when they see yet but little visible success attending their labors, and when those to whom they bear the message of peace and reconciliation cast out their names as evil? This is a strong consolation. If we be faithful to Him who appointed us, the Lord will be our shield and exceeding great reward—the Lord will be our light and salvation—the Lord will be the strength of our life—though war should arise against us, we may still be confident in this, and still enjoy the blessedness of such a confidence. Who, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned, hath preached the word of God, and hath not reaped abundant joy in this present time, and died in possession of a good hope through grace of enjoying everlasting life in the world to come? What is the prospect of obtaining riches and honors and dignities, compared with such a prospect at the close of this life—prospect bright, indeed, on its eternal close! God hath not required us to make a sacrifice of any of our most valuable interests in order to be His servants. We

must, indeed, be content to forego the prospect of possessing a large portion of the pelf of this world—this is all. And even here we may possess our souls in patience; for He hath ordained that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. Our calling may be an inglorious one in the eyes of the world, but it is most honorable in the eyes of God and of all holy beings. It may be esteemed useless—we may be counted the offscouring of all things—yea, the time may come when we shall be viewed as disturbers of the peace and order of society, by interfering with its governing principles, and as abridgers of the natural rights of men, by attempting to impose foreign restraints upon their consciences, or place barriers to their passions and propensities; but if we keep by our commission—“Preach the Gospel to every creature”—God in heaven will view us as pleading His cause—God in heaven will regard us with an eye of love—God in heaven will hold us in His hands, and when our warfare shall have been accomplished, give us an unfading crown.

Let us then endeavor to apply this promise to our own case, and use it for all the purposes for which it was designed. God has dealt most tenderly with us. He knows our frame and remembers we are but dust. To us, as such, He has accommodated His providence and His revelation. Necessarily dependent on Him, He will have us to trust in Him, and trusting in Him, He will have us to hope, and by hope He will have us to strengthen our hearts and our hands. He spoke from sweet experience who said: “Thou Lord hast not forsaken them who put their trust in thee.” If we put our trust in Him, we will have the same to say in relation to ourselves, and on the same grounds. Through every period of our lives, wherever He may lead us, under every circumstance, in every trial, upon every reverse of fortune, or disappointment of

hope, let our faith plead the promise, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." And though heart and flesh should fail us, let us be assured that God will not fail us.

The text teaches us resignation to the will of God. If He smite us, it becomes us to exercise a holy submission to His authority, and to bear His indignation as those who know in themselves that they have sinned. If He afflicts us in any way, it is our duty to bear the rod and who hath appointed it. And with respect to any plans which we may form for promoting the interests of His glory, we are not to make provision for carrying them into effect as though all depended on us. We must always leave much for God to do. We are not, to be sure, to fold up our hands and say, "The Lord will provide." We must use means, even our utmost exertions, in the way that God points out. But we must still bear in mind that when we have done all, the means are altogether inadequate to the end proposed without God's blessing upon them. And when we have the best end before us, we must stop in the prosecution of it, when to go farther would be incompatible with some other important interest. Still farther: when we have used all proper means in our power, and find them still inadequate, we must be cautious not to suffer our solicitude to carry us beyond the line of rectitude and prudence; we must be content to stop and leave the issue to God, who, if it seem good in His eyes, will hasten it in His time—for He hath said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

But we must be very careful how we suffer our minds to be influenced by considerations of caution and prudence. They often spring out of apathy, or derive their importance from fear. Nothing is more common than for men, when their concurrence and co-operation in any measure are asked, to excuse themselves by pleading their doubts

relative to its prudence or expediency, when a very little penetration shall discover that their backwardness arises from indifference, either partial or total, towards the object proposed. And often do similar doubts begin to spring up in the mind, and to be expressed when unanticipated dangers begin to threaten, and unforeseen difficulties to present themselves. When we are engaged in God's work, let us remember God will be our refuge and defence. If duty be placed before us, let us freely engage in it, and leave the consequences to God. If our own ease and comfort rise up before us, and plead with us to desist, let us turn away and not listen to their persuasions; otherwise we shall assuredly desist and bring upon ourselves the reproach and the guilt of our turning our backs upon God and the interests of His glory.

We are assured that all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. Our Saviour has told us that he who follows Him must first take up His cross. Under this condition we trust that we have engaged in His service. Let us not, therefore, wonder or be ready to take our hands from the work, if that happen to us of which He has told us before. If by devotedness to God we expose ourselves to the ridicule of the profane—if by reproving their faults we encounter the enmity of the vicious—or by our attachment to the truth we excite the opposition or even the fury of its enemies;—let us fear none of these things, for He hath said: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee,"—so that we may boldly say, "The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

Brethren, we are about to separate. Another of the few short periods which make up our lives has passed. To some of us it forms a new epoch—to all of us it is a time for serious reflection. It is beyond a probability that we

shall never again all meet together in one place, till, with the rest of the assembled universe, we shall stand at the bar of God. Shall we then all meet to part no more? Shall the final sentence not separate between friend and friend? Shall the irrevocable sentence not make an eternal separation? There is one, and but one union which death, nor time, nor eternity shall dissolve—that is a union formed by the union of each individual to the Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing else can prevent this from being but a miniature representation of an infinitely disastrous separation. What are our hopes? What are our prospects? The question is between God and each one's own conscience. At the same time, let it be remembered, it is one which involves results too stupendous to be carelessly or superficially settled.

The office we have in view is one of high trust and responsibility. We meditate nothing less than to become fellow-workers together with Christ Jesus. We look forward to a time when, as ambassadors for God, it shall be our incumbent duty to pray sinners, in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God. Have we ever in thought realized what this means? If the sinner die in his sins, he has to abide the day of God's coming, and endure His wrath eternally poured into his soul; but if we have warned him, his blood will not be required at our hands. If, on the contrary, the sinner die in his sins, he has to abide the day of God's coming, and endure His wrath; but if we have not preached unto him the love of God the Father and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be called upon to say before the tribunal of God, in the presence of the nations of the saved and the nations of the lost, in the presence of each other, to say why the love of God the Father and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ was not effectual in the salvation of that sinner's

soul. To have the blood of souls upon our head—to be asked, when in glory's terrors all the Godhead burns,—“What hast thou done with the blood of the Lamb that was slain?”—to have a conscience accusing us of unfaithfulness—accusing us to God whose charge we have not kept, to whom we have been unfaithful! Will there be a sight more astonishing, when the thrones shall be set and the books opened, than the appearance of such an ambassador of the cross to give in his account? And can there be a thought more solemn now?

We have undertaken a task to which we are altogether inadequate, if we have no strength but our own. How are we to keep clear of those numberless little indiscretions to which all are liable, and which though apparently small, may under certain circumstances be productive of consequences the most disastrous to the church of God, if we are not under the consecration of His Spirit? Who is to set bounds to the evil which a slight error in judgment or in management may work, if God be not on our side? How are we to keep free from those scandalous falls, of which we are always in danger, from the deceitfulness of sin and from the deceitfulness of our own hearts, and which may cause the name of God through us to be emphatically blasphemed, if God be not engaged to hold up our goings, and to conduct us with His counsel while we live? How are we to teach sinners the things of God, if He who searches the deep things of God has not shown them to us? How are we to make others feel what we have not felt ourselves? How are we to make them know the terror of the Lord, if we ourselves do not know it? How are we to recommend to them the grace of God, if we have not learned its value and felt its power? In a word—how are we to divide the word of God rightly, giving to each one his portion of meat in due season, if we only know of the

different cases of consciences and souls by the hearing of the ear? But suppose we could—which is impossible—the ordinances of God are not rendered effectual means of salvation from any virtue in them or in him that administers them, but by His own blessing upon them. And how are they to become effectual in the salvation of sinners, and in the building up of saints, as administered by us, unless we have God's power engaged by faith to render them effectual?

“Paul may plant and Apollos may water;” but those who are planted by Paul and watered by Apollos will only spring up as roots of bitterness to trouble the household of God—produce envyings and strifes and contentions with the other fruits unto death, to mar all that is fair and lovely in the heritage of God, corrupt the flavor and the fragrance of His garden of flowers—and will not flourish together as beautiful trees of the Lord, in the courts of our God, unless He Himself plant them and make them to grow.

Brethren, to no effect shall we go up to the help of the Lord against the mighty, unless we go up in the name of the Lord. And if any of us take this honor unto himself—if he thrust himself into the vineyard and labor without the Master's commission, without His strength, without His Spirit—when he shall have ceased from his labors and shall repair to the throne of God to give in his account, a voice shall reverberate through the vaults of heaven, “Curse him, ye holy angels, curse him bitterly.” As though it had been a small thing to destroy his own soul, he drew down as many more as he could into the same destruction; as though it had not been enough for him to despise the Gospel himself, he taught others to despise it, by his unblest exposition of its doctrines in his preaching, and by his bad exemplification of its grace in his life.

This will be the end, this will be our reward, if our speech and our preaching be not in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. And who is sufficient for these things?

But, beloved brethren, we hope better things in relation to ourselves, though we thus speak. We trust that we have all had the subject placed before us in its proper light, and have made it a matter of serious consideration and earnest prayer before God. Has it not been the desire of our hearts to serve him in the Gospel of his Son? Have we not, when taking a view of our own weakness, and of the important duties before us, been led to cry out, "Who is sufficient for these things?" Here all our desire has been, that we may go up in the name of the Lord—go up against His enemies, strong in the power of His might—come into His vineyard in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Jesus. To us, may we not say, it has been given to hope that we shall labor in the Gospel vineyard, with the Master's commission, with His strength, and under the consecration of His Spirit? If so, then ours is the blessed hope that when we shall have ceased from our labors and shall repair to the throne of God to give in our account, there shall be no curse there, but we shall meet the gladsome invitation, "Welcome, good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joys of your Lord." "Because ye have been faithful over a few things, I will make you rulers over many things." May our hopes never perish. And let it continually be our hearts' desire and prayer to God, for ourselves and for each other, that wherever we go with the Gospel, we may know nothing save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

In making a review of the events which have marked the character of the past session, we see the fulfilment of the promise which the Lord in truth made to the founders of this blessed and blessing institution. His hand, which

before had lain heavy upon us, had not been stretched out before we met together to take one from the midst of us. We had no last offices to perform to a departed brother. Nor have we been laid under the painful necessity, out of regard to the truth as it is in Jesus, and for the maintenance of the faith once delivered to the saints, to enter our solemn protest against the hurtful doctrines of one whom we had recognized as a brother, because he came to the school of the prophets to be reared up for God. May never one of us be growing old in a still incipient search after truth, whilst the truth is contained in the Bible in language so plain that he who runs may read. But we met together not having been touched by the leaden hand of death, our lives and our health having been precious in the sight of our God, with a goodly accession to our numbers. And though, by a Providence which ought not to be overlooked, we have been deprived of some of our former privileges, yet His mercy has continued with us privileges of which we are unworthy—which, therefore, we should esteem, and for which we should be thankful. These privileges we have enjoyed, we trust, not without His blessing. We have been with one another in much weakness and in much sin, yet lived in harmony and loved as brethren. Things untender and calculated to wound the feelings have no doubt sometimes been said; but referring them to what, perhaps, without exception has always been the true cause—the frailty of our nature—they have uniformly been passed over with good humor, have been thought upon only as things which we could have wished had been otherwise. No excitement of temper, no roused spirits, such as free debate and manly opposition, when there are differences of opinion relative to matters of expediency, do almost unavoidably give birth to, it is believed, have at any time survived the occasion which pro-

duced them. A moment's reflection has always led every one to suppose that his brother had as much, perhaps more, to hear from himself than he from his brother. To this parting scene we have all come with that unruffled and unclouded countenance which always, except in the case of the gross hypocrite, marks the high satisfaction of a man in the company of his friend—we met to part in the spirit of brotherly love. No dull suspicions, no alienations of feeling, no secret enmities, allowed or unallowed, exist among us. The speaker is conscious of none on his own part—would blush before God and before men if he were—knows of none on the part of any other, and hopes that we all feel ourselves above it, and count it unworthy of us as men and as Christians to harbor and cherish those low and secreted jealousies which rack the imaginations, sour the tempers, estrange the feelings, taint the affections, and waste the souls of the unmanly and the unsanctified.

And now, brethren, in the name of those who, with myself, depart to return no more, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified. For you our parting prayer is to the God of our life, that He would bless you, increase you, and cause the light of His countenance to shine on you, and give you peace. This we shall desire of the Lord, and seek to obtain still as we journey on in life's troublous path. We ask your prayers, we ask them as sinners, and we ask them as those who hope soon to receive the high commission—a commission which attaches an awful responsibility to those who hold it, and which imposes upon them duties to which we have no adequate natural powers. May we be endued with strength from on high, and obtain mercy from the Lord to be faithful. To the Seminary, the object of our common attachment, we say, "If we do not remember thee,

let our tongue cleave to the roof of our mouth." We carry away with us the feelings of dutiful children towards a fostering parent, whom choice could never induce to leave. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. Long may the dew of Hermon, the dew which descends upon the mountains of Zion, descend on thee. Long mayest thou be a terror and a grievance to the foes of Zion and of God. Continually may thy stately towers approach the heavens, whilst from afar the banner for truth, lifted up because of righteousness, is seen waving over thy battlements.

Let us endeavor to assure our hearts before God, and derive consolation from the promise, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." The cheering and the blessed hope that after our days of sorrow and of service shall have ended, we shall all meet together in our Father's house, may it animate our exertions and unite our hearts together in love through the remainder of our lives. Let those of us to whom it may hereafter be assigned to labor in the same corner of the vineyard, live as heirs of the same hope, striving together for the faith of Christ. If other servants of God do fall out by the way, and by disunion and strife hinder the Gospel of Christ, never let it be the disgrace and the sin of those who have been nourished and brought up together in the "Theological Seminary of New York."

Farewell.

CHAPTER II.

SERMON.

"And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth."—ISAIAH xlix. 6.

IT is, and always has been, God's design that the religion of Christ should become ultimately universal. Let us trace the progress of its accomplishment, consider the means of its accomplishment, and take a brief view of the evidence that the design will yet be completely accomplished.

1. Let us trace the progress of this design of God towards its accomplishment.—Under the Old Testament the light of Divine revelation was confined to a narrow strip of land stretching along the margin of the Mediterranean a few hundred miles. For reasons inscrutable to us, but for reasons certainly most holy and wise, God gave up the rest of the world, with all the millions of its population, to the dominion of ignorance, darkness, idolatry, and sin; to the dominion, in short, of all those evils which were let in upon the family of man by the apostasy of the father of our race. He only chose out one nation from among all the nations of the earth, to be the depository of His truth, to keep alive the good seed of the Word, to preserve from extinction that particle of light which He had communicated to man, until the fulness of time should come. For a long time did this state of things continue, and the

children of Abraham, in consequence of their enjoying peculiar privileges, were induced to consider themselves the particular favorites of heaven, and to suppose that their favored state would be perpetual, and that the rest of the world would perpetually lie in darkness under the dominion of the god of this world. And, indeed, their privileges would never have been taken from them, but rather enlarged, when the Gentiles were brought in, had they continued in faith. But they rebelled against God, and vexed His Holy Spirit. At length, when the fulness of time was come, God sent His Son into the world to call sinners to repentance, and to seek and to save that which was lost, yea, sent Him into the world as a light, that men might not walk in darkness but have the light of life. The Jews expected the advent of this illustrious personage, they expected a Messiah, but they expected Him to come for their special benefit. They had become ignorant of the true nature and design of their religious system, and temporal aggrandizement and national glory were the only things which had charms for them. And when Jesus of Nazareth promised them no such things as they expected—when all His discourses were pungent and humbling—when He reproved their pride and hypocrisy—when He told them that it would be more tolerable in the day of judgment for the most flagitious sinners of the Gentiles than for that unbelieving and impenitent generation of Jews—when He exhorted them to repentance and reformation, and to lay up for themselves treasures in heaven, and told them that if they would be His disciples, they must deny themselves, take up their cross and follow Him, and must cultivate a spirit of brotherly kindness towards all men of every nation—when such was the character of all His discourses, they were offended in Him, and moved Pilate to take away His life from the earth. But, notwithstanding,

God raised Him from the dead, and exalted Him to His right hand as a Prince and a Saviour, to grant repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And immediately before His ascension to heaven, in His last and parting conversation with His disciples, whom He had chosen to bear witness of His resurrection, and to proclaim salvation through His name to every creature, He gave them their commission, and commanded them to enter on the duties assigned them at Jerusalem. The first offer of grace was still to be made to that people, whose were the fathers, and of whom as pertaining to the flesh Christ came. Yes, to that hardened and unbelieving generation, who would not be convinced by all the good works and all the mighty works which He had wrought in their midst, and who at last crowned all their other sins by imbruing their hands in His blood, was the first offer to be made of pardon through His blood. Obedient to the instructions of their Master, the apostles, as soon as they were endued with the power from on high, began to preach the Gospel in Jerusalem, to the multitudes who were assembled at the temple. The number of converts and preachers of the Word was multiplied. When persecution was raised against them at Jerusalem, many of the preachers of the Word departed, and preached the Gospel in the cities of the Gentiles; but for awhile to none but Jews only. The great majority of the Jews, however, everywhere opposed, yea, contradicted and blasphemed. The apostles and other ministers of the Word now began to see that even if all the Jews should be converted, if the tribes of Jacob were raised up and the preserved of Israel restored, it would be but a light thing compared with what was to be effected by the preaching of the Gospel; that it was a small matter compared with God's grand and ultimate design. Hence, when Paul and Barnabas saw the obstinacy of the Jews at Antioch, they

said to them, "It was necessary that the Gospel should first have been preached to you ; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo! we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee for a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation to the ends of the earth." They here refer to the text and quote it. And in the fact declared by the prophet that Christ was set for a light of the Gentiles and to be God's salvation to the ends of the earth, they recognized a commandment and authority specially given to them, as the ministers of Christ, to preach His Gospel, bear its light, and offer its salvation to sinners of the Gentiles over all the globe wherever God's Providence might direct them. They did so, and it quickly appeared that they had not reckoned without their host, but that the Old Testament prophecies which directed and encouraged them were words of truth and soberness. Churches were soon planted in all the cities of the Gentiles, and fresh converts to Christ and His Gospel were daily gathered in from among them. In opposition to the prejudices and interests and lusts of men, in opposition to the influences of worldly friendships, to the fascinations of pleasure, the threats of power, and the terrors of men, the church made her way until she triumphed over the religion of the Roman Empire, and over all the laws and institutions of the Roman people, which supported the gross, corrupt, yet time-honored system of paganism. The Empire was subdued by the Northern barbarians, but Christianity conquered the conquerors. By one and another and another of those revolutions in the affairs of nations which God employs in accomplishing His own designs of mercy to the world, the fierce Goths and Visigoths and Vandals and Huns and Franks and Britons were brought in contact with the light of God's truth, with the pure and

peaceable, yet powerful Spirit of the Gospel, and their fierce tempers were changed; they settled down and cultivated the peaceful arts of life, and kept God's institutions; and now commenced that march of improvement in all those things which bless the life that now is, and prepare men for a better life, and which is at the present time so rapidly hastening to its perfection in all those nations which keep the testimony of Jesus Christ. Could you or I trace the line of our ancestry back for two thousand years, we should find our ancestors among some of these nations which I have just named—wandering savages—often mingled in the train of a famous leader, carrying war and desolation and lamentation and mourning and woe among the inhabitants of God's world—spending their leisure hours in stupefying themselves by drinking to intoxication, delighting in scenes of carnage and bloodshed, and praising their idol gods, who they supposed looked with complacency on such scenes. How changed the condition of their descendants! And what could effect so great a change? What but the Gospel, which through God is mighty to the pulling down of the strongholds of sin and Satan!

2. Let us now consider the means by which God accomplishes this His design.—Paul pointed to the means when he said, "Lo we turn to the Gentiles"—"For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee for a light of the Gentiles, and for salvation to the ends of the earth." It is by the Gospel, in the various forms of administration, especially by the preaching of the Gospel, that Christ becomes the light of the Gentiles and God's salvation even to the ends of the earth. Their Master pointed them to the means when He said to His disciples, "Go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to ob-

serve all things, whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." Now what is that light which the Gospel communicates to men? Oh! all that light which it is pleasant for the eyes to behold—which cheers believers through this world, and shows them the way to a better world. It teaches us that the worlds were framed by the word of God; so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear; *i. e.*, that God created all things out of nothing. There is more good sense in those few words of Moses, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," because an adequate cause is assigned for the existence of the earth and the glorious orbs of heaven, than in all the systems of all the heathen philosophers that ever lived and dreamed. Some of them dreamed about matter being eternal; some made a fortuitous concourse of atoms; and others of them, chance to be the Creator. It teaches us that man, though originally created in the image of God, fell by transgression, and lost the image and favor of his Maker. The heathen knew from lamentable experience, their own fears declared to them, that man had gone out of his course, that his nature was tainted, but when or how sin entered the world they could not tell. They had no fixed or definite knowledge on the subject whether man was always an erring creature or not. The Gospel teaches us that there is deliverance from the guilt and dominion and punishment of sin, in a Mediator; that God sent His Son into the world to destroy the works of the devil, to be the propitiation for our sins, to reconcile us to Himself and deliver us from the wrath to come. It teaches us to cast our burden on the Lord, to look unto Him for salvation, and to commit the keeping of our souls unto Him as unto a faithful Creator. This way of obtaining peace and rest for our souls is fully and satisfactorily pointed out to us in

the Word of God, and that Word, and the experience of all Christians, unite in bearing testimony that God will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Him. The heathen felt the bitterness of an accusing conscience, and sighed for peace, but were in darkness as to the way of obtaining it. Groping in darkness, they brought the victim to the altar, and offered whole hecatombs to obtain the favor of their deities and free their souls from guilt; but still peace and hope never came. To render the offering more costly, in the bitterness of their minds they offered their children—their own flesh and blood—in sacrifice for their sins; but still conscience, unpurified, repeated the heart-rendering inquiry, “Wherewithal shall I appear before the Lord? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil?” And the most thoughtful among them could see no better prospect for the world than that the reign of vice and ignorance and misery was to be perpetual. They had no promise nor encouragement to hope that God would put forth His hand to deliver men. Hence, though like our modern deists, whose unbelief keeps them in the same dark and cheerless condition, they speculated about the chief good, and about the way of reforming men, and could tell you what might be done and could be done if all men would do right, yet they never, in good earnest, attempted to do anything to improve the moral condition of mankind. The Gospel teaches us that there is one God—the Maker of all things; that He is a spirit; that they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth; that He is a pure and holy spirit, and therefore holiness becomes all His worshippers, and that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Of all this the heathen knew nothing; and

it is impossible that men without the Bible should know anything. They changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things. Every mountain and grove and lake and river was the residence of some deity. Their gods they represented as cruel, faithless, and revengeful; the patrons of crime and lust; and as the character of a people is assimilated to the character of the gods whom they worship, they indulged even in the worship of their gods in the most filthy and impure practices, so much so that the apostle says, it is a shame even to speak of the things which are done of them in secret. The Eleusinian mysteries, and the rites observed in the worship of many of their deities, were abominable beyond all expression. Life and immortality are brought to light by the Gospel. Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life. He that believeth on Him shall never die. The narrow way which leadeth to life is by faith in His name, and by walking in Him so as we have received Him. If we claim to be His disciples we must fear God, be just, temperate in all things, love God and our neighbors as ourselves; while, on the other hand, the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. The heathen had some notions of a future state, but their notions were gross, dark and confused. They had some notions of future rewards for the righteous, and punishments for the wicked; but they made no difficulty in sending the worst of men to future felicity. If a man was a hero, if he had performed some splendid action in behalf of his country, they could enrol him among the gods, and give him a passport to the glory and felicity of the skies, though he should disregard all the claims of private virtue; yea, though he were a reckless murderer and adulterer. On the other hand, they

found no difficulty in dooming their enemies to the infernal gods. In this they were the fair representatives of a certain description of modern religionists who pretend great benevolence, and when they are in a good humor, will send everybody to heaven, though from their bitterness they would seem to like exceedingly that there were a hell for the priests and the orthodox. The Gospel teaches us that God rules in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, that all the good and evil which befall us here is from His hand and under His control, and that those who take Him as their God, and confide in His promises and His faithfulness, shall find all things working together for their good, and shall finally be removed from this present state to a far better inheritance. It teaches us that this God will be our God unto death, and our portion forever; that when He calls us to die He will be with us, that He will raise us up at the last day, and we shall be ever with the Lord. Thus is Christ the light and the salvation. This is the doctrine which has produced an astonishing transformation in the world. Wherever it came, the idols of the nations fell, the temples of their gods were deserted, men's hearts leaped within them and sung for joy when they heard it announced that unto us was born a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. It set men's minds free from the shackles of ignorance and superstition.

3. Let us take a brief view of the evidence that God will carry on His design to its final and complete accomplishment.—This evidence in some measure arises from certain general and indefinite expressions of Scripture, such as the following: "God so loved the world," etc.; "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." These and similar expressions of Scripture lead the mind to expect a time when the world—the inhabitants of the world—will

far more generally be under the influence of the Gospel and share the salvation of the Redeemer than has ever yet been the fact. A great prejudice against the doctrine that there is an election of grace, and that those who in time are brought to believe in Christ were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, arises from the supposed fewness of those who will be saved on this plan. Much of this prejudice would give way in the minds of many, if multitudes were everywhere rejoicing in the hope of the glory of God, and were ascribing to His distinguishing grace the beginning, the progress, and the consummation of their salvation; and if the number of the despisers of the Gospel who shall perish were but as the convicts under a regular government compared with those who enjoy its blessings and privileges, or as the wastage about a machine compared with the manufactured material, which is saved because of its value. Now there is yet to be a time when these general and indefinite expressions will have a propriety and force which has not hitherto appeared. The enemy of souls will not always prevail, but Christ will prevail, the world be recovered to its rightful Lord, the works of the devil shall be destroyed, the world will be saved.

But let us bring into view some positive declarations of Scripture. In the second Psalm the promise is made by the Father to the Son, "I will give thee the heathen for thy possession, and the uttermost parts of the earth as thine inheritance." The promise to Abraham was that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed. The prophets dwell with delight on a time future but sure in the promises of God, when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea," when men "shall not need to teach every man his neighbor, saying, know the Lord, for all shall know him, from

the least to the greatest," when "all ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God," and when "his name shall be great among the Gentiles from the rising to the setting of the sun."

I might here, as an evidence that God is putting forth His hand at the present day to accomplish His promises, point you to the vast enterprises of Christians, to their free and cheerful and often unsolicited benevolence, and while they remain unknown, except to their Maker in heaven, offering their prayers and their benefactions, their gold and their silver, to send Bibles and tracts and the living teacher into the dark and benighted corners of the world, and with them the blessings of knowledge, religion and civilization. But you will perhaps ask, Are there not vast counter efforts being made? Are there not hundreds and thousands in every possible form and by all manner of means, vilifying the Bible, and the church, and the ministers of the Gospel, and exerting themselves by the aid of the profligate, of the sly innuendo, and the witty anecdote, to bring into discredit all the plans which are adopted for the dissemination of Divine truth? Oh, yes, we know it: there are indeed; and they will have just so much success as God permits them to have. But we must keep in view His Almighty power, and ask, Shall His promise fail and His gracious designs towards the world be defeated? Will He be dismayed, though hand join hand against Him? When He said, "As I live, saith the Lord unto me, every knee shall bow," "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord," do you suppose that He reckoned without His host, or that He spoke without considering whether His power was adequate to accomplish what He said? No! God makes no rash promises. And what is there in all the opposition which is now made against Christianity, what in all the contradicting and blaspheming of the present

age, to stagger the faith of Christians? When Satan and the Jews had our Lord on the cross, and saw His disciples all faint-hearted and scattered from Him like sheep, and all the great men, and all the men in power, and all the honorable men, and all the men who wished to be in honor and in power, loading His name with execration and infamy, they no doubt thought the Saviour of the world was in a pretty plight. But in spite of all their efforts to prevent it, He arose from the dead, and the doctrine of salvation through His death sprang up with renovated life and vigor as from His very grave; and these disciples, who were lately so faint-hearted, preached the Gospel to them till they were cut to the heart and at their very wits' end, so mightily the Word of God grew and prevailed.

What did all the opposition made by the Jews—what did all the outcry made by those who lived on the ignorance and credulity of the people when they saw the hope of their gains was gone—what did all the uproar made by Demetrius and the craftsmen at Ephesus, when they found the sources of their wealth dried up—what did all these things avail to stop the progress of the Gospel? Nothing. Paul indeed knew that weak Christians might be moved by them, that they might be terrified at the hostile movements of the enemy; but speaking of all his perils and reproaches and afflictions and imprisonments, he declares that they happened to him rather for the furtherance of the Gospel. What did Christianity lose by all the persecutions of the Pagan Roman Emperors? When the religion of Christ was laid under the ban of the Empire as a pestilent superstition; when laws were passed for its suppression, and governors and deputies and magistrates charged with their execution, and Christians in great multitudes were condemned and clad in the skins of wild beasts and compelled to fight with lions and other terrible creatures; and when

their bodies were covered with pitch and burnt like candle-wicks to illuminate the gardens of Nero,—did all this prevail to defeat the designs of Providence? No, indeed; but the more the Word of God grew and prevailed. Thousands were led to inquire what hope more than earthly could inspire these men to give their names to reproach, their bodies to be burned, and their ashes to the winds, rather than deny that worthy name by which they were called. And it soon passed into a proverb that the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church.

The wicked and the haters of the Lord indeed fulfil the Scriptures, and thus add new confirmations to the faith of Christians. Did we not see that the ungodly are actuated by malice against God's laws and ordinances, we would perhaps not be able to give a full assent to the truth of Paul's doctrine that the carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to His law, neither indeed can be. Did we not see that the foulest misrepresentations are at the present day made by the ungodly of the character and motives of Christians, we would wonder how it could be true that our Lord was treated by the world in such a manner as He was. And do we inquire how shall we know that Christians of the present day are the followers of their Master, and have the Spirit of their Master? Why hereby shall we know, because an ungodly world says all the same evil things of them which was said of their Master. Now if they were of the world, the world would love its own, but because they are not of the world, therefore the world hateth them. In the second Psalm David speaks of the kings and rulers of the earth, with the heathen, taking counsel and plotting together against the Lord and His anointed. Their language is, "Let us break their bands and cast their cords from us." You see the enemies of God then were afraid, or professed to be afraid, that Christ and His reli-

gion would bind them in chains and take away their liberties. Now, is this Scripture not fulfilled in our hearing? The popular outcry which is raised by bad men, who are afraid of losing their influence, and by which they strive to work on the passions of the ignorant, and array them against the Gospel is, Liberty is in danger from religion; and hence, like the kings of the earth and the heathen, they go about to secure liberty by encouraging vice and irreligion.

When good old Simeon took up our Saviour in his arms, he said, "This child is set for the fall and the rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be spoken against." Oh, they are solemn words and full of meaning. Many are made to fall before Him by the convictions of His Word, their hopes are dashed to pieces, and they are brought to feel themselves miserable and condemned sinners; and now, if God puts forth His converting and saving power, they will rise again, rise to a blessed hope, a heavenly hope, which shall never make them ashamed. But if a soul which has been pierced with the arrows of conviction resists the Spirit of God, and says in his heart to the Holy One of Israel, depart from me, and God provoked does depart from him, then that soul will fall to rise no more, sin will prevail over his soul, Satan will tempt him, the world and the pleasures of the world and ungodly companions will allure and entice him, until Christ shall become to him a stone of stumbling and rock of offence. But Christ was also set for a sign which should be spoken against. And what was said against Him? Why, that He deceived the people, that He was drawing ambitious schemes, seeking power, wishing to make Himself a king, and if He was suffered to go on making proselytes to His religion, it would ruin the country. Now Christ is gone into heaven. His enemies see Him not to apply this

language to Him personally, but they still speak all these things and many more against His mystical body, those who believe on His name.

INFERENCES.

1. There is a connection between the light of the Gospel and the salvation of the Gospel.
2. We may learn what is the duty of the Church with respect to the diffusion of the knowledge and the salvation of Christ.
3. It is proper that we should consider the goodness of the Lord toward us.

CHAPTER III.

ADDRESS ON THE SABBATH MAIL QUESTION.

Delivered in the Associate Reformed Church in Hamilton, on the last Sabbath of December, 1829, occasioned by the Opposition which originated in Cincinnati, against the Attempts to stop the Sabbath Mails.

I WISH to address you on a subject of vital interest to the hopes of Christians, and the civil and religious liberty of our country—the Sabbath Mail question. Were this, as formerly, and as it should be still, simply a question whether Congress should put a stop to the travelling of the public mails on the Sabbath, my voice might not now have been heard on the subject; but it has changed, or is fast changing its character, so as to become a question whether the Sabbath is to be regarded as an institution of Christianity, and in connection with this, whether the Government shall give its sanction to the principles of an atheistical philosophy that men and nations are not accountable to Jehovah. It is to contribute my mite towards warding off from our beloved country the horrors which must result from the triumph of such a system that I speak, and not from any expectation that my feeble voice will have any immediate effect on the course of Government. I consider the success of such a system promoted by all such means as are calculated to render any of the institutions of Christianity the sport of popular prejudice and passion. I consider the Sabbath so vitally connected with the system of Christianity, that nothing can have the *appearance* of opposition to the one, without *really* lowering the other

in the estimation of the public; and I consider the reports which are so industriously circulated of the vast number of Christians who appear indifferent to the Sabbath, as being calculated if not always intended to ensnare unwary Christians, and induce them to doubt concerning one of the plainest precepts of Christianity. In some details where I may choose to employ such a language as the occasion calls for, I may differ from some of my fellow-citizens with whom I have lived, and still hope to live, on terms of civility. To wound the feelings of any of them can never be desirable. Nothing shall be said with this *intention*, but the claims of duty must not be disregarded.

The friends of the Sabbath—those whose heart's wish and prayer to God, and whose humble petition to the representatives of the nation is, that the Sabbath may have the same respect shown to it in the Post-office arrangements as in the other departments of the Government—are charged with aiming at a union of Church and State. But perhaps there is nothing of this; perhaps they never thought of such a thing; perhaps they desire no undue influence over the Government; perhaps they are not seeking for a legislative decision in a religious controversy; and if Congress should suspend the operations of the Post-office department on the Sabbath, perhaps it would have no tendency to mingle sectarianism with politics, nor take away from us the liberty of conscience, nor be attended with any religious persecution. Let us examine.

Whether the petitioners adopted the most happy method of obtaining the object which they had in view, is a question on which I am incapable of forming an opinion. I am only concerned to show that the fact of petitioning bears on its face no evidence of evil design, that indeed the design was good, and that apparently, the object might have been granted without any disastrous results.

We fully agree that all legislation which is intended to prescribe or dictate or enforce the faith of men, is to be deprecated. We hope and pray that our civil rulers may always exercise due caution and circumspection when they approach this subject. We wish to choose our own faith, and to enjoy liberty of conscience, as much as any even of those who choose to have *no faith* can possibly do. There are perhaps peculiar reasons why American liberty should be dear to us. Attached to a small religious denomination, whose whole history has shown the very reverse of a disposition to amalgamate with any of the larger denominations, and which would therefore stand but a slender chance to become the favored party, should the huge mountains which hinder any religious establishment ever give way, we must be as clear of a wish to promote the political elevation of any denomination, as a man in the possession of a sane mind, and feeling all the natural love of life, to have his own throat cut. And if we believed that influential denomination which is perhaps the principal object of suspicion, to be actuated by any such worldly motives, we should no doubt be as forward to lift up our voice, and to aid in exposing her unholy ambition, as the most forward of those few professors of Christianity who have permitted themselves to publish their ungenerous, and as we believe, unchristian jealousies. But we believe no such thing. Suppose it were true, however, there are several other religious denominations, any two of which would be more than an adequate check on her unrighteous aspirings, without giving all this trouble to many who cannot have more concern in the matter than Christians themselves.*

* We have listened to what the enemy and others have said on the subject, and the conclusion to which we have come in our own mind is that there is no reason to believe that any of the larger denominations who are associated in the East in the great schemes of Christian benev-

But you know the craft of the persecutor. What was the charge against our Saviour? To what passion of the multitude did the malignant Jews appeal, when they wished to array popular fury against the Lord of glory, and take away His life from the earth? It was not infinitely different from the cry which the *prime movers* in the present opposition to Christianity and the Christian Sabbath (for I wish to make a distinction as to character and motive between the original authors of the present cry about a union of Church and State, and many who believe and propagate it), would wish to have sounded all over the land—he seeks political eminence—to make himself a king. What was the resort of the unbelieving Jews, still when they were galled by the preaching of the Apostles, and wished to have them put where their voice could no more be heard, calling an alienated world back to God? It was to charge them with turning the world upside down, troubling the city, and doing contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, though these very accusers hated the Government of Cæsar as much as some of the prime authors of the present charge hate, not only the restraints of Christianity, but the salutary restraints of such a Government as ours. The policy was to represent the Apostles as dangerous to

olence, are aiming at a religious establishment. We feel no disposition, however, to render ourselves accountable for every foolish and extravagant thing which may have been said by a few disconnected individuals belonging to denominations materially different in their organization. Individuals may defend themselves at their leisure, if they think their case needs vindication. Our position is, that neither the movement on the Sabbath mail, nor any other religious movements of the day, lay a foundation for the charge that any denomination is desirous of a union with the State. An analagous case may be stated. Were we to give it as our opinion that no political party in the United States is in favor of a monarchical government, we should only state what we really believe; yet we would not wish to be responsible for every individual of any party.

the peace and liberties of the State, that the multitude and the rulers might be stirred up to imprison, beat and banish them with hearty good will. By the potency of such arts have evangelical Christians often been conducted, by scores and by hundreds, to the gibbet and the stake. Our ancestors—the ancestors of the friends of the Sabbath in these United States—smarted sorely under that policy which shrinks from the odium of avowedly persecuting Christians until it has prepared the public mind to witness its doings by giving them a bad name. And all experience proclaims that whenever the enemy of righteousness has succeeded in arraying political prejudice against Christians, nothing could have rendered the public mind more indifferent to their wrongs.

This charge, which began to be sounded in the East* six or seven years ago, before the Sabbath mail petitions were thought of, so far as I know, and which would now be sounded just as loud as it is had they never been thought of, is levelled principally against the ministers of the Gospel. The object is well understood. It is to render them obnoxious to the community, and thus destroy their influence in opposing that system of infidelity, which not only the noisy railers against Christianity, but as some recent events are said to have disclosed, a few men high in office are laboring to promote. But it does not stop with the ministers of the Gospel; it embraces all Christians, and they are not a few, who lament to see anything like a design on the part of any of our rulers to sport with the

* It is a curious fact, which it may be worth while to preserve, that the periodical, which we believe was the first to sound an alarm about a union of Church and State, was sent unthought of, and uncalled for, a distance of hundreds of miles, to *distinguished statesmen*, who did not know there was such a creature in existence as its Editor. The fact may be valuable to the future historian.

feelings of the Christian community in relation to the Sabbath. It is indeed levelled against evangelical religion: and the spirit which prompts it would never rest satisfied while there is one vestige of Christianity in the land.

Under our civil Constitution I consider the charge of aiming at a union of Church and State as amounting, in a moral point of view, to a charge of treason; and in the present state of the question, though I never saw one of the petitions, I consider it directed against myself, in common with all other friends of the Sabbath. But where is the proof? The call for proof, though repeatedly made, has never yet been answered, otherwise than by a reassertion of the charge, and for a very good reason—there is none in existence. I ask then, and I ask any man who has not yet divested himself of the average share of candor which falls to the lot of humanity, is it generous, is it honorable, for men of standing in society to give any countenance to the propagation of such unsupported and injurious suspicions on a numerous and respectable class of their fellow-citizens? Is it consistent with our first duty as members of civil society—the duty of forbearing to do anything which might arouse and inflame popular resentment? If respectable men suppose they have sufficient reasons for opposing the Sabbath mail petitions, let them oppose; but it ought to be expected that in doing so, they would stand entirely aloof from any set of men who hope to prevail by reproaching their fellow-citizens and by making havoc of all the best interests of society.

I will not attach so much grave importance to the charge as to offer any proof that it is not true. A negative indeed cannot be proved. It is urged on the very same principle with a hundred things which are brought forward to gain a point at an election, the only inquiry being, does it fall in with some popular passion—will it answer the purpose?

Some of the more decent propagators of the charge have recently thought proper to use a more mitigated language, "any tendency to promote a union of Church and State." That the charge wants truth is possibly by some felt to be an important want.

But should Congress stop the Sabbath mails, how could it introduce a union of Church and State? That body does not transact business on the Sabbath—our courts of justice do not sit on the Sabbath. Does the regard which is shown to the Sabbath in these departments of the Government endanger our liberties or violate the rights of conscience? Has it any tendency to unite Church and State? What danger then could possibly arise from the same regard to the feelings of the religious community being shown in the Post-office department as in the other departments of Government? Could this unite Church and State? The idea is ridiculous when the subject is cleared of the mist and vapor which have been shed on it.

But it may be asked, why are the Sabbath mails more offensive to Christians now than formerly? Does not the general and simultaneous movements on the subject a year ago prove some deep laid plan of evil? It proves no such thing. When any great and important object is to be accomplished, a great and simultaneous movement is often necessary; and, in the view of Christians, to rescue the Sabbath from an organized system of profanation, is a great and important object. And Christians may be supposed to understand their privileges in this land of freedom well enough to know that they have a right to consult each other's minds, and to act in concert as occasions may require. And the question might as well be asked, why were not many of the present schemes of Christian benevolence thought of sooner, as why there was no attempt made sooner on the subject of the Sabbath mails.

It may be further asked, why should Christians be so much more offended with the profanation of the Sabbath by the conveyance of the mails, than with many other kinds of Sabbath profanation? If they succeed on this point, will they not proceed step by step, till they have a man prohibited by law from reading a newspaper in his own house on the Sabbath? Distinctions are sometimes useful—let us make one or two.

1. As to the manner in which a man spends the Sabbath, so long as he does not interrupt the religious exercise of others, or by his example corrupt their morals, he is accountable only to his God. It is only when he inflicts an injury on his fellow citizens, that he can, or ought to be restrained by human laws.

2. Every lawyer will admit the principle, that what a man does by another he does by himself. The same is true in morals—or it is perhaps a great moral and scriptural principle which is recognized in the law. Therefore, the authorized or permitted acts of our representatives or agents are our acts; and we are accountable for them. You and I, then, are concerned in running the public mails on the Sabbath day; and if it is done by our connivance, we are accountable to God for the violation of His institution. Such is not the fact with respect to all other cases of Sabbath profanation. Shall not then the Christians of these United States be permitted to say to their public representatives, we do not wish you to violate the Sabbath for us? We have delegated, and we do delegate to you, no authority to sin for us. Shall they not be permitted to do what is necessary to clear their own skirts of the guilt? And then, if in accordance with the wishes of a majority, the Sabbath still continues to be profaned, let those concerned understand, that they do it all on their own responsibility at that Bar where we must all one day appear;

“where no prevarication of witnesses can misinform the Judge, and no subtlety of an advocate miscalling the names of things, can mislead the judgment;” and where it will be no excuse for transgression, that a man was a politician or a statesman.

It is a popular argument, that individuals would sustain heavy losses, and that it would be expensive to the State to suspend the operations of the Post-office department on the Sabbath day. With the policy of the measure we have nothing to do—we take up the question wholly on theological grounds. All this then may be questioned. We have heard of wealth which had been gotten by transgression, being scattered to the winds. The man who would desire the Government to trample on a Divine institution, for the sake of some temporal advantage, would do well to consider that as God’s blessing makes rich, so His frown can bring very low.

The argument admits that the Sabbath should be respected by Government, provided it does not cost too much. And shall a financier come forth and tell us that he can save a few cents to the treasury by the transgression of God’s law? We deny it. “The Sabbath was made for man.” The Author of the Sabbath and the Author of our being has in admirable wisdom adapted the Sabbath to man’s physical, as well as his moral condition. A rest such as the Sabbath is necessary for his body. Refreshed by it he will perform more labor than under the exhaustion occasioned by ceaseless toil. From this cause, but more from the habits of sobriety and industry produced by the Sabbath, and from God’s blessing, the abject poor are seldom found among those who sanctify the Lord’s day. But the wealth of nations is made up of the wealth of individuals. Where are prosperous nations to be found who have no Sabbath? Prior to facts we should expect to find

God's providence coinciding with his law. But facts fully confirm what otherwise might have been theory. Nothing that is morally wrong can be politically wise. Politicians may be wiser than Christians; but they must not suppose themselves wiser than God.

A language however has been held which imports that it is no concern of Christians how the Sabbath is treated by our rulers—that they have no right to petition. What! does a man cease to be a citizen—does he lose the privileges of a citizen when he becomes a Christian? We have before now seen “indications” of a wish that some such idea should prevail, but we hope there are many virtuous members of society who will be disposed to “watch” them. Or does this reasoning take another turn? Is it intended that Government should be petitioned only on subjects which are of interest in a pecuniary or commercial point of view? Are our citizens then so soon and so far degenerated from the virtue of their ancestors, that they are prepared for the doctrine that it is criminal to desire the Government to refrain from doing anything which would hinder the influence of that “religion and morality” which the Father of his country declared to be “the indispensable supports of all those dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity?” I believe that some traits in that great man's character are better liked than some others by many of his admirers. But I hope there are yet many citizens, I hope the great majority of our citizens will, after due reflection, coincide in the opinion that there are a large class of *indirect means** which Congress may em-

* “Indirect means”—Congress may provide the army and the cadets at West Point with suitable moral and religious instruction, and remove from them many temptations to vice. Should the Executive give appointments to men of immoral character, the Senate may refuse to ratify them. The members may themselves spend the Sabbath in a *Christian* manner, etc.

ploy to cherish those "indispensable supports" without any danger to the liberties of the citizen.

I do not know how popular the idea might soon be made that politicians have nothing to do to regard the laws and institutions of God. It is nevertheless true that while a profession of allegiance to God cannot dissolve our allegiance to the State, the fact of a man's being a statesman by no means makes him cease to be a subject of God's moral government, and accountable to Him for his official as well as his private conduct. And it is the duty of every teacher of Christianity to hold up this doctrine to the light as occasion may require. And shame on that coward servant of the Master who will suffer himself to be browbeaten into silence. Statesmen are not too elevated to learn a lesson from the Bible on the subject of their moral accountability. They will die like men. That atheistical philosophy which would teach them otherwise is no friend to human rights. Its tendency is to inspire rulers with any other "dispositions" than those which would lead to a faithful discharge of their trust. We want none of it; nor do we want either male or female emissaries from abroad to propagate it. It leads to despotism and misrule.

Those who would make it appear that the Sabbath is a sectarian matter, have undertaken a task to which they are not equal. It is indeed a plain precept of Christianity which requires us to sanctify the Sabbath, just as plain as those which require justice, mercy, and the love of God. Christians, if there are any, who in moments of cool and unbiassed reflection, would be willing to relinquish the Sabbath or see it given up to be trampled to the dust by a system of governmental profanation, may just as well be still more generous, and yield the whole of Christianity. It is an essential part of the religion of the Redeemer. It has existed, and wherever there were people of God, it has

been kept sacred since time commenced its course. Wherever the worship of God has been found, the Sabbath has been found in connection with it; and wherever the Sabbath has been unknown as a day of holy rest unto the Lord, the knowledge and fear of God have been equally unknown. Facts are often worth a thousand arguments. Good is it for that man who has wisdom and candor and sobriety enough to attend to them. The Sabbath lies at the foundation of that hope which enters within the veil. Nauseous are that man's *sly* professions of regard to Christianity who would lead the community to despise it. Banish it and you banish the Gospel of the grace of God and the sacraments of the church. Banish it and its lessons and instructions, and you banish the knowledge of God; you destroy in the community a sense of moral obligation and accountability; you rupture all those ties which bind men together in society. With it then must go the moral order of the community and all our civil institutions. Banish it and you will soon be done with all the decencies of civilized life. This is no fancy picture. If any of you have seen spots where it was by all classes spent as a day of sporting and rioting and dissipation, I can venture an appeal to you if you would choose to fix your residence there.

I know of no denomination deserving the name Christian which professes to disregard the Sabbath. A certain denomination may refuse to go back to the Old Testament for its origin, and some of its members may choose to employ a peculiar, and sometimes a loose, phraseology in relation to its sacredness; but they contend for the Lord's Day.* In one or two denominations there may be in some

* Gill, we believe, is a standard writer among the Baptists. The following is extracted from his "Body of Divinity," p. 593: "The first day of the week, or Lord's Day, is now the day of worship observed by the generality of Christians. Upon what account and by what author-

parts of the country, defections from that allegiance which Christians owe to the Lord of the Sabbath ; and the enemies of Christianity may feel all the pleasure and triumph which fiends feel when they blaze abroad that Christians are divided. But I hope in God that the triumph will be short, that reason and conscience will soon resume their seat and their office, and that all Christians will speedily admit that the Sabbath is no unimportant or sectarian matter. I cannot endure to hear the Baptist church represented as indifferent to this institution of her Lord. Some of my dearest relations have been and are of that communion. In the New England States they are as a body with other Christians ; many of them are so to the West and South. A few congregations, in our neighbor city, may have been forward to open their churches to accommodate assemblies got up

ity must be our next inquiry. Not by virtue of any positive precept or express command of Christ, for which there is none ; but the practice and examples of the Apostles of Christ, men inspired by the Holy Spirit, who wrote, taught, and practised no other than agreeable to the *commandments of the Lord*, carry in them the nature, force and obligation of a precept." Farther on he says : "Such an account of time as is made in whatever place a man lives, is to be taken, and of which every man is capable ; it does not require he should be a skilful mathematician ; a man that uses the spade or follows the plough, is capable of counting six days on which he has wrought, and when he comes to the seventh, *he must know it is not his own, but the Lord's.*" Again : "The whole of the day should be observed, from morning to evening ; the early part should not be indulged in sleep, nor any part spent in doing a man's own business, in casting up his accounts and setting right his shop books ; nor in carnal pleasures and recreations, in games and sports ; nor in walking in the fields ; nor in taking needless journeys. But besides public worship, men should attend to reading the Scriptures, prayer and meditation, and Christian conferences ; and in such pious exercises should they spend the whole day." Similar remarks are frequently interspersed through his Commentary. And he would not have been so "mighty in the Scriptures," had not his life corresponded with his doctrines.

for purposes of which, all things considered, it could not have been the least with some of the prime movers to fasten reproach on their fellow Christians. I shall not trouble myself about their reasons or their motives. Perhaps they thought the world had gone after the standard which had been raised against the Sabbath, and they must follow, to make it evident they were true-hearted men, and not like other Christians, aiming at a religious establishment. An association of ministers may have approved the infidel report to the Senate. What! An association who are so scrupulously nice on the subject of mixing politics with religion, approving in their ecclesiastical capacity a political report!* An association of the ministers of Christ, approving in the name of their Master a paper which beyond anything which has yet emanated from our Government breathes a spirit of direct hostility to His Gospel! Did they not know that their care was wholly superfluous; that every reviler of Christianity in our country had approved that report, leaving them nothing to do but to sanction what infidels had done?

But if Congress may not decide in a religious controversy, as we grant they ought not, how happens it that some men are determined that virtually they shall so decide? To provide that the mails shall not travel on the Sabbath day would only be to declare that there is no intention on the part of the Government to sport with the

* We may be too fastidious, but for our own individual selves we have but a slender opinion of the practice adopted by some Ecclesiastical Bodies of passing resolutions approbatory of acts of the Government. The privilege, if it be a privilege, should, we presume, be reciprocal, and then we might have legislatures, courts of justice, etc., turning aside to consider and approve the deeds of the church. Yet we do not say that either the Salem Association, or any other Ecclesiastical Body which has pursued this course, is courting the gracious smiles of the Government.

feelings of the religious community. It would not decide that any denomination of Christians are in the right. Indeed, no such decision is desired from them. The Sabbath stands on higher grounds. With reverence be it spoken, that *holy day* receives not honor even from the Congress of the United States. But for Congress to persist in the determination that the mails shall travel on the Sabbath, and that on the principle that all days may be esteemed alike, is to decide that the Sabbath is so common and so devoid of sacredness, that it may by the people, through their public agents, be devoted to secular purposes.

A few fractions of some religious denominations may vie with each other which will be foremost in a course which almost shows them ready to surrender their charters to the Power, should they ever be demanded ; but the great body of the friends of the Sabbath we trust never will. Their ancestors resisted the encroachments of a royal Tyrant, who published his Book of Sports for the Sabbath day for the special benefit of those of his subjects who were too loyal to question his sovereign pleasure ; that, after dispersing the gloom of a solemn church service, they might return with the more hearty good-will to aid him in putting low his enemies, the evangelical Christians. Through successive generations they contended, and at the expense of much argument, and entreaty, and prayer, and even of suffering, of treasure, and of blood, they wrung from unwilling hands their civil and religious liberties. They laid the foundation of all the freedom which the British nation now enjoys. They transplanted the seeds of liberty to these Western wilds. It was their spirit which first burst forth in the American Revolution. To them our statesmen are indebted for many a lesson. They had their faults, good men ; but with all their faults I love them still. He in whom real dependence may be placed as a friend of

liberty, is a man who, while he respects the rights of others, will temperately yet firmly contend for his own.

But why all the alarm which is sometimes sounded, if Christians are seen approaching the Government? Does their touch really break in pieces and destroy all things? To obtain some pecuniary or commercial advantage, they shall not only be permitted, but solicited to petition; but if ever they are seen exercising their constitutional privilege, to remonstrate against something which is grievous to them as Christian citizens, some men seem to be seized with all the tremors of a convulsion, and nothing is present to their diseased imagination but the horrors of persecution. With religious persecution it has been said, "almost every page of modern history is stained." The language fairly admits the construction that in the present age of the world bloody persecutions are about as common as the sinuosities of infidels. Now, bating the mighty acts of the French incendiaries, it does not occur to my recollection that there has been much bloodshed on account of religion for at least a century. I remember only to have heard of the sufferings of some Protestants in France shortly after the restoration of the Bourbon dynasty, and the case of a few missionaries who suffered a violent death in Asia, and in an island of the South Sea. In some of these instances the heathen were set on by decent looking gentlemen, who would no doubt have been much offended had they been accused of enmity against religion.

Unhappily, there has indeed been much persecution in the world. Christians may sometimes have had too much hand in the unblest business. Persecution was one among the many foibles of ages which are past, we sometimes hope never to return. But then again we have our fears. During the long night of Papal darkness and abomination, the opinion grew up rank that heretics should be put to death.

As on many other subjects, it was only by degrees that the Reformers acquired just views of the rights of conscience. No class of men should be severely censured for not having been centuries in advance of the age in which they lived. But as a general fact, in all persecutions for religion, evangelical Christians were the men who suffered. The world hateth them, and men persecute them as they persecuted their Master. To charge persecution on Christians in the way it is often done, is to say that the spirit of Christianity is a persecuting spirit. It is a slander. He who utters it leaves no room to doubt of his being an enemy to the Bible, to Christianity, and to Christians. He may profess what he pleases. We will believe him to be a friend only when he ceases to wear the livery and speak the words of an enemy. And shame on that coward Christian who can hear such reproaches cast on his Divine Master and His religion without opposing to them his calm and temperate, yet firm and decided disapprobation.

It is easy to overdo a thing. Honest men seldom find it necessary to be noisy in their pretensions. It is proverbially common to find that those who are always ringing the changes on such words as liberty, equality, benevolence, and the rights of the people, are either actuated by some ambitious motives, or cherish some evil design. If I see a man performing in this style, wishing the while to make the impression on my mind that he abhors persecution more than anybody else, I feel an instinctive propensity to take care of myself. "A man may love his own house though he ride not on the ridge." A man who really possesses learning is not always showing it. A man who has much money is not always jingling it in his pocket. And a man who has really a charitable and benevolent disposition, is happy in the possession of it himself, and would not be a whit more so if everybody knew it.

All freemen are jealous of their liberties, and it is right they should be so. The foundation of liberty may be sapped, and no doubt there are Ecclesiastics none too good to do it. But such characters may be as readily found among the accusers as anywhere else, for the same reason that the guilty individual is apt to be the first to fasten down the charge on some other person. In consequence of this natural jealousy, thousands of intelligent and well-meaning persons have been imposed on by the cry, "Union of Church and State." And distance begets suspicion. Many are suspicious of the religious movements of the present day, because they do not approach to take a near view of them. They see something far off through a mist—it appears great and terrific. Some corrupt maxims make them hate Christians; the reason why they cannot tell, but still they do not love them. They will never enter frankly and generously into conversation with respectable Christians, and thus bar themselves of every opportunity of having erroneous impressions effaced from their minds. Could they only get over their shyness, they would perhaps find reason to believe that every true Christian is actuated by higher aims and has nobler hopes than those which centre in a brief political elevation.

We have said that the question has entirely changed. The peculiar character of the efforts of some men show plainly enough that they are anxious to enlist the patronage of Government in favor of that combination of the revilers of Christianity which is composed of many different names.

There are, and long have been, scattered through our country, some infidels, or atheists, or philosophers, or whatever you may choose to term them, of the genuine illuminati school. You may know this philosophy whenever you see it. It is perpetually fretting itself. Nothing is right in

society. The poor are oppressed, the rich are aristocrats and monopolists, except when it is necessary to flatter them. We do not enjoy half the liberty we should; we are under too many restraints. Next to Christianity and the preachers of the unadulterated word of God, matrimony and individual property are the two greatest curses. But our rulers are bad too, except when it is necessary to gain their influence against Christianity; but they are looking forward to happier times when all men will be enlightened, and then we will have abundance of liberty. It is all for reformation, and every one of its votaries is perfectly adequate to the task—which is to undo all that former ages have done. Several societies of this description have been active for a few years past. One of them has held regular meetings in New York to bewail the decay of ancient Paganism, and the superstitions and customs of the savages in this country. Yes, to lament that Bacchus the god of drunkenness, and Venus the goddess of prostitution, are no longer worshipped; thus making an invidious comparison between Paganism and Christianity. Mr. Senator Johnson's report was a triumph to them. They thanked their tutelary deities and took courage. It is not unknown to many in the community that in our neighbor city there are some men of desperate principles banded together in a combination, whose operations, judging from their extent, must cause them to lavish more money than has been expended by the most zealous for the spread of the Gospel, while they shield themselves under the profession of a religion which lays claim to a spurious benevolence unknown to the Bible, and which by erasing from the human mind a sense of moral obligation and accountability, is preparing its votaries for acting their part in scenes of wild uproar. It is made as plain as anything of the kind can be made, that the object is, by availing themselves of the alarm

about a union of Church and State, to operate on the public mind, and if possible on the Government, in favor of their system of infidelity. This is the predominant passion with the *prime movers* in the opposition to the Sabbath. They care little—and it is not possible that they should care more—about the Sabbath mails, whether they stand or go, than the rest of their fellow-citizens. They can show no good reason why they alone should feel a parental concern for our civil and religious liberties. They can show no good reason why the tens of thousands who have petitioned for the stoppage of the Sabbath mails, many of them among the most respectable and intelligent of our fellow-citizens, should be willing to fasten down on themselves and on their children a religious despotism.

Are any of you willing to give the least countenance to such a system? Would any of you wish to see our country deluged with a flood of infidel blasphemy, which, after spending its impotent rage against God above, would turn its hand on men below, till character, and property, and life—all that we hold dear as men and Christians—be made the sport of every evil wind! Under the religion of the Lord Jesus, notwithstanding all the faults of those who profess it, we have done well. We enjoy the blessings of knowledge, liberty, repose and plenty, to an unparalleled extent; and in equal pace, with the increased exertions of Christians, has our country hitherto gone on prospering and to prosper; and will any of our fellow-citizens, who are perhaps so engrossed with the business pursuits of life that they have not had time to inquire into the cause, but only have heard the sound of an alarm—will they echo to the sound, and without due and serious and solemn deliberation, lend their aid to an influence which, if God Almighty permit it to prevail, will cause the scroll of lamentation and woe to pass rapidly over the land. Forbid it Heaven!

CHAPTER IV.

SELECTIONS FROM DR. M'DILL'S EDITORIALS.

Very Fine—Sectarianism—The American Sabbath School Union—Young America giving Law to the World—Catholicism—Meetings for Prayer and Christian Conference—Religious Newspapers—Liberty! Sweet Liberty!—German Emigrants—Fiction—Great Swelling Words—An Ancient Mob—Another Ancient Mob—The Man who reads no Paper—Creeds and Confessions—Temperance—Family Worship—What gives a Writer Weight of Character.

Very Fine.

WE have seen the first and third numbers of a small semi-monthly periodical, published simultaneously in New York and Philadelphia, entitled *Priestcraft Unmasked*. The spirit which it breathes, its allusions, figures, and criminations, clearly mark it as a thing whose sole intent is to preclude the exercise of sober judgment and inflame the passions. Its editor, or contributor to its pages, intimates that he expects vials of clerical wrath to be poured out upon him. He has, perhaps, peculiar reasons for the anticipation—but so far as the matter depends on us, he shall be proved a false prophet. Some time has elapsed since we became irascible at every thing which abused us.

Its phrases, "intellectual emancipation" and "mental independence" point to its original. We all know where mental independence was proclaimed. The fathers of American liberty, it seems, left their work incomplete;

and it remained for a "foreigner" to bring it to perfection at New Harmony. All this furious raillery against priestcraft, etc., etc., is intended to sustain the New Harmony proclamation. Our fathers threw off the yoke of the British king; and the work in which Americans are now called to engage is to throw off the yoke of the King of kings.

Our people are instructed to withdraw their patronage from the Sabbath School Union, Missionary and Bible operations, and even "Infant schools," as the only remaining method of preserving their liberties. Yet the man who talks thus, professes to be a friend to the lights of the reformation to knowledge and learning; yes, and to be "so far from oppressing *genuine* Christianity, that he will defend," etc. "The heart of man is deceitful above all things—" the remainder of the text is in Jeremiah.

We here make two remarks—

1. In denouncing all these religious and benevolent operations, the editor fairly opposes himself to every denomination which professes any serious regard for the Gospel of salvation. We cannot permit ourselves to believe that there are any Christians so blind as not to see this.

2. We have never been enthusiastic admirers of the Sabbath school mode of instruction if a better could be devised, and we have no connection whatever with the Sabbath School Union; but we *do know* that by the friends and teachers of Sabbath schools, thousands of neglected children have been redeemed from ignorance, dirt, and rags, and prepared to become respectable members of society; yes, and that among the friends and teachers of the schools, there are hundreds, we might perhaps say thousands of *laymen*, who, in point of character, intelligence and patriotism, will not suffer from a comparison

with the very best of those who read, and praise, and worship *Priestcraft Unmasked*. In our last number we noticed the testimony of the Lieutenant Governor of New York to the beneficial influence which Sabbath schools are exerting on the morals of society, to which may now be added that of the amiable Governor of Kentucky.

We enter into no defence of individuals against whom so many philippics are uttered, nor do we say one word on behalf of that "particular sect"—that "popular denomination," which is the great eyesore. She would not thank us for our services. Among her own members, and among those who are not, there are a sufficient number of talented laymen coming forward to the defence, the labors of whose pens, we trust, by the blessing of God, will bring the reign of imposition to a close.

But we are not done yet. Coeval with this thing has appeared another semi-monthly periodical, also published simultaneously in the same cities, the declared design of which is to check the progress of infidelity and intemperance. The editor is T. Fisk; and after sixteen pages of a kind of neutral matter, and seeming to aim a few polite and tender thrusts at infidelity, towards the close of the first number out pops "the Universalist." The mystery is unravelled. The *Amulet* purports to be written in a highly finished style; the composition of *Priestcraft Unmasked* is neither correct nor elegant. The *Amulet* is to operate on the higher classes; *Priestcraft Unmasked* is the portion of the vulgar. And here is the difficulty: That "popular denomination" is too high in favor with the people of the United States; and the Universalists are not permitted to share so much of the popular gale as they are entitled to by their merits. "Let us up," looks out plainly. And to accomplish this object, T. Fisk, of the *Amulet*, who is to chastize the wicked infidel, consents to become T.

Fisk of *Priestcraft Unmasked*, and to labor by the side of Robert Dale Owen *et genus id omne*. And T. Fisk, who whips the infidels in the *Amulet*, is T. Fisk who is patronized in *Priestcraft Unmasked*. And the *Amulet* and *Priestcraft Unmasked* will be patronized indifferently by both infidels and Universalists. This is *very fine*.

“And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of the great day of God Almighty.”—Rev. xvi. 13, 14.

Sectarianism.

TERMS signify whatever ideas it may be the fashion of the times to attach to them. In the use of the term *Sectarianism*, which is every day becoming more common among a certain class, it means nothing more nor less than Christianity itself. Thus while the insidious enemies of the Gospel, by using an odious epithet, may appear by the unwary to be directing their attacks against an odious thing, they are often really aiming their shafts at the religion of the Bible. Evangelical Christians should be on their guard, and not suffer themselves to be so far imposed on by words as to agree to things which virtually condemn the religion of their Lord. A man's character and spirit afford a good criterion by which to judge of the sense in which he uses the term.

Open, undisguised infidelity is still rare. The bold, direct defamer of Christianity is soon despised and shunned even by those who smile on a more prudent opposition to the Gospel. Infidelity has entrenched itself behind the Christian name, and conceals itself under cover of a regard for genuine religion; it levels away at what it is pleased to

call superstition, bigotry, priestcraft, etc. It speaks respectfully of Christianity in the gross, but abuses every doctrine and institution of Christianity in detail. Antichrist "sits in the temple of God." And from the spirit which breathes in the Antichristian publications, which cover the land like another flood out of the mouth of the dragon, it is not difficult to see that a great effort is making to place the Gospel and all Christian work under the ban of the community as *sectarianism*, *sectarian efforts*, things which "trouble" the country, etc. Should Divine Providence ever permit the time to arrive when this spirit shall have succeeded in infusing itself into measures of national policy, the tearful story of the church's sufferings in other countries may be repeated in our own. Listen to some men and you would almost be led to believe that the infidel, the scoffer and the despiser of the Gospel is the only catholic and liberal Christian.

We have not been able wholly to prevent our suspicions that much of the outcry which has been made by a certain description of persons against a union of Church and State, may, after all, be mere affectation—that some of the self-appointed guardians of our liberties might possibly have no great objections to such a measure, provided a church of the proper kind could be found. She must be a church, however, which exerts her influence in opposition to evangelical religion, and which, while she never scowls on fashionable amusements and vices, takes care to please the carnal mind by a splendid ceremonial. On the part of such a church there would be no objections, either earthly or unearthly, to a public consummation of the banns. She could conveniently admit within the pale of her communion every gamester, blasphemer, and hater of Christ who might happen to hold an office; and for politely declining to wound their feelings by telling them the truth, or de-

nouncing the judgments of God against their transgressions, and for reducing the tone of public sentiment in relation to religion and morality to their own standard, may there not be some statesmen who would be willing to reward such a church with distinguished honors? We have sometimes wondered whether the kings of the earth could not be induced to try the experiment over again of giving "their power to the beast," if the "beast which received the deadly wound and lived" could be sufficiently revived, or if another "beast" able to wield it should be seen "coming out of the sea."

The American Sabbath School Union.

THIS Association, at its anniversary in May last, adopted a resolution to establish, with the aid of Divine Providence, a Sabbath School in every place where it is practicable throughout the valley of the Mississippi, within the space of two years. An individual on the spot promised \$4000 to aid in carrying the resolution into effect. A meeting was subsequently held in the city of New York, Chancellor Walworth in the chair, at which the sum of \$12,000 was subscribed. At a similar meeting in the city of Philadelphia, over which his honor the Mayor presided, the sum of nearly \$15,000 was pledged. These sums have considerably increased.

That a general and efficient system of Sabbath-school instruction will operate with a favorable influence on the intelligence and morals of the rising generation, is what we think no one who has attended to the subject, and means to be honest, ought to doubt. In the expression of this opinion, while we have the happiness of knowing that we are in company with many of the greatest and best men of our country, and with such *respectable* journalists as the North American Revivers, it cannot be a source of

disquietude that we differ *toto cælo* from that other class—the editors of *Priestcraft Unmasked*, *Reformer*, etc., etc.—a class for whom we can find no appropriate epithet without making one which, though it might become them, it might not, at least in the view of fastidious critics, become us. We go farther, and admit what we also fondly hope, that thousands of youth trained up under the influence of Sabbath-school instruction may be converted to God, and made heirs of eternal life. Still, however, we have permitted ourselves to doubt whether, if voluntary and self-constituted associations do the work which the church as such ought to perform, it may not ultimately—how soon or how late we do not say—be found to have an unfavorable influence on the doctrine, the purity and the efficiency of the church. Certainly the instruction of her youth is the proper duty of the church.

On reviewing what has just dropped from our pen, we find we have made it necessary to explain ourselves somewhat farther. We state then distinctly, that though we can by no means acquiesce in all the *ultra*-reasonings of some good men against *societism*, we nevertheless are of opinion that there are some things for which Societies are not good; and that in general, even where they are proper and necessary, there is always a certain end which, when they have answered, they should give place to the regular settled operations of the body, whether civil or ecclesiastical, which they are designed to aid. Missionary societies have done great good in awakening the slumbering energies of the churches, and making Christians take more lively interest in the perishing condition of those who are destitute of the means of spiritual life. This end answered, or when this end is answered, they ought, in our view, to give place and let the church in her distinctive character as the church of the Redeemer, disciple the nations. We apply

the same reasoning to general associations for the education of youth for the Christian ministry ; to Sabbath School Associations, etc. The training of her own youth, and of all the youth who come, or can be brought within the range of her influence, is the duty of the church *as such* ; and we fear that if self-created associations take this work out of her hands, and she permit it to be taken out of her hands, she will lose her distinctive character as a society placed under special laws and regulations by her Divine Head ; and that instead of the church moulding the character of these associations, they will by their superior energy gradually mould hers like wax, so that she will become in fact a mere voluntary association under laws and regulations of her own, adopted with a view to expediency.

Young America giving Law to the World.

THE Prussian Consul in the city of New York has applied, by the order of his Government, to the Secretary of the New York State Temperance Society, for information relative to the constitution, etc., of the temperance societies in the United States. The Government of his Prussian Majesty having heard of the success of the temperance cause in this country is desirous of trying the experiment at home. We doubt it will not thrive as well under *royal* as under *popular* favor, but let that pass at present. In Ireland our example in this particular is referred to as worthy of imitation ; as may be seen in an "Address to the Temperate," by Professor Edgar of the United Secession Church,—an excellent little pamphlet, with which many of our readers are acquainted. In Scotland also, warm-hearted philanthropists and Christians are beginning to speak with approbation of the progress of the temperance societies in this country, and to advocate them at home. In all this we rejoice ; and we know we rejoice not alone.

From some notices, however, which have fallen in our way, it would appear that the mistaken idea prevails to some extent abroad, that joining temperance societies is, in this country, made a term of communion in the church. When our trans-atlantic friends are better informed, they will know better. Some congregations may have adopted the principle of *total abstinence*, by the voluntary consent of their members (a very different thing from enforcing it by compulsory statute); but we are acquainted with no religious denomination which has *required* her members to join a *temperance society*. "But public opinion may have all the force of a statute." True, and the sooner the better. Should we be spared to a good old age, we hope yet to see the principle of "total abstinence except as a medicine" adopted by Christians as by one man. The rule will be easy, and the burden light for those whose habits have been formed under its influence. Meanwhile, we do not know that the church in her "*distinctive character*" has *now* any special call to act on the subject. A few years ago, when the matter was *strange*, and there was danger of some good people taking the *wrong direction* in relation to temperance societies, for want of some conspicuous index to point them the way, a simple expression of approbation was a desideratum; but that crisis is past; it is not necessary that any branch of the church which may have been inattentive should now come forth in the wake of public sentiment. Let him that knows to do his duty, do it; and then put his trust in God, and there is no fear of the result. Public men in view of their own responsibility must shape their own course. They may either sail in the direction of the current, or sail obliquely, or sail against it, or stand *stock-still*, if they can, as best suits them. This is liberty enough; and so far as depends on us, have it they shall. However, whether he joins a

temperance society or not, every respectable oppositionist will, after a few more *spasmodic* caveats and explanations, and exceptions, choose to conform himself to Christian decorum as best he may. After our own manner, we are expressing, as we take it, the sentiments of the Associate Reformed Church.

Catholicism.

THE attention of our readers is invited to the following words of the Roman Catholic Priests, in their letter to Dr. Brownlee: "The Roman Catholic and Protestant religions are not mere differences of opinion, they are opposite, and must mutually counteract each other. If the Catholics are right, *your reformation was not merely superfluous*, but must be stigmatized as a *rebellion* against the powers established by God himself. If you hold the truth, the chief part of the Catholic worship is not only erroneous but idolatrous; an offence against heaven, instead of a reasonable service."

Whether a Roman Catholic Priest would or would not choose to make this concession on every occasion, we deem it both important and true. Blame us not, then, ye sons of a *wordy charity*, if with all our might we oppose the popish system; for unless we admit that the *Reformation*, which like the day spring from on high visited the world with light and truth and hope and liberty, was not "only *superfluous*," but a "*rebellion*" against God, we must hold that Popery, its own ministers being judges, "is not only erroneous but idolatrous: an offence against heaven," etc. Say no longer that we use the word "Popery" as a mere Shibboleth to rob one-half of the Christian world of the name of Christians. No, no; if Protestantism is the religion of Christ, Popery, which is its "opposite," and "counteracts" it, *is the enemy of the religion of Christ*. Let this be remembered, for it is true—the plain honest truth. And let those Protestants who are leading the thoughtless

and uninformed into the "camp of Antichrist," by representing the *difference* to be but trivial, consider what they are about.

Meetings for Prayer and Christian Conference.

A FEW months ago, we were desired by an aged father in the ministry, whom Providence seems to have been sparing for some time past to serve in the church by his counsel after his strength for active duties is gone, to urge this subject in his name on a very large assembly, to most of whom he had long stood as pastor; which we willingly did; and we have since been solicited by respectable members of our church to say something on the same subject.

While, therefore, we call the attention of our readers to the seasonable article in this number from the pen of a correspondent, on the duties of the Christian profession, we would particularly recommend to their careful consideration his remarks on this subject. Nothing is more certain than that such texts of Scripture as Mal. iii. 16, Heb. x. 25, have always been regarded by the church as warranting and requiring the practice by Christians of meeting together for prayer and other religious exercises calculated to promote their edification, not only on the Sabbath, but on other days of the week. And we *do know*, that in the purest and best times of the Associate Reformed Church, under the auspices of such men as Dr. Clark, her members did assemble monthly or semi-monthly, in prayer and conference, or *correspondence* meetings, when circumstances were such as to admit of no greater frequency. And meetings on Friday afternoon, called in some places "Friday meetings," were common.

We wish that some of the aged lay-members of our church, who remember these things, and who had then passed far enough over the threshold of life to be able to

testify to their happy effects, from their own personal knowledge, would appear in our pages on this subject, after their own plain honest manner. A great change in this respect has taken place in many parts of the Associate Reformed Church, whether for the better we greatly doubt. Twelve or fourteen years ago, we were forcibly struck by a remark dropped by a man of piety, observation and genius, that it is no wonder some churches do not thrive when such is their organization that one man, the minister, must alone do the work in which all ought in some sort to be engaged. Should there not be some organization of the members of every church which would enable them to fulfil such Scriptures as these: "edify one another," "speaking to yourselves in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs," "the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love?" When Christians have a little more intercourse among themselves than what consists in meeting together on the Sabbath to join in hearing a sermon, and in some other religious exercises, only exchanging with each other the ordinary civilities, can they be said to perform the duties enjoined in such Scriptures? Hardly, we think. At least it appears to us that the reader might be puzzled to tell us how.

There is no danger of introducing Popery into the church while all that is contended is that the spirit, if not the letter of such Scriptures as we have quoted, justifies and requires such meetings to be held with that frequency which the circumstances of the church will permit; and while the church pretends to claim no authority to enjoin them with any specified frequency, nor any particular days of the week, month or year. But if they are kept up, stated days must be agreed upon by Christians for their

meeting together, so that all may know the time when it arrives, and be careful to attend. This is just one of these "circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature, and the general rules of the word." ("Confession of Faith," chap. i. sec. 6.) However easy a thing it might be to manufacture the mass of infidelity and irreligion out of the church into something allied to Popery, we are of opinion that the character of Protestantism in the present age is, in many respects, not favorable to the growth of Popery in the church. A disposition to draw all things into dispute, and to cast off the authority of opinions and precedents, is much more characteristic of the religion of the age than that spirit of blind, but at the same time zealous devotion, which prepares men to become the hopeful pupils of the Man of Sin. There was a time when it might have been hazardous to exhort Christians to contribute money to erect churches and theological seminaries, etc., lest being but imperfectly weaned from Popery and instructed in the pure Gospel of Christ, they might rely for justification on such deeds of charity. No such danger is now apprehended. Why? Because the true light is more generally diffused. While Christians read the Bible in their own tongue, and are in the habit of praying to the Father of lights for gracious illumination, they will not suppose attendance at church on the Sabbath and some other days sufficient alone for their justification. However, we must not "forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is," through any morbid fear of introducing superstition into the church. Prayer, whether occasionally or statedly, whether on Sabbaths or Saturdays, is certainly not the enemy, but the friend of orthodoxy.

Religious Newspapers.

WE do not see why we may not as well lay down maxims for the fraternity of editors, as many who do so. The edification of the church, and that Christian dignity which is of some importance, might be promoted by the observance of such rules as the following:

Never publish ministers of the Gospel in your own or any other denomination as "wolves in sheep's clothing," "corrupters of the Gospel," etc., unless you are willing your words should be taken for what they are worth, and are prepared to prove what you say in any court having competent jurisdiction.

Never proclaim your own devotedness to the will of God, and your love of souls, while in the same page or sentence you obliquely accuse your brethren editors of envy, or some other base motive which they claim to be as free from as yourself. Were they knave or fool enough to do it, they would only have to reverse the picture, and then, like children, you and they would be even.

Regard these maxims as sacred; for by indulging the habit of making remarks without attending to their force and bearing, you may readily write libellous matter without knowing it.

N. B.—They may be fitted for the use of *all* editors, *mutatis mutandis*.

Liberty! Sweet Liberty!

It is stated in the eastern papers that the Rev. S. B. Smith, whose renunciation of Popery we some time since noticed, had appointed to preach in the Third Presbyterian Church of Baltimore, but was prevented by a crowd of the sons of "Holy Mother," who threatened violence, and threw the assembly into confusion. A subsequent ap-

pointment in the Fourth Church was deferred on account of similar threats. Baltimore, it should be known, is the Head Quarters of Popery in the United States. We have here a specimen of the kind of liberty to which Catholicism is favorable. If the influence of Popery were as predominant throughout our country as in Baltimore, we might think of preparing ourselves for the same kind of liberty which the heretic enjoyed in Spain, Italy and Austria, before "Holy Mother" went into her dotage in those countries.

Popery promotes no system of education, but opposes the free diffusion of intelligence among the people. If the priests establish schools and seminaries in our country, it is to increase the revenues, followers, and power of "Holy Mother," by entangling Protestant youth in the snares. What have they done to enlighten the Irish Catholic, whom they have had for centuries exclusively in their power? Compare him with the intelligent Irish Protestant of the northern counties! What have the 47,000 priests of France done to diffuse general intelligence and scriptural knowledge among the population of that great nation? In our country, where Popery has never yet appeared in *her peculiar perfection*, there are some enlightened Catholics. Among the higher classes there are some in Europe, in spite of the Catholic system; but if the word "rabble" is ever appropriate, it is when applied to the lower classes in Catholic countries. Let the physical force of any community be in the hands of such a population—zealous for "Holy Mother," and for every rag and tatter of her garments, as ignorant devotees always are—completely at the nod of swarms of priests, who have too much sense to believe one word of her mummary, but are willing to endure it for the sake of advantage; and they will be as violent and vociferous against all who would bring the wor-

ship of the Blessed Virgin to nought, as were Demetrius and the craftsmen at Ephesus against Paul. Before such a mass of blind, infatuated zeal, laws and constitutions would be as threads of tow.

German Emigrants.

THE immense tide of immigration to this country from Germany, is at this time drawing very general attention. It is about to present our statesmen with one of the gravest subjects which has ever occupied their minds; and the man who regards it with indifference can put in but a poor claim to patriotism, or even to sober reflection on passing events. Two causes contribute to swell the tide—the general impression that prevails in Europe that Catholics are becoming so numerous here that a man can leave his own country and go to the New World, and still be among his own people; and the surcharged population of Europe, which is now occasioning one of those periodical *overflows*, which have not been unknown in the history of the Old World for several thousand years. So far as we have the means of judging, a large portion of these emigrants are Catholics, at least in their *prejudices*; and still retain those ideas and those habits of passive obedience to Pope and Prince which marked the 14th century. How are our institutions to be guarded so as to receive no damage from them? is a question which begins to excite some interest. We do not purpose to dip largely into it. One thing, however, is to our mind very plain, that while we should treat them with that kindness which becomes the followers of Him who “can have compassion on them that are ignorant and out of the way,” no legislative or other facilities should be afforded them for perpetuating here the use of the language of Germany. Those who speak different languages never will feel towards each other as the citizens

of a Republic should feel. It is human nature, account for it as you may. Besides, preserving their own language, and neglecting the language of their adopted country, they will of course continue to look abroad for their secular and religious literature; and it may be set down for a fact, that those who furnish a people with their secular and religious literature, will be, to a considerable extent, their masters. We have been concerned to notice more than once, within a few years past, indications of a wish among German emigrants to remain a *distinct caste*. It is but a few days since we fell in with one of them on the way; and on attempting to enter into conversation with him, were repulsed by being told, "*No speak English—I speaks Frainch, and I speaks Chairman.*" While laboring to convince us of his inability to converse in English, he showed that he understood enough of it to hold a brief conversation. Our intelligent *domesticated* Germans should labor to convince their countrymen of the propriety of falling in with the language and habits and customs of the country of their adoption. They can have access to them, and can have their confidence; those of education and birth cannot. It is also much to be desired that the Lutheran and German Reformed Churches would send to the West missionaries of the right stamp, to labor among the German emigrants; and, at least, prevent such of them as are Protestants from falling under the influence of Popery—an influence which will seek to keep them in an insulated state, that they may be kept more securely under the dominion of Rome.

Fiction.

IN some reports of the speeches which were made at the late temperance meeting in Cincinnati we observed that it was asserted, that prior to the efforts of the Temperance

Society, drinking ardent spirits was so common among all classes that *no ecclesiastical meeting was held without it*. The speaker is understood as describing the country at large,—not some spot to which his knowledge was confined. Now, we dissent from the statement entirely. Before the Temperance Society was heard of, we attended ecclesiastical meetings of different grades, as a member, and were often present at ecclesiastical meetings of other denominations; but we have no recollections of having, in all our life, seen ardent spirits used in them. There is a tradition that in olden times the Dutch Reformed Church of New York kept a cask of beer in the consistory room, where their classes and synods met; but to have seen the whiskey-bottle on the table, and members refreshing themselves with repeated draughts of the liquor, would, anywhere in the middle, southern, or western States, where we have had our conversation, have shocked Christian feeling thirty years ago not much less than as at present. We know the Temperance Societies have wrought a great change, and we hope to see still more of their happy effects; but in recommending them, it is not necessary that we should slander our fathers, and ourselves also, *as we all were*, not many years ago. Extravagant doctrines and reckless assertions will injure the best cause.

When the world made the late skip towards perfection in all things, some men seem to think she started from a point much farther back than, according to our judgment, she really did. The Temperance Societies introduced no new light into the world; they only diffused light which before existed, and are endeavoring to bring all to practise the wise lessons delivered by such men as Dr. Rush. Before the last generation appeared upon the stage, the sun rose in the morning, the cold of winter congealed the rivers, the vernal heat thawed them, there were patriots,

and philanthropists, and Christians, mothers taught their sons to avoid the intoxicating glass, there were those who practised total abstinence, the decencies and charities of life were practised, Calvinism was understood, and the philosophy of mind was cultivated; and we are of opinion, also, that one hundred years ago, there were those who prated gloriously of "this enlightened age," and the "improvements of this age," and bragged, and despised their predecessors, just as some do in the year of our Lord One thousand eight hundred and thirty-five.

Great Swelling Words.

THERE is a class of men called "revival preachers." They are described by those who have had rather better opportunities of knowing them than we have had, as itinerating in their habits, roving in their disposition, generally of shallow theological attainments, but as excelling in a kind of wild, fanatical eloquence. They ride upon the "very tip-top of the waves" of their own exciting; and, as it is to this that they owe all their consequence, they take care to have "an urgent call in Providence" to go somewhere else, and are gone before the waves subside. Previous to leaving any temporary scene of their operations, they send to some newspaper an account of the scores or fifties which were converted during their stay, accompanied with certain remarks about "*opposition*," and the coldness and deadness of some of "the ministers of the place," whom they represent as "*doing no good*." We doubt not but they *honestly* think *sometimes*, that they are fast filling the earth with religion and converts; for they do not stay to witness the apostasies, and contentions, and other works of the flesh, which immediately follow, and they regard all that is told them of this nature as the fabrications of the "enemies of revivals." In our judgment,

no class of men are doing more to hinder the Gospel and shame pure and undefiled religion out of the community.

We have been led to these remarks by reading a letter in the *Evangelist* from some person in western Pennsylvania, who styles himself "A Friend to Revivals." Speaking of Greencastle, he says, "Language is inadequate to describe the horrible stupidity which brooded over the place, and the strong prejudice against any measure which has in it any adaptation to the wants of the soul." This is intended to apply to Christians in the writer's own denomination. What Christians! or else, what charity! He tells us that, when conversions were frequently taking place, "one of their most aged ministers would sit unmoved, and speculate, and say that the man whom God has blessed to the conversion of a soul acted like a fool." We know nothing of this "aged minister." Perhaps, like ourselves, he neither understands nor preaches the Gospel as well as he ought; but perhaps "the man *did* act like a fool;" and this aged minister may be a man who, by a faithful discharge of his ministerial duties through a long life, has obtained many seals to his ministry, and will leave behind him a people established in the truth, to stand up for God and Zion long after the wild fire scattered by this itinerant shall have ceased to dazzle and deceive.

An Ancient Mob.

READ Acts xvi.—By divine direction, Paul and Silas went to Philippi to preach the Gospel; they cast a spirit of divination out of a young damsel. Her proprietors, who derived a revenue from her soothsaying, were enraged. They caught Paul and Silas, and drew them to the "market-place," where crowds of the idle and worthless are easily assembled. A wonderful flame of patriotism warmed their bosoms; and they had an uncommon zeal for the

peace and the (commercial) prosperity of the city. They were sadly afraid that Paul and Silas would produce dissensions, and disturb the friendly relations existing between their town and other parts of the Empire. They took care to render the Apostles odious by calling them "Jews" ("fanatics"), a name which was held in universal detestation. The populace were thus prepared to take a deep interest in the matter. Those who had no business of their own to mind were glad that a piece of business so congenial to their tastes and habits was made ready for them. Those who were living in luxury on their ill-gotten gains, and those who were living on their hopes of political promotion—classes of men who can do very well without the *right of discussion*, and who always take care to be on the side of the majority—all these came forth to heighten the rage. There was a riot. The whole multitude rose up together. The magistrates caught the excitement, and gave way to their passions. *What business had two strangers to come to our goodly city, and produce all this disturbance? Their sentiments are offensive to nine-tenths of our citizens, and they have no right to insist on them. Their course is mad in the extreme.* Well, they whipped Paul and Silas, but carried their violence no farther. Perhaps some worthy officer, charged with keeping the peace, but who had been looking on and approving, said, "Come, boys, you have done enough for one night." However this was, they cast Paul and Silas into prison. But a night's reflection, and some other things which transpired, admonished them that they had been a little too fast. They were willing to let the Apostles go. "Respectable" men are very apt to be ashamed of such things when they become cool. Nay, they "came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of their city." That is, they assumed a mild and persuasive tone, representing to

them, no doubt, the danger of more popular violence, and their own inability to protect them, if they remained longer in the city.

Would it not have been better to discipline those men, who, because their "gains were gone," were the real authors of this uproar? Was it not the duty of the magistrates to protect the Apostles and preserve the peace of the city by all the power given to them? Paul and Silas had violated no law of the Roman Empire; and what right had they of Philippi to punish that as a crime which the laws had not made criminal? The lawless and disobedient are seldom hard to quell, if they are met with the stern authority of the law; but yield to them, and the judges of the land may soon come down from their benches. Society must be woefully corrupt, or the laws will always *prove strong*, if those who are charged with their administration stand firm and do their duty. By succumbing to the interested and disorderly persons who encouraged this mob, the authorities at Philippi encouraged every one who in future might think himself aggrieved, to excite a riot, and wreak his vengeance on those whom he hated, *under the cloak of patriotism?*

Another Ancient Mob.

PAUL and Silas preached the Gospel at Thessalonica, and some believed. Those Jews who did not believe were enraged. *What right have these men to preach doctrines which we do not like? Have we not told them enough of the bad effects which must flow from their preaching, to make them desist, if they were good men? They must not be suffered to go on. They are deluded fanatics, and there is danger that all men will run incontinently into the belief of their doctrines! Brainless fanatics have some strange art of bringing the most intelligent men over to their opinions. It*

will never do, we see it plainly enough, to rely on reason and argument in opposing them. What then did they do? Did they lay violent hands on the Apostles, themselves? Oh, no; they were too "respectable!" They collected a company of "lewd fellows of the baser sort," that is, men who lounge about the "market-house," and the "court-house," and other places of public resort to pass the time, and gain a penny now and then in any way, fair or unfair. This class is always vociferous for *liberty*, but still the philanthropist or the Christian must not have liberty to disseminate his principles and carry on his measures. And they are *valiant* for liberty, when "respectable" men collect them, and hiss them on. They attacked the house of Jason, a citizen who was known to be friendly to the Apostles; and they raised the cry that "these all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar," and will, if they are let alone, distract our *happy government*. The people and the rulers of the city were thrown into perplexity. Why, what was the matter? Nothing—but a few Jews were out of humor, because the Apostles *would* preach doctrines which they did not like.

The Man who reads no Paper.

THERE are some church-members who read no religious paper. What is the consequence? They know little or nothing of the exertions of Christians in the cause of God: and because they are doing little themselves, but, perhaps, finding fault with all those who are trying to do something, they conclude that religion is in a very languishing condition. Their minister is a friend to some of the benevolent societies of the age—say the Temperance Society. He has read much on the subject, collected facts, and examined the matter in every point of view, and has deliberately come to the conclusion that, though many un-

warrantable and extravagant things have been said by temperance men, yet they have effected much good, and are laboring to bring all the friends of religion, order and law to take the right ground. The man who reads no paper, however, still thinks as many of the best men in the church once thought, that the temperance excitement is kept up by a few hot-headed enthusiasts, and will soon pass away. He thinks his minister stands nearly alone, is visionary, is not walking by the footsteps of the flock, but is about to make shipwreck of the orthodox faith. He therefore takes it into his head that it is his duty to withstand the minister to his face, and have things brought back to their former happy state, when it was no uncommon thing for a church to have to deal with, perhaps, half a dozen of her members annually for "taking a little too much;" or, if he fails in this, withdraw from the communion of saints.

Creeds and Confessions.

MUCH has been said against the use of creeds or confessions of faith, as a test by which the religious principles of all are to be tried who ask for admission to the privileges of the church. Why is this?

When the Eunuch applied to Philip for baptism, the Evangelist said, "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest." The Eunuch answered, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God." Here was his creed, upon the profession of which Philip baptized him. Who doubts that Philip would have refused to administer this initiating ordinance to him had he given an erroneous answer, or one which betrayed great ignorance of the person, character, and work of the Saviour? The creed is short, but comprehensive. It implied some considerable acquaintance with the types and prophecies of Scripture, and with

the design of Christ's mission to the world. On these subjects the Evangelist had just been instructing him; and when we take into the account the copious effusion of the Spirit of that day, there is nothing to forbid the supposition, that his knowledge far exceeded that which is ordinarily to be found among those who enjoy the same amount of instruction.

Philip proposed the creed to him verbally, no doubt; but would it have altered the case had he proposed it to him in a written form? And who is so wise as to know that the Apostles never did propose written creeds to their converts?

Paul tells us of some in his day who denied the resurrection. He speaks of this error as a radical departure from the truth, and subversive of the faith. After it was broached and propagated by some who professed to be Christian teachers, do you think he would make no inquiries, ask no questions, *apply no tests*, to ascertain whether those who desired admission into the society of the faithful were infected with it? I cannot think so—who can? What is called the “Apostles’ Creed,” though probably not framed by the Apostles, was used at a very early period: and the article, “I believe in the resurrection of the dead, and the life everlasting,” appears evidently to be pointed to the errors just mentioned, and designed to exclude those who held it from Christian privileges.

As new errors sprung up from time to time, it became necessary, in order to guard the church from infection, to embrace the opposite truth in her creeds. Thus the article of the creed was multiplied, and its bulk increased. This was unavoidable; unless men of corrupt minds should cease to pervert the right ways of God.

The church is a society separated from the world, and

organized for a special purpose—to maintain and propagate the faith, or the truth as it is in Jesus. Should she not take care that those who become her members agree with her as to the great end of her institution? Must she suffer men to come under her roof and enjoy her privileges, who would subvert her design? No association of men can do so without folly. A literary society has its constitution. In order to carry out the design of the association, all who become members must agree to certain principles, and come under certain rules and obligations. Do you wish to become a member? Here is the test of admission, you must sign the constitution. The constitution is the society's creed. The constitution of the United States is the national creed. The assent of the citizens to its principles is supposed. Before a foreigner can be naturalized and enjoy the privileges of an American citizen, he must take an oath to support the constitution of the United States; and even this is not sufficient—rather he will not be permitted to become a citizen by taking the oath, unless it appears to the satisfaction of the court that he had, during a certain term of probation, “behaved as a man of good moral character, *attached to the principles of the constitution of the United States*, and well disposed to the good order and happiness of the same.” Such is the law—what is the fact, or how the law is administered we do not know, nor is it material to our argument.

How happens it that many believe that the use of a confession of faith is founded only in prejudice and bigotry? May not this be the reason—they attach little importance to the object of the church's organization?

Why is a church thought to be *liberal* which has no confession of faith? Has she really none? She may not have a written one, but has she no set of principles which she professes to believe? If she has, this is her creed, and

she may be a great stickler to it. If she has not, then is she a church which believes nothing—a church without faith! But she has a creed, why then not write it down, and let people see what it is? Is she really not certain herself what it is, or is she ashamed to let it be seen?

How does it happen that a church is *thought* to be *liberal* which professes to hold a certain system of doctrine, but permits men to become members of her communion who are known not to believe it fully—who are known to reject some of those doctrines which she has thought of sufficient importance to be embraced in her creed, and the belief of which, she declares, distinguishes her from the world?

In other words, why is a church thought to be *liberal* which permits her members to pass for believing what she knows they do not believe? When men were less polite, this would have been called deception.

Temperance.

WE hear of renewed efforts in the cause of temperance in different places. Wise and persevering efforts will never be made in vain. This has often been proved. Bad habits,—habits which are of destructive influence on society, such as calling at the grogshop for a dram, setting down the bottle to friends, will soon begin to give way. Moral suasion, reasoning with men, saying to each one, Do thyself no harm—Do thy neighbor no harm;—are the means to be relied on. We have little confidence in legislation as a remedy—we have no confidence in it at all, if it is in advance of public sentiment. And to make any good cause dependent on the result of an election, is just the way to ruin it.

The cause of temperance has often suffered for want of perseverance on the part of its friends. No sooner have

some good effects begun to appear than the zeal of many has begun to wax cold. The battle seemed to them to be won. The meetings began to be thinly attended. Next, they were discontinued. The enemy then began to take courage. The ground which had been conquered was soon lost. Therefore, let it be said to all the friends of temperance: "Be not weary in well-doing."

Family Worship.

MANY years ago, a man and his wife attended regularly on our ministry. He was an intelligent man, and much esteemed by all who knew him, for his upright and blameless deportment. After sometime he signified it to be the desire of himself and his wife to connect themselves with the church. Their examination before the session was satisfactory. At the close of the examination, he was asked if he observed the worship of God in his family. After a short pause he answered: "No; many a time when going home from preaching I resolved that I would commence that very night; but still when the time came, my heart failed me." He was earnestly advised to commence that night—that the difficulty of making a commencement must be met and overcome at once, or it would never grow less but still become more formidable. He had three or four children. A time was set when they were to be baptized. Before proceeding to administer the ordinance he was asked if he had commenced the practice of family worship. In a very modest and happy manner he replied: "I have—I have never neglected it since." A few years afterwards he was elected to the eldership; and few men enjoyed their religion more or did more than he did, according to his means, to bring others to enjoy its blessings. From this, and from similar facts which have fallen under our observation, we have been led to conclude:

1. That it is a rare thing for persons, however apparently, and perhaps really pious, to observe the worship of God in their families, unless they are in communion with the church.

2. That if people are admitted to the communion of the church, without a good assurance that they have commenced, or will, at that time, truly commence the practice of family worship, the church may soon be filled up with "families which call not upon God's name." If their entering visibly into covenant with God and with his people, does not furnish a motive sufficiently powerful to rouse them at once to the performance of this important duty, it is not likely that anything else ever will.

What gives a Writer Weight of Character.

A friend says that what we write would have more weight if it came from Pittsburgh instead of Monmouth. We believe he is correct ; at any rate, he has the universal consent of mankind in his favor. And philosophy, too, is on his side ; if history is philosophy teaching by example.

In the early ages of Christianity, the Bishop of the chief city, or the metropolis of a province, was allowed a certain pre-eminence over his co-presbyters or fellow Bishops, though he might be a confirmed dunce. But Rome had long been the mistress of the world. There the Cæsars had lorded it over the orb of the earth. It was then quite clear that the Bishop of Rome should be recognized as Universal Bishop ; and that all christendom should hearken to his wisdom, and be ruled by his sceptre. Such was the origin of the Pope's supremacy ; and so true it is that the *place* is of great significance.

But still there may be some difficulty in estimating the relative strength of an argument on the principle which

we have found to be a true one. Pittsburgh, it is admitted, is quite a place; so is Cincinnati; but New York is perhaps four times larger than either of them. By a simple statement of the Rule of Three, as 1 is to 4, so is New York logic; we have the result, that a New York writer is entitled to four times the consideration which is due to a writer in Cincinnati or Pittsburgh. So we have concluded not to fret about it. Monmouth is already quite a place compared with either Pittsburgh or Cincinnati when we first saw them; and what with railroads, and the enterprize of its inhabitants, who, we doubt not, are making money as fast as they can, it may ere long become considerable enough to add some strength to a weak argument, and give a writer celebrity which he might never hope to reach by his own merits.

CHAPTER V.

SELECTIONS FROM "BRIEF REMARKS" IN THE "UNITED PRESBYTERIAN."

Infidel Reformers—Popery and the Politicians—The Westminster Assembly—A National Religion—The Thorn in Paul's Flesh—The Modern Pulpit—John as a Preacher of Righteousness—The Higher Law—Consistency—Old and Young Ministers—Woman's Rights—A voice to the City—How to Discourage a Minister—How to get rid of a Pastor—Despised and Rejected—A Man of Sorrows—A False Judgment—Union College; Dr. Nott; Lotteries.

Infidel Reformers.

"**T**HAT so many professed Reformers of the age (some of them probably sincere) should be verging so strongly to infidelity, is a fact to which no friend of his race should be blind. It is ominous. It is time Christian men should study the fact and its causes thoroughly."

I find the above afloat, credited to the Oberlin *Evangelist*. It does seem to me to be "time" that the fact should be noticed. I have long wondered at the almost total silence of the Religious Press on the subject, and have thought this an "ominous" fact. The "professed reformers of the age" have their disciples everywhere, and among them, some who were once "professed Christians"—a profession which I regard with far higher interest, and hold in far higher honor.

Whatever other causes may be assigned for the ex-

istence of the "fact," there are at least two general causes, which may be discovered without much study or research.

1. It is an easy thing to be a "reformer," such as the mass of the "reformers of this age," who are the subjects of newspaper praise. A man is not required to "deny himself and take up his cross." It is also a desirable position for a man to occupy, who means to assail Christianity. He can prosecute his quarrel with religion, without *seeming* "to set himself in a way that is not good"—an inconvenience to which infidels were formerly exposed. When the infidel turns "reformer" he has the advantage of appearing to aim at a higher degree of purity and excellence than Christians can pretend to. Therefore the office of reformer is coveted by sagacious infidels.

2. God's method of making this world a moral, virtuous, and happy world, is by reconciling its inhabitants to Himself in Christ Jesus, not imputing to them their trespasses. The method of many of the "professed reformers of this age," is quite different. They would render it a moral, virtuous, and happy world, while it remains in a state of rebellion against its Maker. They, therefore, proceed on a principle which is in practical and active hostility to the revelation of grace. Hence, if they are not already infidels, they soon "verge strongly" to infidelity, and become infidels by system. To all this, ministers of the Gospel have given quite too much countenance, because such reformers "seemed to be doing some good." Thus, their hands have been strengthened, and the unstable and unwary have been beguiled. Hence, also, we have in part at least, the solution of another "ominous" fact, that some of the larger churches report a decrease of membership. By Christians and Christian ministers, and therefore to some extent, by the church, the Spirit of God, as the

regenerator of the world, has been practically denied and rejected. Grieved, He has withdrawn His influences.

In some sense, "*some* of these reformers of the age are probably sincere:" for I believe it is very possible for a man to become an admirer of virtue as a thing which is of good report among men, and a well-wisher to his fellow-men so far as the present life is concerned, while yet, "ignorantly and in unbelief," he hates and opposes the chief and highest interest of man. Such a reformer may sincerely lament, and oppose, and labor for the removal of many things as "evils," that is, as things which hinder the "progress" of society in intelligence, in virtue, in facilities for obtaining the necessities and comforts of life, in the enjoyment of liberty, etc., and yet it may never have entered his head, that anything needs to be hated and opposed as *a sin against God*. Of sin, indeed, in the Bible sense of the word, he would speak with a sneer; and in vain would you expect him to cherish any affection for "Him whom God hath sent to bless men in turning them away from their iniquities." Yet, especially if he has apostatized from a profession of religion, he has a *hell* for the wicked; but the *wicked* are those who do not altogether see and act with him in *his* plans of "reform," and he sentences them to *his* hell, without mercy, and without measure. And the light, bold, and irreverent manner in which he speaks of his Maker, and the vengeance of his Maker, manifests but too plainly that he is an utter stranger to that feeling which the Apostle denominates "godly fear."

Popery and the Politicians.

A FEW years ago, when the Pope's agents in this country, flushed with the hope that they would soon have the dominion, were treating Protestantism with an insolence

which admonished us of what we were to expect, should they accomplish their wishes, our politicians (I do not mean our *statesmen*) were, as a general fact, extremely polite and complacent toward them. A Protestant minister could not devote five minutes to the exposition of the errors of Popery, but they would cry, *persecution!* and, moreover, they would take to themselves wonderful credit for standing up nobly in defence of the poor, weak, persecuted Papists. And further, to conciliate the Pope's agents, who, it was well understood "held the balance," and could turn the scale in any close contest between the two great political parties, the leaders of both parties strove which should be foremost in getting up "repeal meetings," and lauding that arch-impostor O'Connell. When the Italians, as "thirteen colonies" had done before them, resolved that they would be free, prudential considerations induced a dignified silence on the part of our American "Sentinels of Liberty." Perhaps no noble struggle for liberty was ever maintained for so long a time, with so little manifestation of sympathy from a people professing Republicanism. Latterly, however, so many adverse things have happened to the Pope—he is an exile, and refuses to return and exercise his spiritual functions, unless he can be a temporal despot—the Romans are making such successful resistance to the troops sent by the mock-republic of France to crush the spirit of liberty and restore the Pope—the Hungarians are giving such fearful employment to the Austrians—and such revelations were made when the "Office of the Holy Inquisition" was opened; that, the time seeming to have come when the frogs may leap upon and insult king log, some notes of sympathy with the Romans begin to be raised; the public press breathes more freely, and there are even those who dare to rebuke Bishop Hughes! But discretion is the better part of valor, and

it may still be their wisdom to observe some caution. The Pope, we are inclined to think, will yet be reinstated for a little season; in which event, he will doubtless endeavor to take fearful vengeance on his enemies. But, be this as it may, the "times" are pregnant with "signs" that the prophecies are receiving their fulfilment. Our politicians (we do not mean our statesmen, but our dealers in politics), have given "their power to the Beast" in times past, and according to the sure word of prophecy, these are the kind of men who, on some turn of the wheel, are to "hate the whore, and burn her flesh with fire."

In such a crisis, it behoves the religious press to be careful not to give the least countenance to any assault on Popery which may be made in the spirit of this world. Let us deal honestly and truly with our Roman Catholic fellow citizens. Let us endeavor to show them in the spirit of kindness, the error of their ways, and the danger of their religious system. But if a political crusade be got up against Romanism, let us, as ministers and churches, have nothing to do with it.

These thoughts were suggested by finding that a correspondent of the *New York Tribune* expresses a desire for the downfall of the Roman Catholic creed. This is such a rapid transition from that state of lordly indifference, which was lately the reigning mode, that I confess it startled me, much as I desire the same thing.

Who can set bounds to the higher passions of our nature when roused! During a calm you look on the waters of a tranquil lake; not a ripple disturbs its placid bosom; but the next hour, the winds of heaven begin to strive, and soon you behold an image of "Ocean into tempest wrought." What human power could now arrest the convulsive motion of its waters? So does it often fare with human society.

The Westminster Assembly.

It is believed that one reason why many look for much good from conventions to settle articles of faith, or produce doctrinal bases of union, is the opinion that the Westminster Assembly, though differing widely among themselves at first, came to an entire agreement by patient and persevering discussion and deliberation. Nothing is farther from the fact, whatever those whose knowledge is derived from nursery tales, and Peter Parley's histories, may imagine. On all the doctrinal points embraced in the Confession of Faith, with a very few exceptions, there was a remarkable degree of harmony among them before they came together. Any one who knows that the articles of the Church of England were understood in a Calvinistic sense by the great body of the Episcopalians of that and the former age, except those of the Laudean school, none of whom troubled the Assembly with their notions, and compares the articles which were adopted by the Irish Episcopal Church, in 1615, and the articles of Lambeth, which met the approbation of the English Puritans, and the former Confession of Faith and devotional writings of the Scotch Church, and the Confession of Faith of the Baptist churches, which was adopted in 1646, and the Independent Confession of Faith, adopted some time later by a remarkable unanimity which was ascribed to the influence of Dr. Owen, and some other old men whose views were formed in Westminster times; any one, we say, who compares all these, will at once perceive that, as it regards articles of religious belief, there was a remarkable unanimity among all those who were represented in the Westminster Assembly, and that the Westminster Confession itself (except in a few places relating to church government and discipline), is but the public expression of a

uniformity of belief which previously existed. Accordingly, on articles of faith there was little or no debate in the Assembly. What discussion there was, according to Hetherington, was in the private committees. He informs us that they discussed "till they all came to be of one mind," precisely as any committee, which has a weighty report to prepare, will have a good deal of discussion before it is so framed as to meet the approbation of all, though there really may be no diversity of sentiment among them. "It is exceedingly gratifying to be able to state, that throughout the deliberations of the Assembly, when composing the Confession of Faith, there prevailed almost an entire and perfect harmony."—*Hetherington*. This harmony evidently arose from their being of one mind before they met. But they were of one mind, and there was a most blessed harmony among them, because they kept aloof from all such questions as now keep up party walls between Seceders, Covenanters, and Associate Reformed. Had they not done so, they would have met with "supposed" differences too hard to reconcile, just as it fares with us their degenerate sons.

It was no object, it was at least by no means a leading object for which the Westminster Assembly was called, to bring about a uniformity in articles of religious belief. But the English Parliament had abolished the prelatical church government, which had existed from the times of Henry the VIII., and his daughter Elizabeth, and the Westminster Assembly was called to give their advice as to what should be substituted for it. "The true theory of the Westminster Assembly comprises two main elements: there was a Christian church in England, but not organized; and the civil power, avowing Christianity, had called the Assembly of divines for the purpose of consulting together respecting the points of government and discipline

which require the sanction of the civil authority for their full efficiency.”—*Hetherington*. They, therefore, “showed their wish to act with fairness and impartiality” by appointing as members of the Assembly “men of all shades of opinion in matters of church government.”—*Ib.* (Or according to Orme, in his life of Baxter, the Parliament had no particular desire that the Assembly should agree, but wished to amuse the Puritans; to which we would add, and please the Scotch, to obtain the assistance of their army against the king.) Taking the Solemn League and Covenant as our guide, the Parliament had not irreversibly abolished Episcopacy, but “Prelacy” as defined to be “church government by Archbishops, Bishops, Chancellors,” etc. Hence, some Episcopalians were invited to sit in the Assembly. If any of the Laudean or king Charles’ Prelatists were appointed, few appeared, and those who did, soon withdrew. Those who remained were “moderate Episcopalians,” and readily coalesced with the Presbyterians. “Into these three great parties, the Presbyterian, Independent, and Erastian, was the Westminster Assembly of divines divided, even when first it met; and it was inevitable that a contest should be waged among them for the ascendancy, ending most probably in increased hostility and absolute disruption; or, in some mutual compromise to which all might assent, though, perhaps, with the cordial approbation of none.”—*Ib.* One of these alternatives was from the first “*inevitable*,” as is always the case when a conference assembles to pass on questions about which there is a real difference of opinion among the members. And how did it end? in a compromise or agreement? No, no; but “in increased hostility and absolute disruption.” The Presbyterians were in the majority. The Independents, the next party in numbers and influence, were out-voted, but not convinced. The frame of

church government prepared by the Assembly was sanctioned by the Parliament. Among the Independents there were many good and great men, who notwithstanding their differences, were highly esteemed by their Presbyterian brethren. But they were now to be exposed to all the inconveniences, and, legally speaking, to all the penalties which hang over those who dissent from the established religion. A plan of comprehension, and a plan of toleration was proposed, and was discussed. But moderate counsels could not prevail. Presbyterianism went into operation in London and a few other places. But the *heart* of the nation was not prepared for it. By Cromwell and the "Sectaries" it was overthrown. The Independents, who were the chief favorites about his court, next obtained the ascendancy. But on his death, the sceptre fell from the feeble hands of his son Richard. The nation was wearied with revolution, anarchy, and civil war. Charles the Second was placed on the throne without "sufficient security for religion." With him the old laws returned. Prelacy stepped in and sat down in all the seats from which she had been ejected. And then followed twenty-eight years of sore persecution to English nonconformists and Scotch Presbyterians.

Such was the uniformity accomplished by the Westminster Assembly in those things about which there had been a previous disagreement, and in which, as the times were, a greater degree of uniformity would have been highly advantageous to the cause of religion, and a blessing to the nation.

A National Religion.

MEMORIALS have been presented to Congress, objecting to the appointment of Chaplains to itself, and in the army and navy, on the ground that it is a violation of the con-

stitution, and tantamount to the establishment of a national religion.

There are three parties to the question: What is the character of the constitution of the United States in a religious point of view?

1. Infidels who hold that it knows no religion, and regard with equal favor, or equal indifference, the worship of Juggernaut, and the worship of Him who made the heavens, and the earth, and the fountains of water.

2. Some ultra Christians (ultra we mean in their theories, not in the practical part of morality), who, because the constitution does not come up to their idea of what is right, take pleasure in branding it as atheistical and infidel.

3. The great body of Christians and of citizens, who regard the Christian religion as of Divine origin, and a blessing to the human family: those hold, that though the constitution refrains from giving any preference to one denomination of Christians above another, and from dictating a religious creed to the people, it still recognizes the Christian religion, and will throw no obstacles in the way of its profession or propagation. In their view, it is no violation of its letter, and perfectly agreeable to its spirit, to appoint Christians, while no rule is adopted that they must all be of some one denomination. Yet, when we consider the kind of men who most generally seek such appointments, and with the aid of powerful friends, obtain them, it is doubted whether the cause of religion or the spiritual welfare of men, is much promoted by them. This, however, only shows, that as not much is to be looked for in this respect from government, it is every way as well that the government does not undertake to do much.

The Thorn in Paul's Flesh.

WHAT was it? Various answers have been given to this question. Sometimes in order that in one respect at least they might be like Paul, men have shown a fondness for the opinion, that it was some ailment such as they themselves were afflicted with. A preacher whom I once knew, a corpulent, sanguineous man, weighing about two hundred, whose head often pained him, on being asked his opinion, was said to have replied, that it was probably the headache.

We may be good theologians and good Christians, without being able to answer the question. When the Bible does not furnish the means of obtaining certain or satisfactory information on any point, we may rest assured, that it is not needful we should have such knowledge. But still, it is lawful to inquire; for after all, the means of obtaining the information, may be within our reach; and no knowledge which can be derived from the Bible, should be deemed absolutely valueless.

The children of Israel (Joshua xxiii. 13) were told that if they formed intimate friendships or alliances with the heathen, God would no more drive them out, but they should remain in the land and be "thorns in their eyes." From this, Paul most probably borrowed the figure when he called his bodily infirmity, "a thorn in the flesh." Our attention may, therefore, turn to the eye as the probable seat of Paul's infirmity. But this is not sufficient. Well; in Galatians iv., immediately after speaking of his temptation in the flesh, he asks, "Where is the blessedness ye spake of? for, I bear you record that if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes and have given them to me." What suggested this language? Why should such an idea have presented itself to his mind

—why show their affection by giving him their eyes, rather than their ears or hands or feet? To have expressed the strength of their affection, it would have been more in accordance with a frequent Scripture usage, to have said, that they would have laid down their lives for him. But on the supposition that he had some disease of the eyes, ophthalmia, for example, which made his Galatian friends sympathize with him, and say, what a pity that such a man as Paul should have such weak, disordered eyes, the language is perfectly natural.

It was Paul's habit to employ an amanuensis. But he wrote the closing salutation with his own hand, to authenticate the Epistle. "The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle, *so I write.*" Why did he employ an amanuensis? It is most likely that Paul, the scholar, the Greek scholar, was a passable scribe. A sentence near the close of the Epistle to the Galatians, perhaps, sheds some light here: "Ye see how large a letter I have written to you with *mine own hand.*" But compared with some of his other Epistles, that to the Galatians cannot be called *large*. The original will, however, bear the rendering, "Ye see in, or with what *large letters*, I have written to you with mine own hand." Why make large letters? A person of defective vision would do so.

There appears, therefore, to be a strong presumption that Paul's infirmity in the flesh was some disease in the eyes. And the presumption loses none of its strength when we consider farther that his infirmity was of such a nature as to injure his personal appearance, so that the more light and thoughtless class would take occasion from it to "despise" his ministry. Nothing would be more likely to have this effect than disordered eyes.

The Modern Pulpit.

I HAVE seen two Sabbath sermons, which were preached on the occasion of the death of General Taylor, and published by request. In one, the preacher extols the extended "fame" of General Taylor as a military chieftain, talks of "glory," dwells on the battles fought and the brilliant victories won under his command, and introduces Lord Wellington as testifying to his superior generalship. The other was preached in the Centenary church in St. Louis, and published in compliance with "a flattering note" (yes!) addressed to the preacher by four gentlemen who had "been privileged to listen to the discourse on last Sabbath." The text was: "For the faithful fail from among the children of men." The preacher fairly outdid many a fourth of July oration, and many an inflated newspaper essay. Among other things, he took occasion to show that General Taylor was faithful as a military chieftain, and as a president, and faithful also in his obligations to his Maker. Under the first head, the preacher gave, *on the Christian Sabbath*, a brilliant history of the military career of the General in the last war with England, in the Florida war, in the Black Hawk war, and in the war that was waged in Mexico *for liberty!* where, he takes occasion to tell us, that General Taylor was ordered to the Rio Grande, because Mexico had proclaimed war against the United States! The story of Palo Alto, Buena Vista, etc., is told once more. The lines in which the poet Campbell celebrates the patriotism of William Tell, slightly amended by the preacher, are applied to General Taylor:—

"To show all Mexico, through peril and alarm,
The power that sleeps within a freeman's arm."

Yes, indeed.

The last part of the discourse, in which the preacher discourses of the General's faithfulness to his Maker, I regard the very worst part of a very worthless sermon. His entire proof is contained in some words said to have been spoken by the General on his death-bed—"I have always done my duty, I am ready to die." I have always doubted whether the General really did utter these words. I think I see in the matter the hand of a gossip, who wished to certify to his piety, but did not know how to frame a certificate. Instead of being an evidence of piety, the sentiment which they contain might come from any insensate soul, which had never been awakened to a sense of its obligations to the Supreme Being. They assert far more than any Christians of whom I read, or with whom I have been conversant from my youth up, could say in truth. Not one of them—nay, not one saint now in glory—could say, "I have always done my duty." I should regard myself a traitor to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to the interests of immortal souls, if I should lead the living to build their hopes of eternal salvation on any such false foundation.

I would, however, wish not to be understood as saying one word in reference to the eternal salvation of General Taylor. Who am I that I should judge another man's servant? He that judgeth him and me both is the Lord. Nor would I be understood as wishing to tear one laurel from the hero's brow. That he was a general of no ordinary merit, none that I know of will dispute. That he acted well and truly as President, I have never seen any reason to doubt. And on account of the part he acted in reference to slavery and free-soil, I have no prejudice against him. Indeed, for myself, I place the slavery politics of Clay, and Webster, and Benton, and Cass, and General Taylor, and the free-soil party, pretty much in

the same category ; and do not look for any great deliverance being wrought in the earth by any of them.

But I do wish to enter my solemn protest against such awful profanation of the Sabbath—such disgusting prostitution of the Divine ordinance of preaching. For years, we have been aware that it was becoming fashionable to make demands on the pulpit, which if not steadfastly resisted, would convert it into anything else than what it once was called, “the sacred desk.” A set of “fine writers” in the East, many of them Unitarian and transcendental preachers, artfully studying to conceal their malignity against evangelical religion and its ministers, have been rising up early and telling us about the “wants of this age,” and how those ministers who dwell on Christ crucified have fallen behind the age, so that there is no “sympathy” between them and their hearers. They have made some impression, and to some extent the pulpit has bowed before them. In the sermon last noticed, we have a fair specimen of the kind of preaching which will exactly do for “this age.” That it met the “wants” and enlisted the “sympathies” of many who heard it, none can doubt. It is well known that, in our cities, there are wealthy congregations, composed chiefly of men who would pay liberally to the support of a teacher who would entertain them on the Sabbath, on subjects more congenial to their taste than the doctrines of the cross of Christ. And that preaching, which is after their hearts’ lusts, they call *the gospel* ; and, assuming the mock-pious tone of a modern reformer, they wish they could always hear *the gospel* preached.

John as a Preacher of Righteousness.

JOHN the Baptist was Elias who was to come. That is, he came in the spirit and power of Elijah. He was a bold re-

prover of sin, and his faithfulness cost him his life. But when the publicans also came to his baptism, and said to him, "Master, what shall we do?" he simply said to them, "Exact no more than that which is appointed to you." Now, these publicans held office under the Roman government as collectors of the taxes. The Roman government in Judea was an usurpation. Let the Mexican war have been as unjust as any man ever said it was, still the Romans had no more right to subjugate Judea, than we had to subjugate Mexico. What then did John? Did he take up this question, and try to show these querists that they ought not to have any hand in upholding this Roman injustice? It really seems not; he only told them to act justly under the laws of Rome. And when the soldiers likewise demanded of him, "And what shall we do?" he simply replied, "Do violence to no man, neither accuse any man falsely, and be content with your wages." Now these soldiers belonged to the Roman "army of occupation." They were stationed there to hold Judea in subjection to the usurped power of Rome. *And was that all John said?* It seems so. *Why, he must have been afraid "to come out."* *He must have been afraid of his popularity. Why did he not "come out" like an honest man, and tell them that Rome had no right to Judea, and that they ought not to uphold such wrong?* Well, what do you think was the reason? It is evident that John did *not* act as it is sometimes thought ministers of the Gospel should act under circumstances not altogether dissimilar. My own opinion—but I speak for myself only—is that John did not think that this was exactly his business. Had he taken up this question, it would have taken him on ground where every noisy blustering fellow could have met him, and talked as long and as loud as he could, to save his life. He would have appeared simply as a common wran-

gler and brawler on subjects which ten thousands in Judea could talk about, and think about, as well as he could; and every impudent fellow would have thought it his privilege to contradict and insult him at his pleasure. The very predicament, in which many would be willing to see the ministers of the Gospel place themselves. He would have laid aside his character as a teacher come from God, and his words would have fallen powerless on the ears of men. There would have been no more conversions to righteousness under his ministry. Perhaps John did not care much for his popularity, as men count popularity; but he did care for the cause of his Master, and was unwilling to injure it, or impair his own usefulness in promoting it. John had not courage enough for this; though he could summon up sufficient resolution to reprove "Herod the king" for living in adultery. There was some real heroism in that. It does not require much courage to enable a man to take part in a controversy which deeply agitates the community: he is sure of the zealous support of one party to the question: but to reprove a man faithfully, for some sin which does not happen to engross much public attention; to reprove him for it for the simple reason that it offends God and incurs his wrath, when all that can be calculated on is often only the approbation, hardly the support of a few good people:—this is quite another affair.

When questions become mixed up with politics, it requires a great deal of prudence on the part of ministers and church courts to touch on them to any good purpose, as they are of a mixed character, having both a moral and political bearing. It is a work of some difficulty to distinguish what in them may be a matter of ecclesiastical cognizance, from what falls within the province of the statesman; but it must be done. Wisdom is profitable to

direct. Perhaps a minister needs to have come through some such scene as the Sabbath Mail controversy, and to have acted some part in it, to be able to appreciate the full worth of such questions as—What is the proper sphere of the minister of the Gospel? and, What will the public tolerate in him? I mean the Christian public; believing, that in this great body, there is much good sound practical sense; which, though in times of excitement it may be misled, and may urge a minister forward farther than he ought to go, begins to react the moment the excitement begins to die away. It may not therefore be to the advantage of any minister who exposes himself to the reaction.

The very same men who would desire to see a minister step into the front rank on any subject about which they are battling, may be among the very first to charge him with rashness, or something no better, when circumstances change. Is it not known, that the same men who embrace every opportunity to represent the clergy as a class of men who always take the side of tyranny, and advocate the pretensions of power against the rights of the people, delight also to charge them with having been disturbers of the peace, and fomenters of discord, because they labored, and suffered, in the cause of civil and religious liberty in the days of Charles the First, and Archbishop Laud?

“The Higher Law.”

THAT the moral law is the standard to which all civil laws and constitutions should be conformed, is a proposition which will be denied by none whose dissent is entitled either to notice or respect. That the moral law, as more clearly revealed in the Scriptures, is such a standard, is a proposition which will be denied by no intelligent statesman who believes the Bible to contain a revelation from

God. No genuine disciple of Blackstone can deny it. That the moral law is above any civil law or constitution, is both a sound and a safe proposition. The framers of our Federal constitution kept this moral law the law of right and wrong in view ; and certainly they aimed not to violate it. Though the constitution which they framed may not come up to the perfection of the moral law, (what civil constitution ever did or ever will possess this perfection?) they studied that it should in nothing be contrary to it. I do not exactly see, why the announcement of this doctrine of "a higher law," in one of the high places of the nation, has been thought worthy either of all the praise, or the blame which has been lavished on it.

This "higher law" may be appealed to: First,—To show that anything which is thought to be wrong in a civil law or constitution should be amended. Second,—As a help to the right understanding of any passage in a civil law or constitution. That interpretation should not be put on it which would make it conflict with the moral law, if another is possible. Third,—When a civil law conflicts with the moral law. But in this case, the duty of the private citizen, under all ordinary circumstances, is fulfilled, if he lends no voluntary aid in its execution, if he is passive under it, and prefers suffering to sinning, and if he uses lawful means to have it amended. If anything beyond this is thought of, I apprehend "it cometh of evil," and is not agreeable to the teachings of Christ or his apostles.

But, if a man when professing to act under the constitution, appeals from it to "a higher law"—if he in effect says, "I know that the constitution says so and so, but I appeal to a higher law"—would that do? I apprehend that no man with his sober second thoughts about him will say it would do. Why, it would make every man's

judgment of what the higher law requires, the constitution of the country. It would do that and nothing else. It would throw society back to the state in which it was before the civil compact was entered into. A constitution would not be worth the paper on which it is printed. Certainly, I do not put this forth as a *discovery*.

But "ecclesiastical persons" may appreciate the argument better, if it be transferred to another field. Well then, a member of a Church Court says, "I know what your Confession of Faith, or constitution prescribes in this case, but I cannot vote according to it. I must take the Bible as my rule, it is above the Confession of Faith." What would likely be said of him? This—"Sir, we know that the Bible is a higher authority than our Confession of Faith; but then, that there may be society among men, that men may co-operate in any cause, it is often necessary that a few leading principles should be agreed on; you have pledged yourself to your brethren over this Confession of Faith; and as you have done this voluntarily, declaring that your principles are to be tried by it, and promising to act according to it, you must fulfil your pledge if you expect to remain in our communion."

Consistency.

I MUST disburden my mind of some thoughts which have been pressing heavily upon it for a few years past, let the consequences be what they may, and let people say of them, and of me, what they may.

I was a Theological Pupil of the late Dr. Mason. In common with some others, a few of whom still remain, I was the object of a good deal of suspicion for a few years, because it was feared I shared too largely in Dr. Mason's liberality. All such suspicions I have fairly lived down, and have earned for myself, in some places, the enviable,

or the unenviable, reputation of a bigot among my brethren. The Doctor, you know, wrote a book in favor of sacramental communion on catholic principles, which was very generally disapproved by our denomination and by others of the same stamp. And to this day, we of the Associate Reformed Church, as well as some others of the strictest sort, hold intercommunion in abhorrence, meaning by intercommunion, joining with other Christians in sealing ordinances, and nothing else. But now, unless I am greatly deceived, unless I am grossly misinformed, our pulpits are sometimes opened,—our ministers sometimes welcome to their pulpits, preachers who hold various grades of errors down as low as semi-pelagianism. And I do not know but we have people here and there, who would have their ministers be so polite as to invite to their pulpits, a Unitarian, a denier of the true and eternal Godhead of the Saviour, if he should present himself among them in the recommending attitude of an advocate for some popular reform. I have written this last sentence very deliberately. I wish I may be mistaken; but such is the conviction of my mind that I am not mistaken, that I cannot suppress it. Nor do I think that in all this we are in advance, nay, I have reason to believe, we are rather behind some others, who once did, and yet do, think themselves more strict than we are.

Now I affirm that Dr. Mason did no such things. I affirm, that, unless my information be altogether incorrect, men are sometimes admitted to our pulpits, and to the pulpits of some others who claim a great degree of strictness, whom Dr. Mason would no more have invited to his pulpit than he would have suffered his right arm to be broken. He and the fathers *may have been* on one extreme—are we in no danger of going to the other? If I am wrong in saying what Dr. Mason did not do, and would not do, I

wish any of those who had the same opportunity of knowing the truth that I had to set me right.

So far as I am acquainted with the controversy which Dr. Mason excited, at least one objection to his plan, and the objection which had the most weight with the people, was, that it opened a door for the introduction of errors and corruptions from other denominations. But has the practice of admitting to our pulpits preachers of a great variety of shades of belief, no tendency to train the people to neglect the divine injunction, "cease, my son, from the instruction which causeth to err," and thus prepare the way for the introduction of every error in doctrine, and every corruption in worship?

When hearing Dr. Mason's plan of intercommunion spoken of in terms of abhorrence, by persons whose frequent practice was known to me to be as above stated, seeming, as they did, to suppose that error and corruption would be effectually kept out of the church if the one door of intercommunion in sealing ordinances was kept close shut, I have thought of the silly ostrich, which supposes that her whole body is safe, if she hides her silly head behind the foliage of a little shrub.

And your "Testimonies, and Bonds and Covenants" and other the like fond things, what will they avail to counteract the evils of such a practice? No one can be so simple as to need an answer to this question.

I must not however, be understood as favoring the idea that the church should "bind up" her members never to go to hear a minister of another evangelical denomination; or as intimating that they should be called to account, if ever they go to hear a minister of a denomination which differs from their own as tweedle-dum from tweedle-dee. For the slavery of such a system I have no respect. But to avoid Scylla, there is no need that we rush on Charybdis.

Old and Young Ministers.

TURNBULL, in his "Genius of Scotland," says: "Old preachers, like old wine, in our humble opinion, are far the best. Their freedom from earthly ambition, their deep experience of men and things, their evident nearness to heaven, their natural simplicity and authority, their reverend looks and tremulous tones, all unite to invest their preaching with a peculiar spiritual interest, such as seldom attaches to that of a young divine. Everything of course depends on personal character, and young preachers may be truly pious, and thus speak with much simplicity and power. But other things being equal, old preachers and old physicians, old friends and old places, possess qualities peculiar to themselves."

The above is to be taken with some grains of allowance. It is not always true that old preachers are free from "earthly ambition." The ruling passion is sometimes strong even in death. But after all proper abatement is made, few will entirely agree with Mr. Turnbull. It may be true that people prefer old lawyers and old physicians, and even old shoemakers who are known to make good work; but men will often trust their souls where they would not trust their property or their health.

As a general fact, young preachers are, and should be preferred when a congregation is making choice of a pastor. There may be exceptions, as when a congregation is in a distracted state, or contains some troublesome members. An old man may succeed better in making them keep the peace, or in keeping himself from becoming the tool of a faction; or, if he fails, it is better that he should be sacrificed, than a young man who is just beginning to give promise of usefulness. The reasons in favor of choosing a young minister are:—

1. He will soon grow old, and the congregation will have the benefit both of youth and experience.

2. After all that is said to the effect that ministers have an easy life, etc., it is the honest conviction of all well-informed men, that their calling is a self-denying and difficult one. Hence people who have any goodness in them, take a lively interest in a young man who appears to be devoting himself to the ministry from proper motives. And they are not ready to suspect him of improper motives, for they know that with a reasonable amount of talent he might choose a profession which would far sooner conduct him to worldly honor and wealth, if that were his object. The warmth of their feelings towards him makes them take a lively interest in his ministry. But this will not last. Hence, the first years of a minister are often the best.

3. A young minister is more able to endure cold, and heat, and fatigue, and, consequently, may perform a greater amount of parochial duties.

4. There is a melody in his voice; and his manner, style, and even his pronunciation, are more modern; that is, more in the fashion. Now, it is a great thing to be in the fashion; with thousands it is all. To illustrate: where an old minister would say, "in the midst of us," a young minister will say "in our midst." Let me not be suspected of raillery, for indeed I am serious. This is a very material difference, especially with young men of literary tastes, and young ladies who have been at a Female Academy. They cannot like *in the midst of us*, as well as *in our midst*. It makes them think of the days of old, but since the flood, when the men wore shoe buckles, and the women fur hats without feather, ribbon, or tassel.

Having now said all that occurs to me in favor of young ministers, let a few things be said in favor of old ones. The question, like most others, has two sides.

1. If a minister occupies the same post till he comes to pass among men for an old man, and conducts himself with propriety, he will have an influence, unseen and unacknowledged by many, it may be, but for many important purposes very effective, on a vast variety of characters. The wicked, who hate religion, and him as a minister, will respect him as a man, and would like him to have a good opinion of them. If they are not made better, they are kept from being made worse. A man shall casually meet him and ask his opinion on some important subject. A bright young minister, hard by, may preach an eloquent sermon or two on the opposite side, but still people do not think the old man's opinion is overthrown. However, while a young man should not rejoice in his youth, the old man had better not rejoice in his age. Though he may have labored for years among a people when they were few and poor, and have borne burdens in common with them, and for their sakes rejected inviting calls to other places, when he loses some of his teeth and his natural force is abated, and the music forsakes his voice, and a wealthy, fashionable generation has arisen, he had better not wait for a broad hint, but shift the scene of his labors. And when he becomes superannuated, few congregations will regard him as having the rights of an old horse or an old negro, to be taken care of by those in whose service he has worn himself out.

2. Though contrary to a very common opinion, I must maintain that an old minister may be more useful among children and the more unsophisticated portion of young people—I mean as a pastor. But in order to this, he must keep alive his sympathies with young people, and even with children. And this he must regard as a religious duty. When youth are enjoying themselves in any safe and innocent amusement, he must give them a smile of

approbation which shall seem to say, That's right, children, I am glad to see you so happy. They will think far more of a condescending notice of this kind from an old man, than from one nearer their own age. And then when he speaks to them on religious subjects (he may often say all that is necessary for the occasion in a single sentence); if he address them without chiding, and without a studied gloom and solemnity, his advice will be the more cheerfully listened to. Children, and old people who are going into their second childhood, are grateful to any person who will notice them as their age requires.

The reader will have seen that the writer does not consider it a sin for an old minister to be cheerful if he can; and even, on proper occasions, to take a good hearty laugh. It has, indeed, been alleged that Christ, the minister's example, never was known to smile. But this is mere tradition, and I don't believe it. He possessed our nature with all its constituent faculties. The risible faculty is one of these. Why was this faculty bestowed on man, if it was never to be exercised? On more than one occasion, Jesus wept; and he that can weep over the sorrows of others, can give expression to his feelings in all the modes which are natural to man, when he shares their joys. A laughing, giggling minister, indeed, is not just the thing. But do not commend me to the man who can never raise so much as a smile, but is always as solemn as the grave. On the whole, to the question, Whether is an old or a young minister the best? I would answer: *Both are best.*

Woman's Rights.

FROM a late number of the *Christian Instructor* it appears that the question whether females should be entitled to a voice in the choice of a Pastor, is receiving some attention. I think they should; perhaps they always

will have a controlling influence on the choice; but whether they should vote in the public assembly is another question.

The vote of the husband is generally as really the vote of his wife as his own vote, and also the vote of a father or a brother, is the vote of his daughters or sisters. That part of the discipline of the Associate Reformed Church which supposes this, proceeds on the pleasing assumption that there is, in general, "a good agreement" in Christian families, a feature of society which commended itself to the approbation of even a heathen moralist.

The privilege of voting, without the privilege of debate, would amount to little. I am sure it would not fulfil the wishes of any female who aspires to the character of a virago. But Paul says, "It is a shame for women to speak in the church;" that is, as we understand it, in any religious assembly. Was Paul wanting in respect for the sex? An individual whose character as a gentleman was never called in question by his warmest opponents, has been known to say that Abraham and Paul were two of the most finished gentlemen whose names stand on record. Paul was chargeable with no rudeness. Some important law of nature may underlie his doctrine. It is not difficult to find it out. The most careless observer must often have noticed the happy effects of female influence. It could not well be spared. It would be suicidal to put it in jeopardy, on which some modern reformers seem to be intent. Perhaps they know what they are about. *It is the influence of retiring modesty.* Bring woman forth on the public stage to measure her strength with men in intellectual combat, and her influence would be put in jeopardy. That rudeness which is often kept in check in the cabin of a steamboat, merely by the presence of a few prudent and respectable ladies, would soon throw off all

restraints, if they were to come forth and engage with men in animated debate and discussion; and they would have to retire to their state-rooms for protection. And all that protection which, in such a situation, they afford to men who do not wish to be annoyed with profanity, would also be clean gone.

We admit no intellectual inferiority of the sex; neither did Paul; for the ends for which her Maker designed her, and the sphere in which He placed her, the superiority is indeed in her favor. But this only strengthens our argument. For, let a law of nature be trifled with, let woman come forth to vindicate by force, or uphold by the exercise of the more rugged and masculine virtues, that dominion which she holds and upholds, by kindness, gentleness, and the other virtues which are peculiar to her sex, and it is easy to see that the mischief resulting would be in exact proportion to the energy of her character.

But we must ascend to a higher source—to Him by whose guidance Paul wrote. God, who made man male and female, knew the proper relative position in which to place the sexes. When the husband comes home, his spirits chafed, his feelings perturbed by the heat and animosity and strife of some public meeting—and religious meetings too often partake of some of these features—it is a wise arrangement of Providence, that his wife, from not having been personally engaged in an angry controversy, should be in a proper mood and frame of mind to allay the irritation of his mind, and soften down the roughness of the bear into the gentleness of the lamb. In the history of woman, how much sin and evil has thus been prevented or checked! Would no injurious derangement of forces be produced, if a balance wheel of society were converted into a motive power? Any force exerted, not in obedience to its proper laws, must work evil. An excited, angry

man, is an object frightful enough ; but oh ! the calamities which have sometimes been brought on the human family, by an excited and angry, but talented woman, seeking to gratify her ambition or revenge ! The institution of the Christian church was designed to train up—not a Semiramis, nor yet Queen Elizabeths, nor yet Madame De Staels—but Isabella Grahams, and Harriet Newels !

But before proceeding to the choice of a pastor, the more intelligent portion of the female membership, especially the “mothers in Israel,” should be consulted. A congregation would act very unwisely to call a pastor by the vote of a majority in opposition to the wishes of such. But we can hardly suppose such a case possible. In fact, a numerous female membership will always have something like a *veto* power. By all means, before proceeding to call a pastor, a congregation should be well assured, that at least a majority of the female members who are not represented by fathers or husbands, are ready and willing to sign the call.

A Voice to the City.

THE late, or perhaps I should rather say, the present, mortality among our ministers, is a remarkable dispensation of divine Providence.

About twenty years ago a similar mortality prevailed, but with some marked differences. The strokes did not come in such rapid succession. Those who fell were generally the more aged, who had passed the meridian of life and usefulness ; though few of them could be said to be superannuated. Those who have recently been cut down were all either in the prime of life, or amongst our most promising young men.

The attention of the church has been turned to the subject. I have read with some care all that I have met

with, which was intended to turn the dispensation to the profit of the living. In all that has been said to the effect that those who remain should be stirred up to give greater diligence to make their own calling and election sure, but also to use more earnest endeavors to "make full proof of their ministry," I fully concur. Not to attempt doing again what others have done well, it appears to me that there is still room for a few more thoughts. I shall proceed in the way of suggestion :

1. Have we not been too anxious to increase the number of laborers in the vineyard, without feeling, as we ought, that the excellency of the power is of God, who can save by few as well as by many ?

2. Have we not been in danger of glorying in the increase of our numbers and strength as a church ?

3. Have not the more liberal supply of preaching, and the choice of preachers which, by reason of our increased numbers, have been afforded to our congregations and vacancies, in too many instances led our people to make light of the ministry of reconciliation ? I may be mistaken ; but it appears to me that I have not for some years witnessed that warmth of affection, towards young preachers especially, which our people certainly did once manifest. And individuals in a congregation, unless they just get their own choice, which all cannot get, if a majority decides, often seem to think that they have nothing to do but to shew piety, by neglecting, or perhaps opposing and teasing the minister who is set over them in the Lord. Having an apprehension that the ministry of reconciliation, which is an "ascension gift" of the Saviour, has come to be too little prized, it was with some satisfaction I read the resolutions adopted by some of our bereaved congregations, testifying their sense of the loss which they had sustained in the death of their pastors, and their sympathy

with others who had suffered similar bereavements. It is some evidence that our people "hear the rod."

4. Has there not been too much backwardness among our unsettled ministers to occupy the missionary ground in the West, on account of the "sickliness" of the climate? In order to give the right answer to this question, a few facts must be brought distinctly before the mind. 1. No church on the earth has a more extensive and interesting home missionary field than the Synod of the West. 2. Our missionary system was planned chiefly with a view to the more unsettled regions of the West, which are rapidly filling up with inhabitants, and unless speedily and efficiently attended to, must become moral wastes. 3. It has always been impossible to find men willing to go to the work in half the numbers which were necessary to meet pressing calls. 4. Appointments which have been made, have in a great many cases not been fulfilled. 5. Nearly all the recent deaths have taken place in old and well-improved parts of our ecclesiastical territory, and most of them, indeed, in those very spots which would have been selected as the most healthful, while not one has yet taken place in the West. How long we may be able to say this none can tell. But the present state of the fact seems plainly intended to admonish us that life is uncertain in all localities.

But I must not close without doing full justice. The ministry are not wholly to blame for this backwardness to occupy extreme western locations. If our people expect ministers to leave home, and country, and kindred, to minister the word of life to them, they must calculate on taking some pains to render them comfortable when they do come. A young man *cannot*, for a year, or even for six months, furnish a people regularly with sermons, without having some place as a stated residence, where he can have

a room to occupy as a study. You might just as well expect a mechanic to furnish you with such articles as you need without having a shop to carry on his business. Congregations have no right to complain if ministers are backward to come to them, unless they are careful to look out for them some place where they can have such accommodations as are indispensably necessary.

How to Discourage a Minister.

LIKE everything else, there is an art in this. If you would set about it skilfully, you will take care not to be over-punctual in your attendance on his ministry. Your example will influence others to do likewise; will furnish arguments to those who would oppose the progress of religion; and, from not having heard him one Sabbath, you may not be able to understand something which he says the succeeding Sabbath, or, indeed, you may misunderstand and misreport it. Then let small reasons—the appearance of a cloud in the morning, or anything which may influence an undecided mind, induce you frequently to stay at home. Keep yourself well-informed in relation to all the political matters of the day, and in relation to all the sayings and doings of self-styled reformers, and the wonderful good things which they are doing; but be at no expense or pains to obtain religious intelligence. It will then be easy for you to believe that the church is doing no good; you will be easily beguiled by the “fair speeches” of her enemies to believe that every mushroom, boastful association which springs up, is doing more good than the church; and you can lecture people to this effect on any possible occasion. It will discourage the minister to see how much the cause of the Redeemer is hindered by those whose aid he had a right to expect. Take an active part in all the political squabbles of the day—see that you keep

in the opinion that no good is or can be done unless people are perpetually "contesting," and "discussing" and "disputing" about matters and things in general. This will keep your temper always in a fierce and irritable state. You will then have daily occasion to fall out with your brethren who are on the opposite side of some exciting question. You will have little or no taste or relish for the "sincere milk of the word," and it will grieve your minister to see how little interest you seem to feel in the matter, when he is doing his utmost to show you and others the way of salvation. Let him, and let everybody see how much you grudge every little pittance which you are required to give to keep your meeting-house in a comfortable state, or for any other religious use. Be very suspicious, and let nothing satisfy you that your minister and most of your brethren are sound on some point, which, for the time being, you have persuaded yourself is alone of importance. If he cautions his people against some practice which he regards as inconsistent with a Christian profession, or if he earnestly urges the performance of some duty, be sure you show your independence by going straightway and doing the very thing he would not have you do. By all means believe, and frequently say in the presence of others, that you can get no good of his preaching. They will believe that all the fault is his, and no share of it yours. Above all things, be sure you never pray for a blessing on him, or on his ministry. Carefully attend to these directions, and you can hardly fail.

How to get rid of a Pastor.

THERE is an art and mystery in this also, which it requires some genius to understand and practise to the best advantage. But having had some opportunity of observing how it is done for more than thirty years, and

having the aid of Dr. Humphrey, I think I can expound the mystery without pretending to any uncommon ingenuity. First, then, you will take special care to have it known and read of all men, that you feel a deep solicitude for the prosperity of the congregation, and are much grieved in your soul that religion does not flourish among you. No person will now suspect the purity of your motives. Having thus laid a good foundation, you will then address yourself to such persons as are supposed not to have a very good will towards him. It will not be difficult to guess who these are. If you select those who are known to neglect some duty which he earnestly inculcates, or indulge in some practice which he earnestly reproves, or who are not on good terms with some of their brethren of whom the minister is supposed to have a favorable opinion, you will not be far wrong. Talk to them; point out to them what you think defective in his ministry, or wrong in the management of discipline. If you can get a few to join you—one or two indeed will do to begin with—you may then advance a step farther and cautiously *sound* others. If they listen to you it is a good sign, and you may proceed to hint that a change would be advantageous to the congregation. This, however, had better be done in the way of inquiry, while you give them to understand that you have for some time wished to *consult* them on the subject. If the minister is still comparatively a young man, you can hint to them that though he did very well when the congregation was weak, and glad to get any kind of a preacher, yet now, since the congregation has become something considerable, you need a more splendid man. But take care you express some sorrow at the thought of dismissing him, for indeed he is a good kind of a man, and the congregation is under obligations to him for laboring among them while they were only able to give a poor

pittance in the way of support; but then, necessity has no law. The interests of the church require his removal, and with you this is a paramount consideration. If he has become old you will allege that his best days are over, and that he cannot be as useful among young persons, as a younger man. It is possible, however, that you may still have but little success in alienating the minds of the mass of the congregation from him; but don't give up. Almost anything can be done by patience and perseverance when there is a determined will. If other means are necessary, inquire into his family concerns, his expenditures, all his transactions, carefully observe the dress and every movement of his family, and fill the neighborhood with gossip on these subjects. Keep trying. And though you may never have more than a very small minority on your side, you may vex him till he will choose to go, and vex the majority of your brethren till they will consent to let him go for the sake of peace.

It is sometimes, no doubt, the duty of a congregation to dismiss their pastor. There may be real objections. But in all such cases the mass of the people will soon come to see what is their duty and be ready to perform it, without a great deal of management on the part of a discerning individual or two. The above directions do not apply to such cases.

Despised and Rejected.

"HE is despised and rejected of men" (Isaiah liii. 3). Of whom does the prophet speak? Of Christ; for, from this passage of Scripture, Philip preached Christ to the Treasurer of the Queen of Ethiopia. The entire chapter is a continued prediction of events which took place in the life and at the death of our Saviour. The prophet describes them as present events, the Divine Spirit causing them, as it were, to pass before his eyes in vision.

"He is despised and rejected of men." An Evangelist gives us the general fulfilment of the prediction in the words: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." But we have also the particulars. When He came into His own country where He had been brought up, men said, "Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? And his sisters, are they not all with us?" Who is he that he should set himself up for a teacher? "And they were offended in him." When He healed the sick, restored health and activity to the palsied, and delivered those who were oppressed of the devil, men accused Him of breaking the Sabbath, and said, "This fellow"—this contemptible creature—"doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub." When He gave sight to one born blind, men, and men too who pretended great zeal for the glory of God, said, "we know that this man is a sinner. We know that God spake to Moses; but as for this fellow,"—this contemptible pretender—"we know not whence he is."

But, reader, if you refuse to obey His word, if you neglect and despise the ordinances of His grace, if you do not love and esteem Him, if your delights are with His enemies and despisers, and not with His friends; you are fulfilling the prediction of the prophet. Inquire whether this be not so.

A Man of Sorrows.

"A MAN of sorrows and acquainted with grief" (Isaiah liii. 5). J  sus was the man who could say, "Misery stole me at my birth." He was born in an out-house, attached to one of the inns of Judea. Such was the poverty of His mother and His reputed father, that they could not provide those things which were necessary for the comfort of an infant child. No sooner was the report spread abroad, that a child was born in Bethlehem who, according to

some ancient predictions, was to sit upon the throne of His father David, than Herod, the reigning monarch of Judea, sought His life; and His parents had to flee to Egypt, to save Him from the grasp of one of the most cruel and blood-thirsty of men. Of the events of His life, from His twelfth till He had entered on His thirtieth year, the Scripture is silent, save that He went down to that town, whose very name was a reproach, and was subject to His parents, sharing with them all the hardships of their poverty. But we need be at no loss to conjecture the "contradiction of sinners," which, all the time, He had to endure "against Himself." If, as we have all heard, the upright character of a little Norwegian boy exposed him to the malice of wicked boys of his own age—if he fell a martyr to that piety which rendered him proof against all the acts which were used to seduce him to sin;—what taunts and jeers must the infinitely more holy child Jesus have had to endure from those of His own age and condition in life, because He would not be a partaker with them in their sins. Always the world hated Him, because, by His holy character and example, He reproved its evil deeds.

"Innumerable evils compassed him about." For the affliction and death of friends, and for the bereavements of their surviving friends and relatives, He suffered the keenest anguish. At the grave of Lazarus, sorrowing for the loss of a dear friend, and sympathizing with the weeping sisters of the deceased, He "groaned in spirit"—He "wept."

Sin around Him was a constant source of grief and sorrow to His holy soul. If the Psalmist could say, "I saw the transgressors and was grieved, because they kept not thy word"—"Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they kept not thy law;" much more Jesus, who

had an infinitely clearer perception of the evil of sin, of its God-dishonoring nature, and of the dreadful doom which impenitent sinners are preparing for themselves. When He beheld Jerusalem—guilty and impenitent Jerusalem—whose inhabitants, He saw, were fast filling up the measure of their iniquities, because the wrath was come upon them to the uttermost—he wept over it, and said, “If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace; but now they are hidden from thine eyes.” The broken language shows how much His utterance was choked with sighs and sobs.

According to the flesh, He was a man, as one of us. He took our nature with all its essential affections, and sympathies, and infirmities. He had all our attachments to acquaintances, friends, kindred and country. He loved His people, and His capital city, who, in the days of her greatest calamity, none of His pious children could “forget,” and the very mention of whose name called up so many tender, so many holy, so many glorious recollections. “I am the man that hath seen affliction, by the rod of God. Oh, that mine eyes were a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night, for the slain of the daughter of my people.” Such were the lamentations of Jeremiah, when he saw Jerusalem laid waste by the Chaldeans, and her children carried into captivity; what, then, must have been the afflictions of our Saviour, in view of those far more fearful calamities which He saw coming on Jerusalem, and on the children of his people?

But Jesus is also Jehovah. “Great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh.” As God, “to whom vengeance belongeth,” it was He who executed these fearful, but righteous, judgments upon Jerusalem, and upon her people. When passing the sentence of death upon a poor miserable transgressor of the law, a human judge has

been known to shed tears of sorrow. But suppose the culprit to be one in whom he had felt a deep interest! Think of a father chastising his son, with tears streaming from his eyes; and then imagine what were the sorrows of the holy and compassionate soul of Jesus, when he lifted up his rod over Jerusalem.

He suffered immediately in his soul, and from the hands of God. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Therefore, all the punishment which our "iniquity" deserved, He had to bear; God, who is great, and greatly to be feared, laid upon Him the weight of His wrath, and chastened Him in His hot displeasure. He hid His face from Him when He cried. Therefore He complains in the desolation of His grief: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? O my God, I cry to thee in the day-time, and in the night-season I am not silent. Be not far from me; for trouble is near, and there is none to help."

He suffered from Satan, the grand adversary of God and man. Hell was permitted to open her mouth and send forth her fiends, as so many roaring lions, seeking to destroy Him. "Many bulls compassed him about—strong bulls of Bashan beset him round. They gaped upon him with their mouths, as a ravening and roaring lion."

He suffered from wicked men: 1. *In His person.* He was nailed to the cross. His bones were parted, all out of joint. His heart within Him, was melted like wax. 2. *He suffered in His reputation.* During His ministry, though He was seeking the utmost good of many, they called him a glutton, a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners; they said He had a devil, and was in league with Beelzebub, the chief of the devils. They apprehended

Him as a malefactor, and charged Him with such grievous crimes as blasphemy against God, and treason against Cæsar. They reproached Him in His mediatorial character as the Son of God. "If he be the Son of God, let him come down from the cross." They reproached Him in all His saving offices. As a *prophet*, when having blindfolded Him, they buffeted Him, and said, "Prophecy, who is it that smote thee?" In His *priestly* office, they said, "He saved others, now let him save himself." In His *kingly* office; having plaited a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and then bowing the knee, as if to mock-majesty, they said, "Hail, king of the Jews."

A Jeffries could miscall and insult a prisoner when arraigned before him for trial; but when the trial was over, and the sentence of the law in a course of execution, perhaps the annals of the world afford no other instance in which such "cruel mockings" were heaped upon the sufferer by all ranks and orders of men. In such movements, sympathy with the victim of the law subdues all the malign feelings, except in the bosom of friends.

Reader, why did Christ endure all these amazing sorrows and griefs? It was for our sins, for our sakes. One suffered and died for our sins, that all might not have to suffer eternally, and die the death eternal. If God spared not His own Son, but exacted from Him as our surety a full compensation to law and justice for our sins, will He spare you, if you reject Christ as your surety, and refuse to confess your sins, and to seek that forgiveness of sins which can flow to us only through the channel of His blood?

A False Judgment.

"YET we did esteem him, stricken, smitten of God and afflicted" (Isaiah liii. 4). Though men love to say "in their hearts, No God" as "the fool hath said," yet when

any uncommon calamity falls upon an individual, there seems to be an innate principle in the human mind, which at once urges it on to the conclusion that he must have been guilty of some great wickedness, which has called down the divine vengeance on his head. This seems to be the best that human reason, with its imperfect knowledge of the divine government, can do in applying the great truth, that there is a God who taketh vengeance. Assuming this as a correct rule of judgment, Job's friends could not account for his unparalleled sufferings but by supposing that this goodness was only seeming, and that he hypocritically concealed no ordinary depravity of heart and conduct under a cloak of piety. Hence, they were indeed "miserable comforters." Such, also, appears to have been a prevailing belief among the Jews in our Saviour's day; and to set them right on the subject, he inquired whether they supposed that those Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices were sinners above all other men? He did not dispute that they were sinners, or that it was because of sin that they suffered such things, but he denied that they were sinners in any uncommon degree. The Barbarians, when they saw the viper fasten itself on Paul's hand, so soon after he had escaped a watery grave through all the horrors of a shipwreck, said among themselves, "No doubt this man is a murderer, whom vengeance suffereth not to live."

The prophet predicts that such would be the prevailing opinion which the Jews would form when they witnessed Christ's sorrows and sufferings; and the New Testament historians inform us, that having been charged by wicked and designing men with "blasphemy" and with being in league with Satan, the populace thought the charge must be true, when they saw him forsaken of God and accursed of men.

Now, that all the pains, and griefs, and sorrows, which enter into the lot of man here below, flow in a course of moral sequence from sin, is a great truth, established by the general tenor of Bible teaching, and countenanced by every right notion of the moral government of God. Nevertheless it is also true, that men may, in the providence of God, be called to endure great and even remarkable afflictions, while, so far from it being true that they are remarkable sinners, they may indeed be "beloved of God and called saints."

1. God sometimes lays heavy chastisements on His own children, to satisfy other men of the sincerity of their hearts and the genuineness of their piety. Such seems to have been His design in sending upon Job so many sore calamities in such rapid succession. Satan, by the mouths of his own children, had alleged that Job, through the partiality of heaven, was a great gainer by his religion, and that if God would but touch him in his worldly estate, he would soon—for indeed his nature was as malignant as his own—show the hollowness of his religious profession. Such is still the language of the wicked, who envy and hate the godly. In order that they may not have this plea to excuse their unbelief and disobedience, God, as in the case of Job, sometimes gives them an opportunity of witnessing the patience, meekness, and submissiveness of His own children, while severely smarting under His rod.

2. Another end for which God's people are often severely tried, is their own spiritual improvement. Verily He chastises us "for our profit, that we might be made partakers of His holiness." Instead of it being the true inference that they have grievously offended God, the inference should be that He chastises them because He loves them. Often does He "choose His people in the furnace of affliction;" that is, while they are enduring

"crosses from His sovereign hand," He shows to them, and confirms to them, His electing love in Christ. "By this, therefore, shall the iniquity of Jacob be judged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sin." "Wherefore lift up the hands that hang down and strengthen the feeble knees, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way." Verily the Roman Catholics are right; there is a purgatory for God's children, but it is on this side the grave. By locating it beyond the grave, and turning it into a catch-penny affair for that corrupt body of men, whom, by an egregious abuse of language, they call "Holy Church," they have sadly erred.

3. Sometimes the obedient children of God are sorely afflicted as a warning to others. This use the apostle Peter teaches us to make of their sufferings. "The time is come when judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

Let God's children be comforted; though still let him who writes and him who reads, ponder these questions well.

Union College; Dr. Nott; Lotteries.

DR. NOTT is a Presbyterian clergyman who has been for about fifty years President of Union College. For some time past, notices have frequently appeared in the papers that charges were made against him for having speculated on the funds of the college. Charges to this effect had been once and again made against him in the New York Legislature. Committees of examination were appointed, but because, as his friends allege, the persons appointed on the committees were hostile to him, the matter was never cleared up to the satisfaction of the public. A donation of \$600,000 having been made by

President Nott to the college, the controversy seems to have waxed more warm, his enemies affirming that it was a debt due by him to the institution. At length, a committee friendly to the president having been appointed, a report was made which is said to contain a triumphant vindication of his character, *an individual having labored through a whole year in examining carelessly kept accounts, records, etc.*

The facts elicited are briefly these:—In the year 1814, the legislature of New York, on the application of President Nott, authorized lotteries to raise the following sums: namely, for Union College, \$200,000; Hamilton College, \$40,000; Asbury African Church, \$4000; College of Physicians, \$30,000; Historical Society, \$12,000. The four last named institutions having refused to accept, President Nott proposed to the Trustees of Union College, “to purchase the interest of all the other institutions,” to which they assented and appointed him *sole manager*. This entitled him to a fee of 2½ per cent. He then entered into a contract with Yates and McIntire, for the sale of tickets to the amount of four millions. Subsequently he sold out the entire interest of Union College to this firm, for \$276,000, which was ascertained to be the *present value* of the nett profits accruing to the institution. A dispute having subsequently arisen (as was to be expected) between Yates and McIntire and President Nott, “founded on other lottery operations in which the former had been largely aided by the latter,” suits were commenced on both sides. These were compromised; and President Nott’s individual share of the profits amounted to \$71,000.

These are strange developments. Granting that President Nott’s conduct was honorable according to the world’s way of judging, which we do not doubt and have

no wish to dispute, still, that a man whose life had been devoted to literary pursuits, should be master of all the arts of turning a penny to advantage—that a Presbyterian clergyman, through the greater part of his active life, should have been so extensively engaged in “lottery operations,” is intelligence which we were not prepared to expect.

Doubtless, President Nott views the matter otherwise—the trustees of Union College, and the president’s brethren in the ministry may view it otherwise, and we are willing that they should have all the benefit of the maxim, “as a man thinketh so is he,” as far as it will go; but to us it has always appeared that, let the ostensible motives be as pious and as patriotic as they may, a lottery is nothing but legalized gambling, and gambling of the very worst kind. Hundreds of silly persons are induced to purchase tickets, thereby depriving themselves of the use of, it may be but a small sum, yet a sum which may be very necessary for the present support and education of their families, each one hoping that he will be the fortunate man, who will draw a prize entitling him to receive a large sum of money for which he has given no valuable consideration. And in order that it may be decided, who of all concerned shall be this happy man, a solemn, or rather a profane appeal is made to Almighty God. And the trustees of Union College appoint their president sole manager of this heathenish appeal! The whole story is so little creditable to the great State of New York, the trustees of Union College and their president, that the question whether the \$600,000 was a debt or a donation, dwindles into utter insignificance.

We have no confidence in the *general* honesty with which lottery operations are conducted. Who has, or

ever had? In the ancient Greek language, the word which expresses the idea of hazarding money on the lot (*kubeuo*) soon came to signify to cheat, to practise trickery. It is much to be lamented that respectable men should have given such a practice so much countenance.

CHAPTER VI.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO A HISTORY OF THE ASSOCIATE REFORMED CHURCH.

Section 1.

The Church of Scotland at the Revolution of 1688—Covenanters—Patronage in the Church of Scotland—Ebenezer Erskine and a few other Ministers secede from the Church and form the Associate Presbytery—The old Seceders—The Reformed Presbytery and the Associated Presbytery of America—Union between Seceders and Covenanters in America in 1782—This united body named the Associate Reformed Church—The Associate, Reformed, and the Associate Reformed Churches—"The Constitution of the Associate Reformed Church"—Objections to it by the Reformed Presbytery of Scotland.

MOST of the churches in the United States have exemplars in Europe; and the reason of their separate existence here is to be sought for in the history of religious movements in that quarter of the globe.

At the revolution of 1688, under William and Mary, when the liberties of the British Empire were settled on their present basis, some of the Scottish Presbyterians were dissatisfied with the manner in which the question of religion was settled, chiefly because the obligation of the covenants, National and Solemn League, was not acknowledged, and the church reformed as was contemplated in those bonds. Hence, they refused to unite with the National Church. When they assumed an ecclesiastical organization, they took to themselves the name of the *Reformed Presbytery*. But they were sometimes called

Cameronians, though more generally *Covenanters*. As they believed the British Constitution to be founded in perjury, they refused to acknowledge the government as the ordinance of God.

In the kingdom of Scotland, during the days of the papacy, to encourage men of wealth to build and decorate churches, a right was conferred on them and their legal heirs forever, to nominate the persons who should officiate as ministers in the churches of their erection. These were called Patrons. Weak and wicked; who are apt to be also tyrannical, rulers, have always regarded religion and the influence of the clergy with a jealous eye. Hence, at the Reformation, the influence of the crown was exerted in favor of the right of patronage. It was well understood that the nobleman who should have the power of presenting a minister to a vacant parish, would be more likely loyal to his earthly master, than to Christ, the Head of the Church. A subservient clergy would therefore be secured. Patronage was grievous to the reformers; but the crown prevailed. When the English monarchy was overturned in the person of Charles I., patronage was abolished, but on the restoration, under Charles II., it returned with the other laws of the monarchy. At the revolution of 1688, patronage was abolished by law; but on condition that each parish would pay the patron a stipulated sum for relinquishing his right. Few parishes seem to have purchased their freedom; and in the reign of Queen Anne an Act was passed by Parliament, restoring to patrons their ancient rights. Many of the people and the more faithful portion of the ministers complained, but as a body, the Church of Scotland acquiesced. For this reason, and on account of many hurtful errors both in doctrine and practice which were introduced by time-serving Ministers, and slightly, if at all, rebuked by the church, the celebrated

Mr. Ebenezer Erskine, and a few other faithful ministers, early in the last century, *seceded* from the Established Church, and *associated* themselves as a Presbytery for the administration of discipline. Their motto was—*the people should be free to choose their own ministers*. They did not, however, finally withdraw from the church of their fathers, till they were forbidden to exonerate their consciences by testifying against the evils of which they complained. They took the name of the *Associate Presbytery*, but were usually called *Seceders*.

Such ministers and Christians as composed the great body of the Church of Scotland at that time, could not comprehend the principles on which they acted, and the very name *Seceder* became a term of reproach. They were regarded as weak bigots, and “conscientious fools.” And yet the *secession* proceeded on grounds quite as sufficient as that of the present Free Church of Scotland, which has been the subject of general laudation, and been styled an *Exodus*. The old *Seceders* were in advance of their age. In their day, the number of spiritual Christians, who alone could be expected to sympathize with them, was but small; and the exasperated party feelings which had their origin in the civil wars of Great Britain had not yet sensibly subsided. They were treated as pioneers, in a cause for which the public mind is not yet prepared, always are. There are, however, some indications that late justice will be done them. Phillips, in his life of Whitefield, calls their secession, THE SECOND REFORMATION.

The old *Seceders* adhered to the covenants as firmly as the Covenanters; but they did not carry their principles so far as to reject the present British constitution. As occasions might require, they deemed it sufficient to say to rulers, “Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.” Such is pre-

cisely the position of their *followers* of the Free Church of Scotland.

Individuals of both the communions whose origin has been given, immigrated to America, and were supplied with ministers from the "old country." A Reformed Presbytery, and two Associate Presbyteries, the Presbytery of New York and the Presbytery of Pennsylvania, were in existence at the time of the Revolutionary war. The leading members of the Associate Presbyteries were Dr. John Mason, father of the late Dr. J. M. Mason, and Mr. Robert Annan. The members of the Reformed Presbytery were Messrs. Cuthbertson, Lind, and Dobbin.

When the struggle between the Colonies and the Mother Country commenced, all the members of these Presbyteries, it is believed, entered warmly into the American cause, as was to be expected from men who had suffered much for the rights of the people. Dr. Mason espoused the cause of American independence with such zeal, that when New York was captured by the British, he had to flee to the American camp, where he officiated as one of General Washington's chaplains. And, if I am not mistaken, his church was used as a stable by the British troops while New York was in their possession.

When the Colonies had secured their independence, both Seceders and Covenanters rejoiced with unfeigned joy; and, with at least few exceptions, all for a time agreed in recognizing the American government as the ordinance of God. There being, therefore, now no tangible reason why they should longer remain separate, they began to consult about forming a union. After much prayer and deliberation, the union was consummated in the year 1782, on the following basis:—

1. That Christ died for the elect only.
2. That there is an appropriation in the nature of Faith.

3. That the Gospel is indiscriminately addressed to sinners of mankind.

4. That the righteousness of Christ is the alone proper condition of the covenant of grace.

5. That civil power originates from God the Creator, and not from Christ the Mediator.

6. That the administration of the Kingdom of Providence is committed to Jesus Christ the Mediator; and magistracy is the ordinance appointed by the Moral Governor of the Universe, to be the pillar or prop of civil order among men; that it, as well as other things, is made subservient by the Mediator to the welfare of His spiritual kingdom, the Church; and besides, the Church has the sanctified use of that, and every common benefit, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

7. That the law of nature and the moral law recorded in the Scriptures are substantially the same, although the latter expresses the will of God more evidently and clearly than the former; and, therefore, magistrates among Christians ought to be regulated by the general directions of the word, as to the execution of their office in faithfulness and righteousness.

8. That the qualifications of justice, veracity, etc., required in the law of nature for the being of a magistrate, are also more explicitly and clearly revealed in the Scriptures. But a religious test, any farther than an oath of fidelity, can never be essential to the being of a magistrate, except when the people make it a condition of government; then it *may* be among that people by their own voluntary deed.

9. That both parties, when united, shall adhere to the Westminster Confession of Faith; Catechisms Larger and Shorter, Directory for Worship; and Propositions concerning Church Government.

10. That they shall claim the full exercise of church government, without dependence on foreign judicatories.

It is believed that these articles afford good evidence that our fathers—we love so to call them—felt a deep concern for the great and precious truths of the Gospel. They would not unite without being sure that they fully understood one another, and had substantially the same views of all those things “by which men live, and in which is the life of the soul.” Ardently as they desired union, they would not purchase it at the expense of truth. But matters of doubtful disputation, such as the question whether *national* covenanting, and conjoint, formal, explicit *ecclesiastical* covenanting, is an ordinance of God under the New Testament dispensation, they left undecided (which is not a practical question till an occasion arises which may seem to require it), to be afterward disposed of as God might make their way plain before them, by His word and the leadings of His providence. Moreover, these articles embrace nothing local, nothing of a party color, which would serve only to render a body of Christians calling themselves a church, a clan, a party, a faction—nothing but what is applicable all over the world. The views which they present of the office and duty of the civil magistrate, and of the powers of civil government are such as will meet the approbation of all sound, intelligent Christians, and of all enlightened American statesmen.

They did not undertake to show how all the principles contained in these articles were to be applied, or to lay down definite rules, to direct in the *application* of them to different cases. Had they done so, questions might have sprung up by the wayside, about which the members could not all see exactly alike; and if, after all, they had succeeded in forming a union, a foundation would have been laid for an abundant harvest of wrangling and litigation.

afterward. In the application of some of the principles contained in these articles, men, and good men too, will probably differ till the end of the world, according to the position which they occupy, the different degrees in which they are capable of applying the same general principle to a number of different cases, and the different circumstances under which they are placed.

They avoided the different extremes into which controversialists of the original parties had sometimes run, or into which the parties themselves might have been led by "lifting up a testimony" in times of high excitement; and united on grounds which had always been common to both Seceders and Covenanters as *Christians*—and what more should they have done? There is no evidence that there was any want of unanimity among them when the union was formed. Whatever "times" may have since passed over the Associate Reformed Church, those who have been longest in her councils, and are best acquainted with her history, best know that she has had no difficulties growing out of the supposed discordant materials of which she was originally composed. We have always had men among us who, in their speculations, leaned to the old Seceder view, and others who leaned to the old Covenanter view, of certain vexed questions; but never, no, not in one single instance which is on record, or has come to the knowledge of the writer, has such differences led to any unpleasant consequences. They have always conversed about them and left them as things about which the disciples may "agree to differ," sufficient that they were "of one mind in the Lord." Hence, the Associate Reformed Church has not, and never has had any terms of communion which would exclude either Seceders or Covenanters, when she spreads the Lord's table before His friends. Even these articles were never held forth as terms of communion.

People on offering themselves to the Associate Reformed Church, were never confronted with them and told—you must profess your belief in these, or we cannot receive you.

But as the doctrine contained in the second article is sometimes objected to—from misapprehension it is believed—it may be proper to subjoin a few questions and answers from Fisher's Catechism, which is pretty generally regarded by sound Presbyterians of all denominations, as a standard work.

Ques. Is a belief and persuasion of the mercy of God in Christ, and of Christ's willingness and ability to save all that come unto Him, all that is necessary to constitute justifying faith?

Ans. No; because there being no appropriation or particular application in this persuasion, and can be no more than such a faith as devils and reprobates may have.

Ques. What is the appropriating persuasion in the nature of faith, which is necessary to answer the call and offer of the Gospel?

Ans. It is not a persuasion that Christ is mine in possession, or that I am already in a state of grace; but a persuasion that Christ is mine in the gift of God and offer of the Gospel, Zech. xiii. 9: "I will say, 'It is my people,' and they shall say, 'The Lord is my God,'" and therefore I appropriate to myself the *common salvation*, Acts xv. 11, or what did lie before me in common, in the Gospel offer, I take home to my own soul in particular, etc.

Ques. Since an appropriating persuasion is necessary to the nature of faith, has every one that has true faith always an assurance of his being in a gracious state?

Ans. No; for though a believer be persuaded that Christ is his, in the promise and offer of the Gospel; yet through the prevalency of remaining corruption, he may

frequently doubt of his being in a state of grace; or, of his present title to eternal life. Isa. xlix. 14.

The united body took to itself the name of the Associate Reformed Church—a name compounded of the names of the two original bodies. But in some places it is known by the name of the Union Church.

From the union in which the Associate Reformed Church had her origin, two ministers of the Associate Presbytery dissented—Messrs. Marshal and Clarkson. As they were learned and pious men, their declining the union decided the course of many of the Associate people. Other ministers from Europe came, or were sent to their aid. Hence, the Associate Church continued to exist as a distinct branch of the Church of Christ, and has, up to the present day, enjoyed a good measure of the Divine favor.

Some of the people which had been in connection with the Reformed Presbytery were also dissatisfied, and finally came to the determination to remain separate. Ministers were sent to them from Scotland and Ireland, and after some years, the Reformed Presbytery was reorganized, and has till this time occupied a respectable rank among the tribes of Israel. This brief history shows how and why it is, that three distinct ecclesiastical organizations, bearing the names of the Associate, the Reformed, and the Associate Reformed, exist in the United States. The attempt to heal one of the breaches in Zion, but made another breach; instead of making one division less in the visible church, another was created; so difficult is it, on account of the infirmities even of good men, to gather together in one, the children of God which are scattered through the different visible organizations on earth.

The united body soon constituted a Synod; and the next year after the union was consummated, the Synod published a small pamphlet, entitled "The Constitution of the

Associate Reformed Church," which, in its day, was familiarly called, *The Little Constitution*. In the first article, the Synod declares her resolution to continue her adherence "to the system of truth laid down in the Holy Scriptures, and exhibited in the Confession of Faith, and Catechisms Larger and Shorter, etc.," stating, however, that this declaration does not extend to such sections of the Confession of Faith as define the powers of civil government in relation to religion, etc., viz., chap. xx. sec. 4; chap. xxiii. sec. 3; chap. xxxi. sec. 2, which were reserved for "candid discussion on some future occasion."

At this distance of time, two or three things must be apparent to every one who carefully peruses this document.

1. That the Synod felt she was closely watched. And enough has come down to our day to satisfy us that she had to deal with all those prejudices and suspicions which are apt to attach to those who make any, the least change, in modes and forms, however wise the change may be, and however imperiously it may be demanded by the altered circumstances in which they are placed. Her perplexities were much increased by the efforts of persons unfriendly to her. Perhaps it would have been better had she paid less attention to public clamor; for there is reason to believe that her extreme caution sometimes induced her to use a language which furnished to the unfriendly, new points of attack; while others, perhaps, interpreted it as a pledge on her part, that she would continue to contend for all those opinions and customs which they had received by tradition from their fathers. She has *lived down* the suspicions of former days; and bids fair to live down some other suspicions which are now industriously propagated concerning her in some corners. She has at least made as few changes backward and forward as either of the bodies which dissented from her.

2. That on one or two points the opinions of the fathers of the Associate Reformed Church were still only in the forming stage. It was a long time before the Disciples of Christ, notwithstanding all the advantages which they had enjoyed from His teaching, and from the Pentecostal effusion of the Divine Spirit, were prepared to cast off the fetters of Judaism, and proclaim the Gospel as a message of mercy to sinners of mankind as such stripped of all its Jewish encumbrances. So it was some time before our fathers saw their way clear, to disembarass the Christian profession of some peculiarities which attached themselves to it in consequence of the union of Church and State in the "old country."

3. That "The Little Constitution" was a hasty production. Indeed, there is reason to believe that it was only intended as a temporary thing, till the reserved sections of the Confession of Faith should be considered.

The fathers of the Associate Reformed Church did not regard the Confession of Faith as possessing any inherent authority such as belongs only to the Scriptures. Neither its venerable antiquity, nor its being the production of good and great men, could give it any such authority. They did not regard it as so *sacred*, that it would be a sin to modify any of its statements, which, on a careful examination, they might judge not to be in accordance with the only unerring rule. Nor would they continue any statement of doctrine in their standards which they did not fully believe, out of a blind veneration for the Westminster Assembly of Divines.

It has been said that at the era of the Revolution, Covenanters, as far as appears, agreed with Seceders, and with Presbyterians generally, in acknowledging the American Government as the ordinance of God. And had no subsequent influences moved them from this position, and

made them assume the character of *protestors* against the civil institutions of the country, there is reason to believe that, with few exceptions, they would ultimately have made up their minds to embrace the union.

But, *The Little Constitution* found its way to Scotland. The Reformed Presbytery "at home in the mother country," had it read in their presence, paragraph by paragraph, by their Clerk; when, after the members had severally spoken their minds, they appointed a committee to draw up a paper expressive of their views, copies of which were to be sent to their "*quondam* brethren," and to those private Christians from whom they had received letters, "complaining of the defection of their ministers from the testimony formerly espoused by them, upon a coalescence taking place between them and some Seceding Ministers, and requesting advice from them as to their duty in such a trying conjuncture," etc. This "paper," which was drawn up and forwarded, is entitled, "The Constitution of the Associate Reformed Synod in America, Considered, Disowned, and Testified against, as inconsistent with the Reformation Constitution of *Britain and Ireland*." The reader of the present day will ask, what does all this mean? To the best of my ability I will explain it. The Solemn League and Covenant bound those who *swore* it, to endeavor, by the grace of God, the preservation of the Reformed religion in the Church of Scotland, in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, according to the word of God, and the example of the best Reformed Churches, and to endeavor to bring the churches of God in the three kingdoms to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in religion," etc. It is not said, in so many words, that the Scotch system was to be the model, but as the covenant spoke only of the preservation of religion in Scotland, it seems to have been intimated that the nearest conjunction and uniformity.

was to be effected by bringing the churches of England and Ireland up to the Scotch standard. And such, from the best sources of information, seems to have been the idea entertained, at least by the Scotch. This was "resigning the honors of the day" to Scotland; and some British statesmen appear to have yielded rather unwillingly, but yield they must, or do without the assistance of the Scotch army in their struggle with the king. The Covenant was sworn to by both houses of Parliament, and by all ranks in England and Scotland, or by many of all ranks, and thus it became a national deed. This covenant then, and the reforming acts of Church and State under it, constitute the "Reformation Constitution of *Britain and Ireland*." As this Constitution was overturned by the commonwealth, and buried at the restoration of the monarchy, and neither revived nor acknowledged at the revolution in 1688, the Scottish Reformed Presbytery, as their ancestors had done, rejected the "revolution settlement," and adhered, as their descendants still do, to the former "Reformation Constitution." Hence they cannot acknowledge the present Rulers of Britain as rightly constituted, or duly qualified magistrates—on all which we express no opinion, as we know not how things might appear to us, were we placed in their circumstances. Some sweeping inferences might however be drawn from their position—among them this—that as George the III. was a usurper, an illegitimate monarch, his recognition of the independence of the United States is of no moral or legal validity, and should the Reformation Constitution of Britain and Ireland ever gain the ascendancy, we would be morally bound to return to our former state of colonial dependence.

The Reformed Presbytery of Scotland found many faults with the Constitution of the Associate Reformed

Church in America. This was altogether in course; for it had not yet entered the dreams of people on the other side of the water that things could be done anything like as well in this "new country," as in the "mother country." As the churches here were still scarcely out of their swaddling clothes, it was but right that they should send to Scotland for ministers, for opinions, for wisdom, for advice, and it was most unpardonable arrogance in them to imagine they were "able to go alone." The Constitution was too "latitudinarian"—their *quondam* brethren had "resigned the honors of the day" to the "Seceding body"—had shown too great a predilection for the "Seceding testimony," a pregnant proof of which was, that in the name the new Synod had assumed, *Associate* was placed before *Reformed*, whereas, if all had been exactly right, the name should have been "Reformed Associate Synod;" and above all, as it is first mentioned, Messrs. Cuthbertson, Lind and Dobbin had had the temerity to act according to their own convictions of duty instead of previously consulting "the Mother Church at home."

The effect of such a paper is easily imagined, if we only reflect on the care with which suspicions are propagated, and on the influence which a paper coming from the mother country must have on the minds of the people of this new country. A party was organized which took a firm and decided stand against the union, and were subsequently induced to dissent from the civil institutions of the United States by some ministers who came over from the "mother country," who, on a hasty view formed opinions unfavorable to the American government, which some of them have lived long enough materially to modify or change. Perhaps nothing had a more powerful influence in giving this shape and character to the views of Covenanters, than a pamphlet which was published near

the beginning of the present century, entitled "The two Sons of Oil."

By these and similar unhappily influences, a number of excellent Christians were induced to remain in a state of separation from the Associate Reformed Church; and there is still little to encourage the hope that they and we will be one, so as to afford visible evidence to the world that we keep the unity of the Spirit as those should do, who have "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." But the ways of Providence are inscrutable. He may mean it for good to them, to their children, and to the whole household of faith.

Section 2.

Rev. John Hemphill's Views of the Union—Parallel Sections of the "Westminster Confession" and "The Constitution of the Associate Reformed Church"—Remarks on the same—Alteration in the Larger Catechism—*Tolerating* versus *Authorizing*—Letter on this subject by the General Synod to the Second Presbytery of the Carolinas and Georgia.

BEFORE taking a final leave of the union which gave rise to the Associate Reformed Church, I shall give an extract or two from a paper written in its defence by Rev. John Hemphill, being an appendix to a discourse on religious fasting. Though not absolutely one of the fathers of the Associate Reformed Church, he may now rank among the fathers. The well-informed reader does not need to be told that in his day he stood high as a man of talent, learning and piety. After inserting the Articles on which the union was founded, he proceeds:

"Now what is there in those Articles on which the union was founded, which should give so much uneasiness, and be the subject of so much contempt? If they be erroneous, let it be shown; if not, why find fault—why so zealous in opposing a union, if the ground taken be tenable?"

What more must be done in order to give satisfaction? Will not a plain declaration of the truth as it is in Jesus, and maintaining it in a manner suited to our circumstances, be sufficient, without introducing all those subjects and disputes about them, which are peculiar to other countries? If not, the Church will enjoy little peace. If this principle be adopted, that every particular Church must not only judge and declare what is truth and duty in general, and what is the duty of her own members in particular, but that she must also judge and declare what is the duty of all others, however numerous and different their circumstances may be—if this principle be adopted as the foundation of union and communion in the Church, I fear there will be little of it enjoyed in her.

“It is granted on all hands that soundness in the faith and a holy life, is a sufficient foundation for Christians to enter into union and communion with each other. But to constitute this character, it is not required that Churches and Christians in one part of the world should know and declare what is proper for Churches and Christians in circumstances peculiar to themselves, in other parts of the world; therefore such a thing should not be demanded in order to their uniting with each other.

“Had this been the case, the union between the Reformed and the Associate Presbyteries would not have been so much opposed. Had all parties been contented with maintaining the cause of Christ against the common enemy, and making a proper use of his testimony against the evils appearing and prevailing in America, without introducing those disputes which divide those Churches in Britain out of which the Associate Reformed Synod was formed; disputes which were occasioned by circumstances peculiar to themselves—circumstances which had no existence among us—I say, had this been the case, much sin

and discord might have been prevented. For it is well known, and much to be regretted, that a flood of bitterness and evil-speaking, evil-surmisings and falsehoods, have been occasioned by the opposition made to the Union and to the Synod since she was formed. Now, it is a question worth asking and worth answering, whether an attempt to unite these Churches, or whether the principles on which this union was founded, merited that opposition which has given occasion to the evils above specified. If so, I can see little propriety in praying for, or attempting to bring about any union in the Church; for I am convinced, if an attempt to unite these two Churches when such a favorable opportunity offered, may be opposed with impunity, and if a union founded on such principles may be opposed with propriety and impunity, at least by sound Protestant Presbyterians, I have no hope of seeing the wounds in the body of Christ healed. I have no hope of seeing any attempt of the kind made, which may not, and ought not to be opposed; if any attempt to bring about that union of which I am speaking might with propriety be opposed."

These last sentences may now almost appear to have been prophetic; and in one sense they were; for without the spirit of prophecy, a man who knows that like causes will produce like effects, may utter a true prediction. All the attempts which have since been made to heal that "wound in the body of Christ," which was only partially healed by the union of which we are speaking, have failed for the very same reasons. Questions which arose out of the peculiar circumstances in which Christians were placed two or three centuries ago in Britain, must be discussed and settled; superannuated controversies which derive all their importance from the fact that there were once warm parties to them, must be brought to a judicial decision; a

form of words, not of sound words exactly, which was adopted in an age when it never entered people's heads that religion could exist and prosper without a union between the Church and State, and when the powers of civil government in matters of religion were unduly extended, must be retained ;—all this must be done, or union may go a-begging. It is, therefore, by no means strange that our brethren of the other Churches should have found it about as difficult to agree among themselves as to what would be a proper basis of union, as to agree with us. It is, and for years has been, my decided opinion, that some undesirable consequences might have been avoided had we of the Associate Reformed Church, when invited by our Reformed Presbyterian brethren to meet and consult with others in a union-conference, stated decidedly but with Christian courtesy, that if those who were dissatisfied with the articles of union on which the Associate Reformed Church was founded and declined uniting at that time, had since come to see, by a more particular investigation of the subject, that their reasons were not entirely sufficient, there would be some encouragement to proceed ; but if otherwise, no practical good could result from a protracted negotiation.

Those sections of the Westminster Confession of Faith which were reserved for "candid discussion on some future occasion," were very deliberately and leisurely examined. The chief substance of the amendments which were finally made was first laid before the Church in the year 1787, in an "Overture for illustrating and defending the doctrines of the Confession of Faith," and afterward incorporated in an "Act to amend the Constitution of the Associate Reformed Church," in the year 1790. In the year 1799 the proposed alterations were made in the text of the Westminster Confession, and the first edition of the present

Constitution and Standards of the Associate Reformed Church was published.

The period between the year 1782, when the union was formed, and the year 1799 when our present standards were adopted, may be regarded as the forming, or if the reader will, the *reforming* period of the Associate Reformed Church, during which our fathers held under serious consideration the several local questions which "the Mother Church at home," by her letters, and by those whom she sent to America to do her bidding, sought to persuade us we ought to be troubled with because she was troubled with them. And I hope it will not be imputed to me as unpardonable arrogance, if I here remark that our ministers who have since come on the stage should be well assured that they are fully acquainted with all the circumstances and facts and considerations, in view of which our fathers decided, before they, for one moment, think of abandoning, even in what may seem but a jot or a tittle, the UNION GROUND which the Associate Reformed Church occupies, lest we "be entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

On this *union ground*, all those in the other Churches who really regard union as a blessing worth seeking, will unite with us, if at all; and perhaps some of them would have thanked us a few years ago, had we planted ourselves more firmly on it, and shown fewer symptoms of wavering.

The reserved sections are here presented in parallel columns as they stand in the Westminster Confession of Faith, and as they stand amended in the Constitution of the Associate Reformed Church; that all may judge for themselves, as to the extent of the wrong which, as some say, we have done, or the value of the improvement which, as we think, we have made:

Westminster Confession.

Chapter xx: sec. 4. "And because the powers which God hath ordained, and the liberty which Christ hath purchased, are not intended by God to destroy, but mutually to uphold and preserve one another; they who, upon pretence of Christian liberty, shall oppose any lawful power, or the lawful exercise of it, whether it be civil or ecclesiastical, resist the ordinance of God. And for their publishing of such opinions, or maintaining of such practices as are contrary to the light of nature, or to the known principles of Christianity, whether concerning faith, worship or conversation; or to the power of godliness; or such erroneous opinions or practices as either in their own nature or in the manner of publishing or maintaining them, are destructive to the external peace and order which Christ hath established in his Church, they may be lawfully called to account, and proceeded against by the censurers of the Church and the power of the civil magistrate."

Chapter xxiii: sec. 3. "The civil magistrate may not assume to himself the administration of the word and sacraments, or the power of the keys of the kingdom

Constitution A. R. Church.

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"The civil magistrate may not assume to himself the administration of the word and sacraments, or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven; yet

of heaven ; yet he hath authority, and it is his duty to take order that unity and peace be preserved in the Church, that the truth of God be kept pure and entire, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline prevented or reformed, and all the ordinances of God duly settled, administered and observed. For the better effecting whereof, he hath power to call Synods, to be present at them, and to provide that whatsoever is transacted in them be according to the mind of God."

Chapter xxxi: sec. 2. "As magistrates may lawfully call a Synod of ministers and other fit persons, to consult and advise with about matters of religion ; so, if magistrates be open enemies to the Church, the ministers of Christ, of themselves, by virtue of their office, or they with other fit persons upon delegation from their Churches, may meet together in such assemblies."

as the Gospel revelation lays indispensable obligations on all classes of people who are favored with it, magistrates, as such, are bound to execute their respective offices in a subserviency thereunto, administering government on Christian principles, and ruling in the fear of God, according to the directions of his word, as those who shall give account to the Lord Jesus, whom God hath appointed to be Judge of the world.

Hence, magistrates, as such, in a Christian country, are bound to promote the Christian religion, as the most valuable interest of their subjects, by all such means as are not inconsistent with civil rights, and do not imply an interference with the policy of the Church, which is the free and independent kingdom of the Redeemer, nor any assumption of dominion over conscience."

"The ministers of Christ, of themselves, by virtue of their office, or they, with other fit persons on delegation from their Churches, have the exclusive right to appoint, adjourn, or dissolve such Synods or Councils ; though, in extraordinary cases, it may be proper for magistrates to desire the calling of a Synod of ministers and other fit persons, to consult and advise with, about matters of religion ; and in such cases it is the duty of Churches to comply with their desire."

Here some remarks may be proper :

1. There is no disputing that a dangerous power over the religion of the people is given to the civil magistrate in Chapter xx. sec. 4, of the Westminster Confession. Let him have the power of punishing all who, in his judgment, publish opinions contrary to the power of godliness, or the order which Christ has established in His Church, and where will it end? Do those who cleave with such pertinacity to the unaltered Westminster Confession, desire to see it tried, or do they really not believe their own confession?

2. As little can it be disputed that in Chapter xxiii. sec. 3, the civil magistrate is clothed with *an episcopal* power over the Church. He is to see that peace be preserved, that truth be kept pure and entire, corruptions and abuses prevented or reformed, etc. And all this he may do of his own mere will, without consulting any mortal; though, if he distrust the all-sufficiency of his own wisdom, he *may* call a Synod to his aid; but if he condescend to do so, he must exercise a providential care over its deliberations, and if its decisions after all do not please him, he can put his veto on them. The Constitution of the Associate Reformed Church allows him no such power; but insists that he ought to administer government on Christian principles, ruling in the fear of God, and that he ought to promote the Christian religion as the most valuable interest of the people, by all such means as will not trench on civil rights or the rights of conscience, or interfere with the free administration of the Church—and all this as he shall give an account of himself to God. These are most excellent and wholesome truths. Who will not say that they are good and profitable for men? But they are not contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith.

3. Chapter xxxi. sec. 2, does not vindicate the right of

ministers to meet in Synods by virtue of their office, but virtually surrenders it. The magistate may assemble them: without his call they are not to meet unless the *magistrate be an open enemy to religion*. If he is but a *secret enemy*, he may, by prudent management prevent the Church from enjoying the benefit of a Synod, all the days of his life. The Constitution of the Associate Reformed Church places the Church of Christ in no such state of dependence "on the powers that be." We may hope in God that the days will never return, when the civil magistrate would attempt to exercise any improper authority over the Church; but as we know not what may be in the future, it is of no small moment that those who would deprive her of her freedom, should never be able to point to her doctrinal standards as authorizing their usurpation.

The Established Church of Scotland still suffers these sections to remain unaltered in the Westminster Confession of Faith. For many years there was no attempt on the part of the civil government to exercise any such control over the Church as belongs to the king by the Constitution of the Empire, and is conceded to him in the Confession of the Scotch Church. It was fondly hoped that it would always remain a mere theory. But some cases occurring which seemed to call for the interference of the civil magistrate, the power which had been long kept in abeyance, was put forth into vigorous exercise. The consequence was, the *Exodus* of the Free Church. A remark of Hallum is here in point: "The Church of Scotland in her General Assemblies preserves the forms and affects the language of the 16th century; but the Erastianism against which she inveighs, secretly controls and paralyzes her vaunted liberties; and she cannot but acknowledge that the supremacy of the legislature is like the collar of the watch-dog, the price of food and shelter, and the condition

on which alone a religious society can be established and endowed by any prudent legislature.

“The practice observed in summoning or dissolving the great National Assembly of the Church of Scotland, which, according to the Presbyterian theory, can only be done by its own authority, is rather amusing. The moderator dissolves the assembly in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the head of the Church, and by the same authority appoints another to meet on the same day of the ensuing year; the Lord High Commissioner then dissolves the assembly in the name of the king and appoints another to meet on the same day.”—Constitutional Hist. England, vol. iii. page 444.

There yet remains to be noticed an alteration which was made in the Larger Catechism—the substitution of the word *authorizing* for the word *tolerating* in the enumeration of the sins forbidden in the *second* commandment. The Synod would not say that the civil magistrate should permit the exercise of no religion, which he might deem false; she would not admit that it belonged to him to judge for the people what religion they should profess, and coerce them into obedience if they refused to follow his prescription; she would not say that he had a right to enter the Church and proscribe and punish whatever he might think erroneous in doctrine, worship, and discipline. But if he should *authorize* a false religion,—that is, if he should approve it, and give it his civil sanction,—this, she was clear, would be sinful. Moreover, the word *tolerate* is inapplicable in the United States. Toleration can only exist when there is an established religion. In that case, dissenters may or may not be *tolerated*, that is, *suffered* to exercise their religion. The doctrine of the Westminster Assembly was, that no dissent should be permitted by the civil magistrate.

The history of the times shows this ; and also, that the Westminster Assembly, in common with mankind generally in that age, held ideas on this subject, which the Synod could not approve—which none but the advocates of slavery can approve. Since the problem of religious liberty has been so well worked out, and the conclusion has been reached that conscience, as well as white men and black men, has rights from a higher than any human source, it may appear strange that great and good men could have so erred ; but it is not strange. The history of the world abounds with similar examples. All men must be tried by the standard of the age in which they lived. We sometimes hear of men who were a century in advance of their age ; but it belongs to no creature whose dwelling is with mortal flesh, to be thus in advance in everything. To bring the 17th and the 19th centuries together, and condemn those who lived two hundred years ago, because they did not see some things which to us may appear plain, would be unjust. If the same measure were dealt out to the best men now alive, how might they appear two hundred years hence ? But this is no reason why we should revere former errors.

The Parliament of England had abolished Episcopacy. The Westminster Assembly was called to give their advice as to what system should be established in its room. At first there were three leading parties in the Assembly—Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Independents. The Episcopalians, except such of them as could readily coalesce with the Presbyterians, soon withdrew. The Presbyterians prevailed. Their system, with perhaps some slight modifications arising from the presence and the authority of their masters in Parliament assembled, was carried, and received the sanction of Parliament. A plan of “comprehension” for the Independents was spoken of,

but abandoned. The Independents then petitioned for a *toleration*; but—the truth must be told, strike where it may—the Presbyterians, backed by the Scottish Parliament and the Assembly of the Church of Scotland, opposed. No such ease could be granted to tender consciences—it would work all manner of confusion and evil, both in Church and State—the wisest statesmen and churchmen could not see but it would—it was contrary to their “covenanted uniformity”—how could they grant such toleration without violating their “solemn covenant engagements?” As often as my mind recurs to this part of the history of our Presbyterian ancestors, I think I see in it a verification of our Saviour’s words: “They that take the sword, shall also perish by the sword.” In less than twenty years, that mercy which they refused the Independents, was refused to them. During that long, dismal, dreary, *bloody* period which intervened between the restoration and the revolution, they were led as sheep to the slaughter; they were hunted like wild beasts over fields and glens; “they wandered about in sheepskins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, (of whom the world was not worthy,) they wandered in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.” “Thou answeredst them, O Lord our God; thou wast a God that forgavest them, though thou tookest vengeance of their inventions.”

A great outcry was made against the Synod for dismissing *tolerating*, and inserting *authorizing*. *It was a woful departure from the faith; a sad sign of declension and apostasy, and defection, and backsliding from “covenanted uniformity,” and from “former attainments of the Church.” The Associate Reformed Church will let her members do as they please.*—Such were the “evil speakings and evil surmisings,” which Mr. Hemphill notices. Some uneasiness

having been excited in the 2d Presbytery of the Carolinas and Georgia, and the case being represented to the General Synod, a letter was addressed to the Presbytery, of which the following is an extract: "The Synod never expected, it were vain to expect, that the spirit of captiousness will be entirely subdued, or the tongue of slander silenced. No conduct can be so shaped, nor any principle so expressed, as to please those who seek occasion for censure. The Synod reminded you in their Pastoral Letter of 1801, that they cannot descend from the respect which they owe to themselves, to refute every calumny and cavil against their procedure. They are resolved generally to answer with silence the insinuations and assertions of unreasonable men. They desire all their subordinate judicatories to pursue the same plan. Go on in the path of your duty with firmness and equal step, and leave to their own insignificance the tales of meddling censoriousness which 'come up in a night, and perish in a night.' While, therefore, the Synod would not have noticed, on their own account, the allegations which, from different quarters are brought against them, nevertheless, out of respect to your wishes, and sympathy with your particular situation, they inform you: 1. That the substitution of the word *authorizing*, in room of the word *tolerating* among the sins forbidden in the second commandment . . . was not intended to conform the Constitution of the Associate Reformed Church, to the Constitution of any other body, civil or religious. The Synod never made an agreement or disagreement with any existing ecclesiastical or political institution, an object of their solicitude. But they did not wish to retain expressions which might be interpreted as recognizing in the civil magistrate a right to interfere with the internal economy of the Christian Church, or the principle of persecution for conscience sake. They wished to

assimilate the language of their standards to those maxims which have at all times directed their spiritual discipline," etc. That is, the Synod wished to expunge from her Confession of Faith an element which, if it be not Erastianism, is exceedingly liable to be mistaken for it; and a phraseology, which, if it do not authorize persecution for conscience sake, is very convenient for the persecutor.

These extracts are commended to the *religious* attention of those ministers, who are said to be still in the habit of edifying their hearers with a rehearsal of all the sins of the Associate Reformed Church, and of those people whose misfortune it is to be fed on such musty bread, instead of "the true bread, which came down from heaven."

The next report from the Second Presbytery of the Carolinas and Georgia, was that peace and confidence had returned to dwell among them.

Section 3.

Covenanting in Scotland—The Solemn League and Covenant of Scotland, England and Ireland—Its Objects and Results—Charges against the Associate Reformed Church of the United States in regard to Covenanting—Reply—Synod of the Carolinas and Georgia defend the Associate Reformed Church.

It has been remarked that from the year 1782, when the union was consummated, till the year 1799, when our present constitution was adopted, may be regarded as the forming period of the Associate Reformed Church. Though worldly policy might have dictated the propriety of bringing some subjects which were still held under serious consideration to a speedy settlement, in order that the agitation which was kept up by meddling officiousness might cease, our fathers were not to be moved to do anything rashly to avoid inconvenience to themselves. The disposition which was finally made of two other subjects remains yet to be noticed.

1. *Covenanting*:

In his life of Knox, Dr. McCrie states, that in the year 1556, "The greater part of the gentlemen of Mearns made a profession of the Reformed religion by sitting down at the Lord's Table; and entered into a solemn and mutual bond, in which they renounced the Popish communion, and engaged to maintain and promote the pure preaching of the Gospel, as Providence should favor them with opportunities. This seems to be the first of those bonds or covenants, by which the confederation of the Protestants in Scotland was so frequently ratified." In the year 1580 the Confession of Faith, or National Covenant of Scotland was drawn up by order of King James, in one of those "fits" when his mind was favorably disposed toward the reformed religion. By repeated acts of the Scottish Parliament, and of the Assembly of the Church, it was ordered to be subscribed by all ranks. In the year 1640, every member of Parliament was required to subscribe it as a test of his fidelity to the Constitution of the Kirk and the State, on pain of forfeiting his seat.

In the year 1643, an application was made by the English Parliament to their Scottish brethren, for their assistance against Charles I., who was, with good reason, believed to be laboring to overthrow the liberties of the nation. The Scotch refused to make common cause with the English, unless they would enter jointly with them into a bond to maintain the true reformed religion. The form of a covenant was drawn up by the Assembly of the Scotch Church, approved by the Scotch Parliament, forwarded to the English Parliament, and adopted by the latter. This was the Solemn League and Covenant. According to an act of the English Parliament, it was subscribed by all ranks (by many of all ranks) in England. The reader who permits himself to think, will readily per-

ceive that these covenants were intended:—1. To supply, for the time being, the place of a Confession of Faith, or, we might say, they were rude attempts toward the formation of a Confession of Faith. 2. To effect the closest union, and secure concert of action among the friends of civil and religious liberty at a time when it appeared that physical force would soon have to be resorted to. Doubtless they were well intended engagements. Their object was the maintenance of all that was dear to the Covenanters as men and Christians. Under these engagements the friends of civil and religious liberty did noble battle in a noble cause. Such was the complexion of the times, that the friends of civil and religious liberty and of evangelical religion were the friends of the covenants; the enemies of true religion and of liberal principles, were the opposers of the covenants. No wonder the opposers were called “malignants:” *i. e.*, persons not well affected to their country.

Even in England the tide of popular indignation was running strong against Prelacy in the time of the Solemn League and Covenant. Prelates had been cruel persecutors; prelates had favored the advances of tyranny; prelates had caused better men than themselves to rot in dungeons. The extirpation of prelacy as well as Popery was, therefore, contemplated in the Solemn League and Covenant. But a few years afterward, a change took place in the public sentiment of the nation. The covenants were disowned. The Covenanters were a defeated party. Their opponents, now that they had triumphed, maintained more stoutly than ever, that the Solemn League and Covenant was an *unlawful bond*. Its friends, instead of showing that to enter into such a confederation and bond in defence of religion and liberty was *lawful*, which they might easily have done, adopted a mode of reasoning which at length drove them or their successors to take the ground that such

covenanting is so of the essence of religion, that it is a moral duty, an ordinance of God, to be observed even in a peaceful and settled state of things, both in Church and State. Hence a new term of communion in the Church. Nowhere in the writings of any Apostle, any father, any early reformer from Popery, is there such a thing taught as that though a man may believe in God the Father, and in Christ the Son of the Father, who was crucified, dead, and buried, and arose again on the third day, and in the resurrection of the dead, and the life everlasting; still he must be excluded from the Table of his Heavenly Father, and from partaking of the children's bread, unless he will also say that he believes public, explicit, and national covenanting is a moral duty under the New Testament. Suppose that in Providence it had happened—and it might have happened—that the actual condition of the Church in Scotland had not called for covenanting as a means of defence, would we ever have heard of such a term of communion in the Church? Yet, to this day, this thing of trans-atlantic origin, is able to perpetuate divisions in the Church in this country. It always presents itself as a formidable obstacle in the way of union. It need not, therefore, seem strange that the Associate Reformed Synod, the first religious body which ever permitted this question of covenanting to come before them as an *open question*, and perhaps the only religious body which has yet duly considered and settled it, should have taken time for inquiry and reflection.

In article 2d of the *Little Constitution*, the Synod declare, "That they have an affectionate remembrance of the National Covenant of Scotland, and of the Solemn League and Covenant of Scotland, England, and Ireland, as well-intended engagements to support the cause of civil and religious liberty, and hold themselves bound by the Divine

authority to practise all the moral duties therein contained according to their circumstances. That public and explicit covenanting with God is a moral duty under the New Testament dispensation to which they are resolved to attend as He shall direct."

This article, which is contained in what was once the Constitution of the Associate Reformed Church, may perhaps be thought to contain more than would have afterward been assented to when the subject had undergone a more full examination. Be this as it may, it appears that when the present Constitution was published, three distinct charges were brought against the Synod: 1. That she had buried the covenants, by omitting to publish them in her standards. 2. That she did not hold to the duty of covenanting. 3. That she did not insist on the binding obligation of the covenants.

1. To the first of these charges, we find the Synod replying in her letter to the 2d Presbytery of the Carolinas, as follows:

"The omission in our Constitution of the National Covenant of Scotland, and the Solemn League and Covenant, cannot wound the most tender conscience when rightly informed. It is not possible, consistently with truth, to make these covenants, as they stand, a part of the Church's testimony in America; and, therefore, the insertion of them among her terms of communion, instead of promoting the edification of her members, would only serve as a snare for their consciences. To be at all applicable to the circumstances of this Church, they must undergo a variety of alterations; but the moment any alteration is admitted into an instrument of solemn compact, it ceases to be the *same* instrument. To *modify* the covenants, therefore, is to *destroy* them; they instantly cease to be the same covenants; and the persons who take

them thus modified, instead of *renewing* them, do, in fact, enter into a *new* compact, and by that very act, resort to the original principle of covenanting."

Some disturbance having been excited in the Synod of the Carolinas and Georgia, chiefly through the instrumentality of two disorderly ministers, Messrs. M'Millan and Dickson, that Synod defends the Associate Reformed Church against the charge "of burying the covenants" as follows: "It is true the Synod has not inserted the European covenants, believing that, in form, they could not bind in America, yet the Synod have said the same thing on the principle of covenanting that the Westminster Divines said in their confession, and in several acts have declared that national (?) covenanting is a duty, and promises that when God calls unto this duty, she will attend. Besides, the Associate Body to which these men have fled for shelter, have also expelled these covenants from their standards, as may be seen in the Declaration and Testimony, page 11,* when they say, 'not that we judge everything in the manner of covenanting used by the Church of Scotland in former times a proper example for us to follow, or that we judge the form of words which they used binding as an oath on us. As to what may be called the civil part of these covenants, it is what we neither have, nor ever had anything to do with.' Having, therefore, nothing to do with the form, or civil part of these covenants, they are worse than expelled; they are broken up and ruined. Take away the form from anything and it ceases to be the same thing; some of the demolished parts may be useful for some purposes. Hence the Associate Church have broken down these covenants, gathered up some fragments which they looked upon as useful, and out of the two they made one new covenant, which they call their bond," etc.

* 197 nobis.

Section 4.

Mr. Hemphill on the "Binding Obligation" of the Covenants—Does the Associate Reformed Synod acknowledge the Binding Obligation of the Covenants on Posterity?—Objections to having the Doctrine of public Covenanting embraced in the Standards of Faith and made a term of Communion.

To the charge that the Synod deny the "binding obligation" of the covenants, hear the reply of Mr. Hemphill:

"The Synod does not require as a term of communion that persons acknowledge the covenant as binding on them. The reason is this; many people may apply for communion with us who were never, either directly or indirectly, under the obligation of these covenants. It is a matter of uncertainty with many, and it is out of the question with others, that neither themselves nor their ancestors ever had an opportunity of entering into these covenants. Persons cannot, in truth, declare that they are bound, nor can they feel themselves rationally impressed with the obligation, unless it can be made evident that they have entered into these engagements, either by their own act, or by the act of those whose place it was to represent them in that transaction.

"The Associate Presbytery of Pennsylvania, and many of their people, have found great fault with what the Synod has said about the covenants. What, then, have they said about them themselves?

"In their act and testimony they declare that, with regard to the civil part of these covenants, they never had anything to do with them; they reckon it improper to mix civil and religious things together in the same covenants. However highly, then, they may approve of covenanting, they must judge it was wrong to make the covenant; for civil and religious things are mixed in it. Had they been

present, then, when the Solemn League and Covenant was first formed, they could not have taken it; and they could not have approved of others for taking it, seeing those things are intermixed in it which they judge improper."

That is, the argument for the binding obligation of the Solemn League and Covenant upon posterity stands thus—*It was wrong to make the Solemn League and Covenant, for civil and religious things are mixed in it; we, had we been present, could not therefore have taken it; yet, the posterity of the Covenanters are, and until the latest generations will be, bound by this improper deed of their ancestors!* By such miserable logic can divisions be made and perpetuated in the Church.

But has not the Associate Reformed Synod acknowledged the binding obligation of these covenants upon posterity, Mr. Hemphill notwithstanding? Not, I think, as the matter is generally understood. True, she said in the *Little Constitution*, that "we are bound by the divine authority to perform all the moral duties contained in them"—i. e., whatever is contained in them which is clearly a moral duty, she is bound to perform by the divine authority which requires it, and which gives to it its character as a *moral* duty. And further the Synod said not.

But again, in an "Act concerning the religious connections of the Synod," she says: "In respect to the religious part of these covenants, in which the Covenanters solemnly avouched the Lord to be their God and the God of their seed, and with the same solemnity surrendered themselves and their posterity to Him, promising and swearing that they would walk in His ways, and keep His commandments; they are obligatory on the posterity of those who entered into them, in virtue of the solemn public oath of their ancestors." That is, that act of spiritual worship

which the believer performs in any religious duty, as in receiving the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper, in which he avouches the Lord to be his God and the God of his seed, and promises to walk in His ways, is binding upon his posterity according to God's covenant. No doubt that in entering into the British covenants, hundreds and thousands took hold of God's covenant, claiming Him as their God and the God of their seed; an act, which, whenever and however performed, lays their posterity under peculiar obligations, as "the seed of those whom the Lord has blessed." About this, there can be no question; beyond this, there should be no questioning; for all beyond is little suited to minister "godly edifying."

3. Another accusation against the Synod was, that she did not assert the duty of covenanting with God. But she always did, and still does. O yes, continues the accuser, but she does not believe in public and explicit covenanting with God. Yes, she does. She believes in this also; but she regards it as out of the ordinary course of evangelical administrations. She also regards it as a duty, for the performance of which no express rule is laid down in Scripture. It may exist in substance, when it is not attended to in any such formal manner, as has sometimes been done. The occasion suggests the duty, and the nature of the particular occasion will always be suggestive of the most proper mode of performing the duty.

On this subject, the Synod vindicated herself from aspersions which had been cast on her, in her letter to the Presbytery of the Carolinas and Georgia already noticed—as follows:

"On this principle, viz: the principle of public and explicit covenanting, the Synod have repeatedly declared their views, in terms which cannot be easily misunderstood by the most illiterate. If, after all their anxious endeavors

to free their own sentiments from misconstruction, and remove honest scruple from the minds of their people, they cannot escape the most injurious and unfounded aspersions; they can only commit their cause to the Divine providence. If any man will still be ignorant, let him be ignorant. They have never departed from a principle which they have formerly asserted, that public covenanting is an exercise suited to very singular emergencies of the Church, and whenever in the judgment of the Synod such emergencies shall occur, they trust that they shall not be found unmindful of their duty."

Though we believe our Confession of Faith, which was framed *in covenanting times*, when the subject was not likely to be overlooked, or have less importance attached to it than it deserves, contains all that is necessary on this question; still, we would have no objection to see the doctrine of public and explicit covenanting, as above declared, embraced in our standards and made a term of communion, for any doubt we have of its truth. But we have two objections of a different kind.

1st. It has no such claim beyond many things which are not embraced in our list of terms of communion; it would therefore probably be a dead letter, the duty being no more attended to than it would be if not made a term of communion, as is the case with some. It would serve only to embarrass the consciences of God's people.

2d. Or, if otherwise—then some one would immediately be on his feet, as we once had occasion to witness, to move that a committee be appointed to draw up "a bond," just as a matter of course, and without the least inquiry, or thought of inquiring whether the circumstances of the Church called for the duty.

Section 5.

Testimony-bearing in Scotland and in the Associate Reformed Church of the United States—Overture in 1787 for illustrating and defending the Doctrines of the Confession of Faith—In 1797 Testimony-bearing finally disposed of by the Associate Reformed Synod—Act of Synod on this subject given in full.

TESTIMONY-BEARING was another of those subjects which underwent a deliberate examination during the forming stage of the Associate Reformed Church.

The Reformed Presbytery, on her organization, emitted a testimony setting forth the reasons why she refused to be incorporated with the established Church of Scotland. When the Erskines and their co-adjutors withdrew from the establishment, they emitted an act, declaration, and testimony, setting forth the grounds of their secession, and the important truths of which they felt themselves called to stand forth in the defence. All this was doubtless necessary and proper under their circumstances. But each party made its testimony a term of communion, instead of taking it for granted, as in our judgment they might safely have done, that all who were willing to "adhere to a small despised remnant," were acting from a sense of duty, and might be received into Christian confidence.

People are apt to suppose that what they found in the church when they became capable of observation, and what they have always been accustomed to, was always in the church, and is essential to her purity, if not her very existence. Hence they often adhere with as much or more tenacity to a mere custom, a mere human measure or expedient, which was perhaps adopted under peculiar circumstances, than to a positive divine institution.

When the union in which the Associate Reformed Church had her origin was formed, whatever the good

sense of some of them might have led them to think to the contrary, our fathers seem generally to have been so far under the influence of former habits and modes of thinking, that it appeared to them necessary that they should have a standing judicial testimony, in addition to the Confession of Faith. But its proper use and place in the Church was a subject of much inquiry and conversation. They understood well the design of a Confession of Faith—that it is useful to ascertain whether the members of a Church are so far agreed in their views of the truths and ordinances of the Gospel, that they can have comfortable communion with one another, and co-operate in building up the Redeemer's kingdom without jar or discord. But a testimony—what is its use? It seems to be, to show how far the Church which holds it forth as her testimony *differs* from all others. “How will you know the difference between us and the General Assembly, without a testimony?” it was gravely asked while the subject was under consideration. But some contended, and we have heard the idea gravely and confidently advanced at a comparatively recent period, that it is a Testimony, a little printed book kept in a few families belonging to a particular Church, though not in all its families, that “torments them that dwell on the face of the earth.”

In the year 1787, a committee was appointed to prepare an overture “for illustrating and defending the doctrines of the Confession of Faith.” Probably this was intended to meet the demand for a judicial testimony. The overture was in due time prepared and laid before the Synod, but she very properly declined adopting it as a part of her standards, and simply recommended it to her people as, in substance, a useful book.

From this document we give an extract or two, to show what our fathers, at least the revered Annan, its author,

regarded as the most useful and efficient kind of testimony-bearing. And much is it desired that the Lord's witnesses, as he describes them, were many thousand times more than they are :

"It is an easy matter to adopt a system of principles (and when a religious education has been enjoyed, they may be sound principles too), publish them to the world, and plume ourselves, as if on this account we were the most eminent Christians and faithful witnesses for God in the world. This is not one of the most difficult duties of the Christian religion. We mean not by this remark to diminish the value and importance of being valiant for the truth on earth, but to prevent your placing an undue confidence, and laying a disproportionate stress on it. *Adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour*, with every Christian grace and virtue; among which charity, brotherly love, peace, humility and candor, possess a rank." Tried by the rule laid down in this last sentence, Churches which regard themselves as the only faithful testimony-bearing Churches, would often be found sadly wanting. Again :

"By a truly religious profession and holy life, it will appear, that God is in you of a truth. If the light of truth and holiness thus shine on you before men, others seeing your good works will glorify your Father who is in heaven. God is not the object of our senses. His essence is invisible. He can be discerned only by our understandings. It is an intellectual view of his glory only that men can obtain; and this may be obtained from the works of creation and providence, but especially from his word and his Church. A pure and holy Church reflects her glory in an eminent degree. God says, 'I will dwell in them and walk in them.' Christ walked in the midst of the golden candlesticks. Such a Church is the image of heaven. God is visible in her. Divine truth, divine love,

divine purity, peace, harmony, and good order, shed a lustre on her. The glory of God beams around her. But a society where the contrary evils prevail, is a synagogue of Satan. And wherever heresy, error, pride, strife, contention, uproar, and impunity reign, there we see the kingdom of darkness and the devil; and by such things, men prepare themselves to dwell with devils forever."

I can not but wish that this overture were in the hands of all our ministers and people. It would help them to comprehend the *genius* of the Associate Reformed Church. They would learn from it that she was not established to perpetuate certain notions and customs which had their origin some centuries ago in the "mother country," (which some people really still seem to think,) but to maintain the worship and ordinances of God, and to bring the saving truths of the Gospel to bear with the greatest efficiency, and to the utmost extent, on the masses of our countrymen.

In the year 1797, the subject of testimony-bearing was finally disposed of; and that all may judge for themselves of the wisdom and propriety of the final decision of the Synod, the Act is here inserted entire.

"WHEREAS a number of people, under the inspection of the Associate Reformed Synod, entertain doubts as to their principles and intentions with respect to the maintenance of a faithful testimony for the truth, as it is in Jesus; and whereas these doubts are accompanied with anxiety for a judicial publication, copiously illustrating and defending the doctrines of the Gospel; and enumerating, refuting, and condemning errors and heresies;—to be called a *Testimony; the Ministers and Elders, in Synod assembled*, think it incumbent on them to explain, and by this Act they do explain, their real views of these interesting subjects.

“Upright and open testimony for the truths of the Lord’s word, whether relating to doctrine, discipline, worship or manners, is the indispensable duty of all Christians; especially of the ministers and judicatories of the Church, who, from their office, ought to be set for the defence of the Gospel.

“Judicial testimonies, being designed to operate against prevalent error, are, lest they should miss their aim, to be wisely adapted to the immediate circumstances of the Church.

“Both these principles have been fully recognized by the Synod in their published Act of May, 1790, entitled, *An Act to amend the Constitution of the Associate Reformed Synod*. They therein declare, that ‘they consider the Confession of Faith, larger and shorter catechisms, directory for worship, and form of Church government, as therein received, as their *fixed testimony*, by which their principles are to be tried; or as the judicial expression of the sense in which they understand the holy scriptures in the relation they have to the doctrine, the worship, and government of the Christian Church; and that it is their resolution to emit *occasional testimonies*, in *particular acts* against errors and delusions.’

“The Synod, however, having been frequently importuned to publish a testimony of a different kind, renewed, from time to time, their discussions on this point; and, after the most impartial and serious deliberation, find it their duty not to recede from the above resolution.

“For the satisfaction of such as have not had access to know the grounds of this decision, some of them are subjoined:

“1. In her excellent Confession of Faith, catechisms, etc., the Church is already possessed of a testimony so scriptural, concise, comprehensive, and perspicuous, that the

Synod despair of seeing it materially improved, and are convinced that the most eligible and useful method of maintaining the truths therein exhibited, is *occasionally* to elucidate them, and direct them in particular acts, against particular errors, as circumstances require.

"2. There was drawn up and published by a committee of Synod, in the year 1787, *An Overture for illustrating and defending the Doctrines of the Westminster Confession of Faith*. And in May, 1790, Synod unanimously resolved, that said overture is 'in substance, an excellent and instructive illustration and application of these truths unto the present state of the Church of Christ in America, and warmly recommended it as such, to all the people under their inspection.' Whatever, then, might be effected on a general scale, by any similar pamphlet in the form of a judicial testimony, may be effected by that overture. And to emit such a testimony would only be to repeat the same laborious and expensive work, without obtaining any proportional advantage.

"3. Could a testimony universally acceptable be prepared, it would still be far from producing those beneficial effects which are so fondly expected.

"If it were to do tolerable justice to the prodigious extent of the Confession, it would swell into an immense work, of which the very bulk would defeat the intention. And if it were comprised in a volume suited to the leisure of an ordinary reader, it would be defective, and defective perhaps on those very points on which the occurrences of a few months might require it to be particular and full.

"It could scarcely give a correcter view of the principles of the Synod than is already given in their received Confession; because it could scarcely hold forth any truths which are not therein held forth; or state them, upon the whole, with more luminous precision. The opinion that

such a testimony is needful to *ascertain* the Synod's principles, is a direct impeachment of the Confession itself; since, if they are not sufficiently ascertained by this, it must be either lame or ambiguous; and then the Church demands, not a separate testimony, but an amended Confession. If any parts of it are differently interpreted, and abused to the promotion of error, these ought to be explained in detached Acts; and such explanation belongs strictly to the province of *occasional testimonies*.

"It could not deter from application for ministerial or Christian communion with the Synod, any who are not really friendly to the doctrines of grace. Since one who can profess an attachment to the Confession of Faith, while he is secretly hostile to its truths, is too far advanced in dishonesty to be impeded for a moment by any testimony which the wisdom of man can frame.

"It could not silence the objections and cavils of such as incline to misrepresent the principles and character of the Synod; since it is impossible to satisfy with anything those who are determined to be satisfied with nothing. The very uncandid manner in which the Synod have already been often treated, both in Britain and America, leaves little reason to hope their plainest declarations will not be perverted, and their most upright intentions misconstrued.

"It could not lift up a *perpetual* banner for truth; since, from the ever-fluctuating state of religious controversy, and the impossibility of foreseeing the different shapes which error may assume, some parts of it would gradually grow obsolete, while some would be deficient; and the same necessity for occasional testimonies would still remain. In the nature of things, moreover, it would, after a short time, at most, a few years, be out of print and out of date, and ceasing to interest the public curiosity, would utterly fail

of accomplishing its end. There is also solid reason to fear, that in the present unhappy contentions which divide the Church, it would be used by too many as the rallying point of party, and would inflame those wounds in the body of Christ, which it should be our study and prayer to have speedily and thoroughly healed.

“While these and similar reasons impel the Synod to decline issuing such a testimony as hath been desired, there are others which persuade them that the plan on which, as the Lord in His providence hath called them, they have hitherto acted, and on which they are resolved to act in future—the plan of emitting *occasional testimonies* includes all the excellencies of that which they reject; is free from its embarrassments; and is calculated to produce real and permanent good.

“As witnesses of the Most High, Christians are especially bound to avow and to defend those truths which are more immediately decried, and to oppose those errors which immediately prevail. This is termed by the Spirit of God, being ‘*established in the present truth.*’ It is the very essence of a judicious testimony; nor is there any way in which judicatories can so well maintain it, as in serious and scriptural *occasional* acts. Of this method of testifying there are plain and numerous traces in the holy scriptures, and in the pious practice of the primitive Church.

“Such testimonies have, moreover, several advantages.

“They are *brief*: so that a reader of ordinary diligence can, in a very little time, make himself perfectly master of their contents.

“They are *pointed*: and by singling out the error which is doing *present* mischief, they give more effectual warning of *present* danger, than could possibly be done if they were interspersed through a large and general publication.

“They are *new*: and for this very reason they arrest the

attention of men more than if they were diffused through an older and more extended work, however excellent. They may also throw fresh light upon received truths, and make a deeper impression on the mind, than if met with in the course of ordinary reading.

“They furnish *special topics for religious conversation*: and by fixing the thoughts of pious people on a particular subject, render them greatly instrumental in edifying each other.

“As they confine the attention of judicatories within a *small compass*, there is a better prospect of their being executed with ability and success.

“They serve to *cement the affections* of judicatories and their people; as they oblige the former to watch, with peculiar zeal, over the interests of the latter; and afford the latter continual and endearing proofs of the faithfulness of the former.

“They are *frequent*: and thus have a happy tendency to keep alive the spirit of honest testimony for Jesus Christ, which would slumber much deeper, and much longer, were that duty supposed to be discharged in a solitary volume.

“They will form, *collectively*, a more complete and useful vindication of truth than could be expected, if the different branches of it were all to be discussed in a continued work.

“They will show posterity what were the truths which, in a peculiar manner, their fathers were honored to maintain.”

Section 6.

History of the Progress of the Associate Reformed Church—A few general Observations—Rev. Adam Rankin and Psalmody, in 1785—Received into Ministerial Communion with the Associate Reformed Church—Reflections on the above—Rise and Progress of Literary Institutions in the United States—Efforts of the Associate Reformed Church to raise up a well-educated Ministry at Home—Prejudices against Home Education—Attempts in 1801 to erect a Theological Seminary—Accomplished in 1809—Success of the new Institution.

HAVING now said all that is deemed necessary in relation to the union in which the Associate Reformed Church originated, and seen some questions settled which were reserved for future consideration, I now enter on the history of her progress. But before proceeding farther, it is thought proper to make a few general observations.

1. The original parties united on grounds which were common to them as *Christians*, leaving out of view those things which had been peculiar to them as *Seceders*, and *Covenanters*. With this plan of union some portions of both parties were dissatisfied; and hence, both the Associate and the Reformed were continued as distinct denominations in the Christian Church. Some years ago, at the instance of one of the dissenting bodies, a negotiation was set on foot, the object of which was, to embrace in the union those who had hitherto stood aloof from it. As our dissenting brethren found fault with the basis on which the Associate Reformed Church was organized, we agreed to accompany them in the search after a better basis, or one which would be more acceptable to them. After years spent in the search, a better could not be found; it was at least not found. At length the Reformed Synod came to a stand, declaring, "that before making any farther direct effort in the matter of Church union, time be taken, and measures adopted, to settle the matter among ourselves,

the ground on which the whole Church of God may be, and ought to be, united in one organic body." (I quote from the Covenanter, not having the original minute before me.) When they will be able to say what the basis of union should be, and be ready to report progress, it is impossible now to tell. After some farther attempts, we intimated to our Associate brethren our willingness that they should form a basis to suit themselves, which being done, we would consider it, and agree to it if we could. This they have not yet been able to do. Such is the present state of the union question. But must it not appear to be utterly idle to keep up a talk about union while that *awful* distance is studiously preserved between the parties which has heretofore existed; while in some cases, the ministers would almost shudder at the thought of occasionally exchanging pulpits, and in other cases, they could not do it without making a fearful uproar among the people?

2. Though there are in the eastern part of the Synod a few brethren who are older than I am, yet the friends and companions of my youth, those with whom I acted and took counsel, in what has now for some years been called "the West," are all gone to their eternal rest. I am now approaching a period when the part which some of these acted in the general concerns of the Church will come under review, as well as the conduct of some others who are still alive. I do not expect to meet with much which will require to be seriously censured; but when I can not entirely approve, I shall try to "reverence that boundary line which separates between the mistakes of man and their personal integrity and character." *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*, is a maxim which I entirely approve. But I should give it in English—"Say nothing of the dead, unless you have something good to say." It does honor to our nature. But still it must have its limits. If the faults and follies

of good men are always passed over in silence, or excused, future generations will be deprived of those lessons of instruction and caution which may be derived from them; and instead of growing wiser and better from the experience of the past, men will continue to repeat the same follies till the end of time. But the faults and follies of good men, whether they are numbered among the dead or the living, should never be wantonly exposed. If touched at all, it should be with a steady hand, and under the guidance of that "charity which beareth all things, hopeth all things." Then will the reputation of no good man receive damage.

3. As I am only writing "contributions" to a history, and not the history itself, I do not hold myself bound to pursue always that method and order which would otherwise be proper. Though I have been collecting materials for a number of years, and possess a pretty ample store of them, some are still wanting which it is hoped may yet be obtained. Some matters may, therefore, be passed over for the present, which may afterward receive attention.

4. These contributions are laid before the public with the wish, and in the hope, that any mistakes or inaccuracies which I may commit, may be pointed out. It is not desirable that anything should go down to future generations as history, but what is strictly true, and, therefore, I shall consider myself a debtor to any one who will furnish me with the means of more correct information on any subject which may come under review. Let us now proceed.

Perhaps it has not been distinctly noticed, that at the same meeting at which the union was ratified, the two Associate Presbyteries, and the Reformed Presbytery, resolved themselves in a Synod. After this nothing claiming particular attention, except what has been already noticed,

took place till about the year 1793. The event alluded to must be introduced by a brief narration.

About the year 1785, Rev. Adam Rankin, of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, (now the general assembly of the Presbyterian Church,) settled in Lexington, which was then, and long afterward, the chief town in Kentucky. He was perhaps the first Presbyterian minister who was stationed in that large and fertile tract of country, which lies between the Ohio and Kentucky rivers. What number of Presbyterian ministers were then settled, in what is now the state of Kentucky, is not known; but at the time of Mr. Rankin's settlement in Lexington, or soon afterward, there existed a Presbytery, known by the name of the Transylvania Presbytery. Prior to this time, the use of Watts' Imitations in the praises of God had been authorized or permitted in that Church. This, in many cases, led to disputes and distractions in congregations; some contending for the old, and some for the new psalmody. Mr. Rankin decided, but it would seem after some hesitation, in favor of the psalmody formerly in use—*i. e.* in favor of a *version*, instead of an *imitation* of the scripture songs. His co-presbyters took the other side. The dissension between them became sharp, and no doubt sharp things were said on both sides. The result was, that two charges were brought against Mr. Rankin before his Presbytery.

1. That he had said, that on some extraordinary occasions, he received special directions from God, through the medium of dreams.

2. That he had repeatedly charged his brethren, who used the Imitations, with deism and blasphemy.

The Presbytery found both these charges proved, and Mr Rankin was suspended from the exercise of the Christian ministry. He then declined the authority of the

Presbytery ; and as a numerous party adhered to him, in some congregations, it is believed, a large majority of the people, he organized them into separate societies. This conduct the Presbytery regarded as schismatical, and proceeded to *depose* him. In this state of his affairs, he turned his attention to the Associate Reformed Church, and applied for admission to her communion. A committee of the Second Presbytery of Pennsylvania was appointed, and directed to repair to Kentucky, and examine into the facts of the case. It does not, however, appear that more than one member of the committee attended—Rev. John Young, of Rockbridge county, Virginia, of whose piety, scholarship, and accomplished manners, there are yet some living witnesses. The result was, that Mr. Rankin was received into ministerial and Christian communion with the Associate Reformed Church ; a very considerable body of people came in with him, many of whose descendants are now living in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, and are among the most exemplary and enterprising members of the Church ; and, within a few years, the Associate Reformed Presbytery of Kentucky was organized. On this narration, the following reflections are submitted :

1. Whether Mr. Rankin was, or was not, righteously suspended, and afterward deposed by the Transylvania Presbytery, is a question on which men will continue to differ, according to the prejudices which they bring with them to the question, and the position which they occupy in reference to it. But let this question be settled as it may, or though it should never be settled, every intelligent and candid man must admit that the Associate Reformed Church had no hand in producing the distractions which existed at that period among the Presbyterians of Kentucky, on the subject of psalmody. No minister of the Associate Reformed Church lived within two or three

- hundred miles of the scene, nor does it appear that an Associate Reformed minister had ever visited Kentucky. The disputes about psalmody were purely of Presbyterian origin and growth.
- 2. Mr. Rankin had entirely separated himself from the Presbyterian Church, before the Associate Reformed Church received him into her communion. From the well known inflexibility of his character, the strength of his convictions on the subject of psalmody, and the popular support which he received in his own neighborhood, there was no likelihood that he would ever retrace his steps.

3. Such was his influence over the minds of his followers, that, had they not been received into the Associate Reformed Church, it is morally certain that another sect would have been added to the already too numerous list of sects. However the fact may be accounted for, it is well known to the writer, and to others who are still alive, that he exerted all but a despotic influence over the minds of those who adhered to him. The apparent warmth and fervor of his devotion, the genuineness of which I, at least, will not call in question, will account for his influence with the pious; but in addition to this, he possessed, beyond most men, the faculty of infusing his own feelings into the minds of those with whom he was in habits of friendship and intimacy.

4. It is agreed on all hands, that the proceedings in his case were marked by a very considerable degree of heat and acrimony. Those who are acquainted with Mr. Rankin's temperament will not doubt this, so far as he was concerned; and the anxiety which has been occasionally manifested to vindicate his judges on this score, is evidence that there was at least the appearance of some improper feeling on their part. Indeed, from the very nature of one

of the charges, it is evident that they had a deep personal interest in the issue.

5. It is due to truth that we admit, that, at one period of his life, Mr. Rankin did probably attach too much importance to dreams. But in this respect, good men, and men of otherwise strong minds, have often been a little "too superstitious," without being thereby led into any hurtful errors. Grant, however, that he was in danger of falling into some hurtful delusion from this source, might not some friendly caution and admonition from his brethren have sufficed to save him? At all events, the Presbytery charged him with holding the false and dangerous opinion, that he was sometimes directed from heaven in dreams. Mr. Rankin denied, and affirmed that he held no such opinion, notwithstanding that certain impressions had been made on his mind in a dream which was so remarkable that he had communicated it in confidence to some friend. Might not this have satisfied his brethren, at least, till they could lay their hands on some practical wrong into which he had been led by holding the opinion?

6. This trial gave rise to three pamphlets, all of which I have seen, and have now before me such extracts from them as are sufficient for my present purpose. On the whole, the most probable conclusion to which my mind can arrive is, that it was only by implication, that Mr. Rankin charged his brethren with deism and blasphemy. Dr. Watts had said some "unguarded things" about the psalms of David, as one of his advocates has admitted. Many of the Doctor's admirers had learned from him to say the same "unguarded things." Perhaps members of the Transylvania Presbytery had said them. It is certain they used Watts' Imitations. They were, therefore, to be regarded as approving those alterations and emendations which Dr. Watts had made in the inspired psalms, for the

same reason which had led him to say those "unguarded things." When, therefore, Mr. Rankin affirmed, that "to say that anything dictated by the Spirit of God in the Old Testament, is opposed to the spirit of the New, is blasphemous—for both Testaments were dictated by the same Spirit, and can not be opposite to each other—nothing can be a stronger support for deism than to set the word of God at odds against itself,"—when I say he affirmed, as he did affirm, all this, and also, I think, did affirm nothing but the truth, his brethren would perhaps feel about as acutely as if the charge of deism had been brought directly against them. Indeed, I am not certain but they would show a little more sensitiveness.

Mr. Rankin was an impulsive man. He was also a man of strong resentments, and sometimes gave vent to his feelings in no very measured terms. What expressions may have escaped his lips in the heat of controversy, it is impossible to say; but if he ever charged his brethren with deism, otherwise than I have supposed, the proof has never, that I have seen, been so distinctly laid before the public as to preclude a reasonable doubt.

During the days of our colonial dependence, it pleased our people to look up to the "mother country" for books, for opinions, for preachers, for buttons and ribbons, and for every other good thing. Especially was this the fact in the southern and middle States. And it was always supposed that the imported article was the best. Never mother had more dutiful, affectionate, and confiding daughters, than were those colonies, till the old lady began to play the step-dame. This disposition to depend on a foreign country, and this prejudice in favor of foreign productions, had the unhappy effect of retarding improvement among ourselves. Our own resources were not called forth

and cultivated. American talent was not encouraged; American energy was paralyzed. One fact, out of many, may be given in illustration of this. Though the college of William and Mary, in the province of Virginia, was founded while William and Mary filled the British throne, it rarely had more than twenty students during the first seventy years of its existence. "The habit of sending young men to Europe for their education had continued so long, that many of the more wealthy persisted in it after they had a college erected among themselves." Indeed, it is said that it never began to gain much on public favor, till near the beginning of the present century.

But "the revolutionary war was no sooner terminated by the peace of 1783, than the friends of literature began to feel more than ever the importance of encouraging institutions for diffusing useful knowledge. Indeed, before the din of arms ceased to be heard, plans began to be formed, and in some instances to be executed, for the promotion of this object. The inhabitants of the American States now not only felt independent in a political view, but they began to cherish the wish for greater literary independence than they had formerly enjoyed. The zeal and enterprise which had been directed against the common enemy now turned toward domestic improvement."

It was just at this important crisis, when this powerful impulse was given to American mind, that the Associate Reformed Church was ushered into existence. It was at this ever-memorable epoch in the history of the world, that the heretofore dissevered and belligerent parties, out of which she was formed, began to feel themselves powerfully attracted toward each other, that they might put forth that strength there is in union, in the strife for human improvement. But there were, and there are, minds which are not susceptible of any such noble impulse. There are men

calling themselves Christians, who seem to think that opposition, and contention, and partizan strife are the veins and arteries which circulate the life's blood of religion; and it was insinuated—was it never more than insinuated?—that the union ministers wished to have large congregations, and large salaries, like the “popular” and “apostate Churches.”

I have lately seen an article in an Associate Reformed periodical, which speaks of what a *Seceder* preacher should be and do, and tells us what people will expect from a *Seceder* preacher. Now, I have up to the present moment labored under a gross mistake, if the Associate Reformed Church was organized for the purpose of keeping up old party names, or that she might nourish and cherish, under the infirmities of old age, peculiarities which had their origin in other times and on the other side of the water. Whatever meaning and importance the disputes between Burghers and anti-Burghers, Seceders and Covenanters, may once have had, they are now, with us, utterly unmeaning—they are idle, and useless, and mischievous—and so let them pass away to the land of shadows and thick darkness. Let who will become the resurrectionist, and call forth these spectres from the dead, to play their fantastic tricks in this world of living men and living realities, look out!—for I am determined on regular and obstinate battle. No; the Associate Reformed Church came up on the theatre of human action, for a nobler object. It was that the united body might be able to accomplish more toward bringing the saving truths of the Gospel to bear, with the utmost efficiency, on the masses of our population. So soon as there shall be more of this spirit in the Churches, so soon there will be more union; but not before.

It appears from a remark of old Mr. Annan, that a great

and important consideration, which influenced the minds of the fathers in favor of union, was, that the united body might be able to do much more toward raising up a well educated ministry at home, instead of being dependent on a precarious, and often not very acceptable supply from abroad. "We hoped," says he, "by the late coalition of parties, between whom every real cause of contention was by God's providence removed, to have had it more in our power to raise up and educate candidates for the ministry among ourselves; but our dissenting brethren have greatly baffled this good design. However, we must look higher for the source of the evil. God has had a holy hand in it. The schism is an awful judgment on both parties. God is angry with us. Our sins have procured His righteous displeasure. 'O God! thou hast cast us off; thou hast scattered us; thou hast been displeased. O turn thyself to us again.'"—(Overture, page 155.)

There is reason to believe that at least some of the fathers cherished the hope—it may have been a fond hope—that the united body would possess such numerical strength, and such *moral power*, that they would be able to furnish with a sufficient ministry that portion of the American public who are Presbyterian in their leanings. And much might be said to show that the hope was not altogether visionary. But the comparative failure of the union, the strife which ensued, and which was carried into the very heart of many congregations; the parties (too often directing their forces against each other, instead of employing them against the common enemy and for the common good) baffled all such calculations. Hence a pause ensued in the prosecution of the "good design;" and though it was doubtless still kept in view, it was some years before any efforts began to be made for its accomplishment. And then the old difficulty had to be encoun-

tered—"since we have been so greatly disappointed, and are still weak, we must fall back on the old plan, we must depend on the 'mother country;' we need not expect to improve the state of education here, so as to make it equal to what it is abroad." It is natural to suppose that many of the foreign recruits would do their utmost to swell this cry. They did so. There may be those still alive who remember that the affected scorn with which many of the imported preachers were in the habit of speaking of native American preachers, was at one time a source of considerable disquietude, and of some apprehension for the future harmony of the Church. Mr. Annan was himself from the old country; but his good sense enabled him to see, and his superiority to those vulgar prejudices which lead some men to endeavor to exalt the country of their birth, at the expense of the country of their adoption, permitted him to confess, that the policy of depending on a foreign supply of ministers would be ruinous. There may be those still alive who remember to have heard, that in reference to the policy of sending abroad for help, he remarked—" *They will send us their lumber.*" Foreign ministers of conscious worth knew that such was often the fact, and were not offended; but by another class it was long remembered against him. Each one said to himself, "that means me."

Dr. Miller, from whom I have already borrowed some sentences, which are distinguished by the usual quotation marks, expresses the opinion, that so late as the beginning of the present century, the cultivation of literature and science was discouraged, and consequently retarded, by this prejudice. His words are—"A large portion of our citizens seem to entertain the idea, that nothing worthy of patronage can be produced on this side of the Atlantic. Instead of being prompted to a more liberal encourage-

ment of genius, because it is American, the prejudices, on this account, are rather exerted against it.”—(Retrospect, vol. ii., page 417.)

It has lately been remarked in my hearing, that in some congregations in a sister Church, something of this old prejudice still exists. A preacher from the old country will be eagerly grasped at, though he may possess but little real merit; while a young man, no matter how promising, who has the misfortune to have been born and educated on the wrong side of the Atlantic, is elbowed aside. I think we have no such congregations in the Associate Reformed Church; though our people will, as they should, esteem and honor a foreigner who acts well his part. Individual foreigners may doubtless be found among us, who proclaim that there are no such ministers here as at “home;” and indeed, that native American preachers can tell them nothing but what they knew before; but such men only render themselves ridiculous. The sun, they may admit, is as large as in the “auld kintra,” but the moon is hardly as bright. It is an amiable weakness, for it shows their love for “home, sweet home;” and it proves that they did *not* “leave their country for their country’s good.”

The project of establishing a theological seminary on this side of the Atlantic was a novel one. It required time to bring over intelligent and good men to be fully sensible of its importance. And then they had to be convinced that it was so feasible, that it was worth while to make earnest efforts for its accomplishment. It had moreover to contend with other prejudices, which are no less unyielding than those which have been already noticed. The first step which was actually taken toward it, was in the year 1798, when, at the instance of Mr. (afterward Doctor) Mason, the Synod adopted an “Act concerning a synodical fund;” a leading object of which was, “to assist pious

young men, who from poverty can not comfortably and successfully pursue their studies, and for the establishment of a professorship of theology for the instruction of such as design the holy ministry." Though this "Act" was not altogether without effect, it did not accomplish all that was desired. Hence, at the meeting of Synod in 1801, Dr. Mason was, after solemn prayer, chosen by ballot to go on a mission to Europe, to obtain a supply of ministers and probationers to meet the immediate wants of the Church, and to solicit donations in money and books for the erection of a theological seminary. He immediately set out on his mission, and the next year made his report to Synod. The mission was as successful as could reasonably have been expected. He obtained six ministers and probationers, who were selected with care as persons suitable to enter on the interesting field of labor which America then presented. Others followed in consequence of his visit. He procured a valuable library, partly with the money which he took with him as the Synod's agent; but chiefly from donations in money and books which were made by friends of religion and literature in several towns in England and Scotland.

But the seminary was still not immediately established. I do wish I could account for this delay without supposing the existence of causes which it is painful to think of. The most favorable conclusion to which it is possible to bring the mind, is, that it was probably owing to a culpable indifference and apathy on the part of many of the brethren. It is indeed beyond all dispute, that too many members of the Synod never gave the seminary their cordial support. But in May, 1804, the General Synod held its first meeting at Greencastle—by a previous arrangement a general Synod had been formed—when a plan of education was adopted; and it was determined that the seminary should

commence its operations on the first Monday of the following November. Dr. Mason was chosen professor, and New York was selected as the site. In the year 1809, Rev. James M. Matthews was chosen professor of church history, and adjunct professor of biblical literature. The seminary soon enlisted a considerable amount of popular favor, and students repaired to it, not only from the Associate Reformed, but from the Presbyterian and Dutch Reformed Churches. Dr. Mason continued his labors as principal professor till the year 1821, when he resigned in consequence of ill health. He was indeed *broken down* under a pressure of labors, being at the same time professor of theology in the seminary, provost of Columbia college, and pastor of a congregation which made no ordinary demand on him who furnished its weekly lessons of religious instruction. The General Synod, now weakened by the withdrawal of the Synods of the West and the South, and being otherwise embarrassed, soon found it necessary to suspend the operations of the seminary. In the year 1829, it was revived by the Synod of New York; but removed to Newburgh, where it is still (1850) in successful operation, under the care of Rev. Joseph McCarrel, D. D., as principal professor.

During its continuance in New York, ninety-six young men availed themselves of its advantages; the greater part of whom went through the entire course of four years. Of these, probably about one-third are still alive (Dec. 1850), and with a few exceptions engaged in the Master's work. One of them is the president of a college, and two are principal professors in theological seminaries.

Near the middle of the last century, Rev. Samuel Blair opened a seminary at Fog's Manor, Chester county, Pennsylvania, "with a more particular attention to the study of theology as a science." About the close of the century, it

is said, that the Associate Church placed her students under the care of Dr. Anderson, that they might receive a more regular and systematic training. The Dutch Reformed, directed hers to attend the lectures of Dr. Livingston. And there may have been other efforts to facilitate the studies of young men preparing for the ministry. But it has become a *matter of history*, that the Associate Reformed Church founded the first theological seminary ever established in the United States. With the year 1804, the era of theological seminaries commenced. To the professors in her seminary also belongs the honor of editing the first American edition of the Hebrew Scriptures.

That the reader's attention may rest on it, this section will close with an extract from a communication of Dr. Mason to a committee of the Associate Synod of Edinburgh:

"The rank which America must one day hold among the nations, renders her political and moral institutions of general concern. Of this, infidel reformers are aware; and in no part of the world have their emissaries been more active in disseminating their poison. They know too, that there is little hope of overturning Christianity, and of inflicting on the world those plagues which would follow her ruin as long as the ministry retains its respectability and influence. This, of course, must encounter their most inveterate hostility. And hence arises an additional reason for ministerial ability. The committee can not fail to perceive the conclusion which I wish them to draw, that the Churches which I represent have claims on their sister Churches here, for preachers of *talent* as well as *piety*."

Yes; infidels understood their business as well in the morning as they do at the noon of the nineteenth century—they must needs be *reformers*, and promise fine things, to catch the multitude. They knew too, as they know now, that in war, it is good policy to endeavor to kill off the

generals of the opposing army; hence they aim their missiles against the ministers of the Gospel. But for this, we would not have *quite* so many laborers in the various departments of reform. And in this work, disorderly professors of religion, and those who hate the restraints of wholesome discipline, are ever ready to lend infidels their aid.

Section 7.

Historical Narrative of the early Seminaries in the United States—
Dr. Mason and Dr. Bishop—Dissensions in the Kentucky Presbytery—
The Lexington Academy—Transylvania University.

ANOTHER chapter in our history must be introduced with a narrative, which may, at first sight, appear extraneous to the subject.

In the year 1780, a literary institution was chartered by the legislature of Virginia, called the Transylvania Seminary, and endowed with eight thousand acres of land. It was located at Lexington; Kentucky being, at that time, within the chartered limits of Virginia. But it did not give general satisfaction; and in the year 1794, the Presbyterians, at their own proper cost and charges, established an institution in Lexington, called the Kentucky Academy, under a charter obtained from the legislature of Kentucky, which had now become a State. This prospered; the State institution languished. In the year 1798, at the instance of the trustees and friends of the latter, and with the sanction of the legislature, these two seminaries were united, and the institution thus formed, was called the Transylvania University. As the Presbyterians brought with them a dowry of about eight thousand dollars, and had proved themselves to be successful educators, they had, of consequence, a chief control over the university.

Soon after Mr. Rankin left the Presbyterian Church, he and his friends established a seminary, called the Lexing-

ton Academy. To this institution the legislature of Kentucky made a donation of four thousand five hundred acres of land, which, according to a report of the Kentucky Presbytery, were "deeded to the Associate Reformed Church." In this institution, a number of young men were educated for the ministry of reconciliation, viz.: Messrs. M'Chord, Wallace, M'Farland, and Logan, all of whom are now (1851) dead, and Rev. S. Crothers, D. D., now, and for many years bygone, pastor of a Presbyterian Church at Greenfield, Ohio. The academy was a favorite with Mr. Rankin, the Kentucky Presbytery, and all that portion of the Associate Reformed people who took a lively interest in the cause of literature and religion. It had promoted "good learning," and it was preparing young men to become heralds of the cross.

When the theological seminary in New York was established, an application was made to the Synod, on behalf of the Lexington Academy, for a share of the books and funds procured by Dr. Mason in Europe. The Synod expressed their high regard for the liberality and perseverance of the brethren in Kentucky, in thus far maturing their academy; but declined dividing their means "at present" between two seminaries; which, they alleged, would be to destroy both, instead of supporting either. For the ensuing three years, however, the contributions from the Synod of Scioto were appropriated to the academy. A similar application in the year 1807 was disposed of in substantially the same way.

This refusal of the Synod was certainly wise. To have divided the funds and the patronage of the Synod between two theological institutions, at that crisis, would have been bad policy. But it may still be a question, whether some more definite assurance should not have been given to the friends of the academy, that, at some

future day, earnest efforts would be made to establish a Western Theological School.

The pioneer fathers of Kentucky came over the mountain passes, and penetrated far into the wilderness, each man with his gun on his shoulder, his wife and a child or two on horseback, with perhaps a led horse, and pack-saddle loaded with provisions and a few cooking utensils. They erected forts, or, in more quiet times, lived in block-houses. In the morning a window shutter was cautiously opened, and the prospect all around carefully viewed to see if any Indians were near, when the door was opened, gun in hand perhaps, while the good woman stood ready, if need should be, to help her husband to do battle; for, in those heroic ages, women performed deeds of daring from which men would shrink—"in these degenerate days," as a despairing philosopher would add. Then, an energy of character was acquired, if it was not already possessed, which will characterize their descendants for years yet to come. It was of these pioneers, and their children, now become wealthy, that the Associate Reformed Churches in Kentucky were chiefly composed. Considering that every thing in Kentucky was yet in an infant state, it required no little exertion and energy, and perseverance, and some influence with the legislature, to erect an academy, whose property was estimated at ten-thousand dollars. Add to this, that the West was beginning to feel its importance, and Lexington already felt all its importance, as decidedly the first town west of the Alleghany mountains. Why should New York, rather than Lexington, be the ecclesiastical metropolis of the whole Associate Reformed Church? A Kentuckian could see no reason for it in the world. Perhaps then, some other assurance than could be deduced from the words, "the present," should have been given, that young men preparing for the ministry in the

West would not always have to attend a seminary so remote as that in New York. One consequence of the apparent neglect was, that Mr. Rankin, and some other members of the Presbytery of Kentucky, who never were entirely cordial in supporting the seminary in New York, became more lukewarm, if, indeed, they did not become hostile to it. Another consequence was, that efforts were made to establish a theological school at Lexington; not perhaps in despite of the Synod, but in the hope that the Synod would be compelled to consent to it. Little, however, was done, and the project was soon abandoned. A third consequence was, that at least two young men, who were under influences which prevented them from attending the seminary in New York, relinquished the idea of studying divinity.

But some other consequences which flowed, though perhaps indirectly, from the establishment of the Lexington Academy, remain to be noticed.

Among the ministers who came over from Scotland with Dr. Mason, there was a young probationer whose name was Robert H. Bishop, the same who has now (Jan. 1851) been for many years extensively known as Dr. Bishop. Mr. Rankin was a delegate from the Presbytery of Kentucky, to the first Synod which met after Dr. Mason's return; and report had it, that when he came home, having procured that Mr. Bishop should be assigned to the Presbytery of Kentucky, he told some of his friends that Dr. Mason said to him—"Mr. Rankin, you have got the cream." It is known that Dr. Mason held Mr. Bishop in high estimation. It is also known that the latter soon ascended to a high rank among pulpit orators in Kentucky. "Clay at the bar, or Bishop in the pulpit," was at one time, among the students of Transylvania University, the *ne plus ultra* of human greatness. Those who

only had an opportunity of hearing Dr. Bishop in his later years, can have no just conception of his earlier pulpit performances—of the fire which flashed from his eye, the earnest vehemence of his manner, and the effects produced by the modulations of a voice, which, though by no means musical, admirably answered the purposes of its owner. Besides, there are, and there have been, few men in the United States, who could wield a general principle with the same facility, and apply it to such a variety of cases. This was his *forte*. In this he excelled Dr. Mason. In this he was not unlike the far-famed Dugald Stewart, though in many other things he was unlike the Scotch professor. Stewart was of a metaphysical turn of mind, and his powers of perception and discrimination were more acute; while he could write page after page in a style of the finest polish, though his reader, without the closest attention, is perpetually in danger of forgetting what is his subject. Dr. Bishop dealt more in “great leading facts,” and while he was little studious of the graces of diction, he never spoke or wrote without saying something, and you always knew exactly what he was saying.

A few years after Mr. Bishop's arrival in Kentucky, he was chosen by the trustees of Transylvania University, professor of logic, rhetoric, and moral philosophy, and he accepted the appointment. Such were Mr. Rankin's feelings toward that institution, and such the interest he felt in the Lexington Academy, that this step was highly offensive to him and his friends. The Presbytery brought charges against him, the precise nature of which I have not been able to learn; but they grew out of his connection with the university. The case went up to Synod. The Synod found Mr. Bishop to blame for the *manner* in which he had formed his connection with the university; but instructed the Presbytery not to insist on his resigning

his professorship, as the condition on which they would instal him in the pastoral charge of a congregation; alleging, that time should be allowed for testing the matter whether his duties in the university would be incompatible with his obligations to the Church. The Presbytery, after some hesitation, proceeded to instal him.

Here we are to look for the germ, though perhaps not exactly for the cause, of those dissensions which arose in the Kentucky Presbytery; which, in their progress drove some talented ministers out of our connection; and which, drawing the people into their vortex, and deriving fresh aliment from new circumstances which arose, continued to rage till the Associate Reformed Church in Kentucky was almost totally annihilated. We shall meet them again.

The reluctance of the Presbytery to the instalment of Mr. Bishop, may have arisen in part from their participation in the prejudice against Transylvania University. This is but supposing them human, and compassed with human infirmities. But it may have arisen, and I have no doubt but it did, in part, arise from their stretching a little too far the very good and sound principle, that a minister of the Gospel should give himself wholly to the work of the ministry. *So he should; but he may further the Gospel of Christ, by conducting young men through a course of education, preparatory to the ministry. He may thus multiply himself manifold. And what if many whom he educates never enter the ministry, but choose some other profession? God and man need pious physicians, and lawyers and statesmen, as well as pious preachers. And what if some of them never enter any useful profession? The rain which God sends from heaven, waters the barren, as well as the fruitful parts of the earth.

The Associate Reformed Church has suffered much loss in consequence of her having so few men employed as Mr. Bishop was in Transylvania University.

The operations of the Lexington Academy ceased about the year 1812. For some years after this, if my information, or rather, if my memory is correct, a board of trustees existed and occasionally met to manage its concerns; but how the board was perpetuated, I do not know. What has become of the lands, whether they have reverted to the State, or whether some of the managers, managed to convert them into private property; here also, my information is at fault. But if the grant was such as is generally supposed, those lands, in equity, belong to the Synod of the West, as the proper representative of the Synod of Scioto, for whose use they were held in trust by the persons known in law as the trustees of the academy.

The academy was taught in Mount Zion (Mr. Rankin's) church, either in the upper or basement story. To aid in the erection of this building, subscriptions were taken up, not only in the immediate vicinity of Lexington, but in places more remote; and according to my understanding of the matter, it was in part the property of the congregation, and in part the common property of the Church. On a representation being made to the Synod of the West about the year 1848 that the building, and the lot which had become valuable, were deserted, and, if not looked after, would be taken possession of by the corporation of Lexington as a derelict, the Synod appointed an agent to take care of the property. The agent exceeded the powers given him, and made some arrangement by which it was put into the possession of another party. The Synod were about taking further action in the case, when information was received that some individuals in the vicinity of Lexington had associated themselves as the congregation of

Mount Zion, and would resist the claim of the Synod. The matter was then dropped. Who will ultimately reap the fruits, and whose private property will be increased, by these donations and grants to promote the cause of literature and religion, are questions which cannot now be answered; but which, no doubt, could be answered by a careful inquiry on the spot. All may now be regarded as irrecoverably lost to the Church; but this statement of facts will not be without its use, if it shall induce more care in future, on the part of those who have the management of such interests, to proceed in the manner of "business men," and according to strict legal forms.

Nor were our Presbyterian friends, though generally more expert in the management of such matters, much more fortunate. For some years after the organization of Transylvania University, its progress was as rapid as could reasonably have been expected. But the cry of "Sec-tarianism," and of "Presbyterian influence" was set up. In the year 1817, during one of those paroxysms of infidel and political fanaticism, which sometimes threaten the desolation of a Christian community, the legislature annulled the charter, turned out the old board of trustees, and appointed a new board, composed of men whose religious *indifferentism* made them acceptable to the leading politicians about Lexington. One of their first steps was to choose for president of the university the Rev. Horace Holley, a pompous Unitarian preacher of Boston. Mr. Holley came on, "loved the Kentuckians," gave assurances that he held what are usually called evangelical or orthodox sentiments; but soon began to show a disposition to use his great popularity, and his official influence, for the subversion, not of orthodoxy merely, but of Christianity itself. He jested on the scriptures, sneered at what the pious of all denominations hold sacred, and attended balls,

theatres, and horse races, though, as his parasites testified, he always "conducted himself at such places with dignity and decorum." To his friends, he said in confidence, that when he came on he expected opposition from the Presbyterians—to their honor be it recorded—but that he intended to play off against them, the Episcopalians, Methodists, and Baptists. But in this he did not succeed to the extent of his wishes. The morals of the students ran riot; study was neglected; scoffing, sneering, profane jests, and pleasure seeking, usurped the place of close thought and severe application. President Holley resigned. And this was the end of the chapter. But funds to the amount of at least twenty thousand dollars which were handed over by the old to the new board were squandered. By an act of the legislature of 1817, which was in direct violation of the faith of the State, pledged by the legislature, which sanctioned the union between the two original seminaries, the Presbyterians were defrauded to nearly the amount of eight thousand dollars. They peaceably withdrew and founded Centre College. For these facts I am indebted to memory, and also to the *Literary Pamphleteer*, a paper which in the times referred to appeared in occasional numbers, Rev. J. M'Farland, editor.

Section 8.

The early Church in Jerusalem and Antioch—The First Christian Council. Its Decision for Christian Liberty—Dr. Mason and Frequent Communion—This subject much discussed in the Associate Reformed Church and elsewhere—Liberty in things indifferent; Uniformity in things necessary, and Charity in all things—The Synod decides in favor of Christian Forbearance.

THE first Christian Church was established at Jerusalem. It became the "Mother Church;" and besides the idea of sacredness associated with Jerusalem in the Jewish mind, many circumstances contributed to give

it a vast influence over the Churches which were afterwards formed.

Many of the Jews who embraced the Gospel had belonged to the sect of the Pharisees ; and not a few of these continued to be as zealous for the law of Moses, after, as they had been before their conversion. An influence was rapidly forming, which would have loaded the Christian profession with a burden of rites and observances foreign from its nature as a spiritual system ; and which would have repressed its energies, and prevented it from becoming a universal religion. But still, there were converts from among the Jews who held the true idea of Christianity, and saw clearly, what Paul afterwards taught, that, "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." But the proper time for discussing and settling this question had not yet come. To have urged it to a decision before the mind of the Church was furnished with the necessary data for coming to a correct decision, would have created a division in the infant society. Something must occur to present the question in its practical bearings. In the meantime, it required the utmost caution, and prudence, and forbearance on the part of the apostles, and the utmost care of the Head of the Church to prevent the question from producing an early schism, which would have been most disastrous in its consequences. . How many scandalous schisms have since been made, and how many new and warring sects have since been formed for reasons not a whit more important? A zealous advocate for purity, of another stamp, would have cried—"Come out from among them and be ye separate—How can two walk together, except they be agreed?" and then he would have broken communion with all those who could not, or would not, view the question with his eyes ; and he would have denounced

them as time-servers who would not risk their popularity for the sake of precious truth; and then he would have built up a wall between his followers and the other party, which would reach even to heaven; yes to heaven; for in very deed, Heaven must agree with him in regarding this wall which he had built up in his pride and folly so sacred, that it would be a grievous sin to climb over it, or crawl through it, to join with those on the other side, in the ordinances of the Lord. But though time must be allowed to wean the Jewish converts from Moses, they must not, in the meantime, be permitted to acquire such a preponderating influence, as to prevent Christianity from being evolved out of Judaism, in all its spirituality and simplicity. For this purpose, the Head of the Church took care that there should be early established a Church composed chiefly of converts from the Gentiles, which should have such a rapid growth, and acquire such an influence as to be a counterpoise to the Church at Jerusalem. This was at Antioch, the chief city of Syria. The place was favorable. Antioch was a large city, and it enjoyed the freedom of Rome. The ministers of the word could teach, and the people could profess and practise, all that Christ had commanded, secure from the annoyance of the local magistracy, for they could appeal to Cæsar. How rapidly did able and zealous teachers and preachers of the word spring up at Antioch! It was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. The Lord gave the word; great was the company of those who published it. In zeal for the spread of the Gospel, the Church at Antioch did not yield to the Church at Jerusalem; in efficient efforts for the spread of the Gospel, did it not surpass the Church at Jerusalem? *Here, the first Christian mission to the heathen was planned; and hither Paul and Barnabas returned, when they had fulfilled their mission.*

The zealots at Jerusalem thought it was now high time that something were done to arrest the tendency of things at Antioch. Certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren that except they were circumcised and kept the law of Moses, they could not be saved. They pretended to have authority from the Mother Church to teach this. And they had antiquity on their side, and they had custom on their side, and they had on their side the example of all the pious from the days of Abraham down to the time then present; and Paul with all his eloquence, and Barnabas with all his goodness, and Paul and Barnabas together, notwithstanding all their labors and sufferings in the cause of Christ, were no match for these men. How could they contend successfully against such odds?

After much fruitless discussion, it was determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders about this question. They did so. It was soon conceded on all hands, that such conformity to the law of Moses should not be insisted on as essential to salvation. But though this much was conceded, the whole ground would not be surrendered so easily. There arose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying that it was needful to circumcise them and command them to keep the law of Moses. That is, though we grant it is not positively commanded, and therefore not essential to salvation, yet it is needful, it is proper—such has always been the custom among us,—innovations are dangerous, for when people begin to change, who can tell where they will stop? And I doubt not they said something about the necessity of “uniformity,” as a man always does when he wishes to have his favorite notions manufactured into a rule for all other men. The apostles and elders came together to consider this matter; that is, the question in this new form. *This was the first Christian*

council. The sequel is known. The decision was in favor of *Christian liberty*. Let the Jews do as they had ever done; but let no such rule be imposed on the Gentiles. The apostles had sense enough to know that there may be a "unity in the faith of the Son of God," without a monotonous "uniformity" in matters of custom and form. And they were capable of conceiving that, in many things, Christians may be left to exercise their own discretion and prudence, instead of being blindly led by custom, or driven by authority, and still no terrible disaster befall them, or the Church of God.

Human nature is the same in all ages. Every age may have its own questions and controversies, and its own distinctly marked peculiarities of character; but amidst all these changes, the human mind will still present essentially the same phenomena. Hence, it is as true in the nineteenth century as in the days of Solomon, that there is nothing new under the sun.

In the year 1796, the late Dr. Mason addressed several letters to the members of the Associate Reformed Church, on the subject of Frequent Communion; in which, with an eloquence and a force of argument, which have seldom been surpassed, he pleaded for a more frequent administration of the Lord's Supper than had formerly been the custom. As the days of fasting and thanksgiving which were connected with the ordinance stood greatly in the way of that frequency which he desired to see introduced, he contended that they should be laid aside, as without authority in the word of God; without precedent in the Church of Christ till a very late period, and therefore an innovation; and also, without authority in the Directory for Public Worship, as adopted by the Westminster Assembly, or received by the Associate Reformed Church.

Much about the same time, Rev. John Hemphill, of

South Carolina, published a Discourse on the nature of Religious Fasting, in which he took the same ground, and labored for the same object as Dr. Mason, with an ability little inferior; for indeed, as an investigator of truth, he was little inferior to Dr. Mason, though he did not possess all his power as the advocate of truth.

These publications gave rise to much discussion. Many good people, up to that hour, had never doubted (why should they? for nothing had led them to inquire) that the observance of these days was required both in the Bible and the Directory; but when they looked into the Bible they could find no authority for it, and when they looked into the Directory, all they could find was, that "when the Lord's Supper cannot be frequently administered, public warning be given on the Sabbath before the administration thereof, and that either then, or on some day of the week, something concerning that ordinance, and the due preparation thereunto, and participation thereof be taught." It was therefore evident that a day of fasting previous to the administration of the Lord's Supper was unknown to the Westminster Assembly, or made no part of the order prescribed by that assembly.

Out of the Associate Reformed Church, the question also attracted notice. Dr. Anderson, of the Associate Church, buckled on his armor, and came up to the defence of the days in one of his letters to Mr. Hemphill. Those who had opposed the union said—"There now, we told you so; and who can tell into what errors and innovations the Associate Reformed Church will yet run." With a few exceptions, however, those who contended for the observance of the days, whether in the Associate Reformed Church or out of it, soon conceded that they were not essential to the right administration of the ordinance, and that neither Christ nor his apostles had enjoined them; but they still

insisted that it was needful, it is a laudable custom, our fathers observed them, they have been owned and blessed, fasting is a good means of preparation for the Lord's Supper, and much more to the same effect, the amount of which was, that though Christ had not appointed a day of fasting preparatory to the administration of the Lord's Supper, yet it can be shown to be so useful and necessary, that one can hardly help wondering why He did not; at least, that all His apostles should have overlooked it.

And to this ground many good men in the Associate Reformed Church cleaved till the day of their death; as I doubt not that the private opinion of some of those who said, "It is needful to circumcise them and command them to keep the law of Moses," remained unchanged. And these also, I do not doubt, were good men; though I am not prepared to say as much for those "certain men who came down from Judea and taught." There was a hardihood about these, which does not look well. I much question if they were not a parcel of self-appointed *illumina-tors* and *reformers*, such as abound in the present age,—men who are very "apt to teach," but care little what they do teach, provided they can distinguish themselves, and create trouble for the friends of true godliness.

The question was brought before the Synod. The decision was such as it ought to be—in favor of *Christian liberty*. I say, "such as it ought to be;" for I hold that Christian liberty is a privilege which Christ purchased for his people. To deny it to any of his followers, is a detestable heresy. In the absence of divine authority, if any set of men attempt to impose a rule upon other men, no matter on what plea of custom, piety, or devotion, they do invade the sanctuary of the Lord, and usurp a dominion over conscience which belongs to the Lord alone. Once admit that men have any such right, and who can

tell what an intolerable system of tyranny may be built on it? Who, in fact, can enumerate the divisions, and contentions, and sufferings, and persecutions of which such imposition has been the fruitful source? Liberty in things which are not necessary and therefore indifferent, uniformity in necessary things, and charity in all things—is a human maxim indeed, but one which will wear the better, the longer it is worn. The Synod decided in favor of *Christian forbearance*. “Ah! forbearance! that is but another name for that wicked *toleration*, against which our godly ancestors contended in the purest times of the reformation,—it is the parent of all error and laxness.” Patience, friend; that is driving an argument through with great celerity. Forbearance is a *Christian grace*—“forbearing one another in love.” Any society claiming to be a church, but boasting that she makes nothing a matter of forbearance, does in effect say, that there is one Christian grace which she does not exercise, and will not permit her members to exercise. She therefore proclaims that she is not a Church of Christ. She does more. If she says truly, she proclaims herself an antichrist. If she does not speak the truth, she is a deceiver. But forbearance is exercised, when we bear with things in our brethren which we do not approve, but do indeed disapprove, “endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace.” When we meet with things which are *expressly*, or by *very plain and necessary inference*, forbidden in the word of God, then, but not before, does forbearance cease to be a duty.

It might be added, that those who will make nothing a matter of forbearance, but must make every punctilio and peccadillo a term of communion, are somewhat noted for having in their communion a formidable list of contentious, censorious, wrathful, out-breaking professors of religion.

The Synod enjoined forbearance. Enough had been said to prevent the attaching of any superstitious importance to the days. All agreed to place them on the ground of a mere human observance. Some thought that, in their circumstances, they were useful; others thought that, to them, under their circumstances, they were not so. Let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind. The observance, or the non-observance of them might hinder edification, but it would not prevent acceptance with God. And neither of the parties to the question could suppose that it would edify their brethren, to impose on them, by the mere dint of authority, a rule to which they were seriously opposed.

In the First Presbytery of the Carolinas, in New York, and in some other places, a more frequent administration of the Lord's Supper was introduced without the days. In the Second Presbytery of the Carolinas, in the Synod of Scioto, and some other places, no change was immediately made. But gradually, the plan which now (Feb. 1851) most generally prevails was introduced,—a greater frequency in the administration of the ordinance, with preaching on all the week days, unless the season of the year or some other circumstances render it expedient to dispense with some of the week days. . As preaching the word is always a duty—"in season and out of season"—there can be no scriptural objection to meeting for public worship on the Friday and Saturday before the communion, and the Monday after it. But if it is found that on any of the week days, the attendance is thin—so thin that it acts as a damper on the spirits of the worshippers, would it not be better to discontinue meeting on that day? Who would be most likely to find fault? Yes; that's the question. Some good people might be grieved; but, as a general fact, those who would make the greatest uproar would be the very persons who are the most irregular in their attendance.

Section 9.

Church Censures on Ministerial Brethren for irregular and unchristian Conduct—Cases of Church Discipline:—Rev. Robert Kerr deposed and afterward restored—Rev. Mr. M'Millan censured, rebuked, silenced, and restored, but finally joined the Associate Church.

I REMEMBER to have heard it said that, many years ago, some members of the Synod were lamenting among themselves, that there were so many cases occurring, in which it was necessary to inflict the censures of the Church on ministerial brethren for irregular and unchristian conduct. It was grievous in itself; and they were afraid it would be laid to the reproach of the Associate Reformed Church by those who were unfriendly to her. Dr. Mason, in whose presence the conversation was held, replied—"It is the glory of the Church: it furnishes evidence of her *fidelity*, and her regard for the purity of the faith and morals of Christianity." The remark doubtless contains much truth. It does afford evidence that the ministers of the Gospel are not disposed to screen or uphold one another in that which is wrong; as, from the necessity of the case, all bands of impostors are obliged to do. I think it was Cicero who said, that one soothsayer cannot meet another without smiling—smiling at the imposture, and the success of the imposture in which they are jointly engaged. A similar opinion in reference to the ministers of the Gospel seems to be entertained by some. Something like it seems, at one time, to have been the opinion of Thomas Jefferson. If it were worth while, they might be asked, on your supposition, how does it happen that the ministers of religion do not spare one another, lest by faithful dealing and inflicting censures on an offending brother, they provoke his resentment to such a pitch, that he will reveal the unhappy secret? Some ministers who have been put out

of office by their brethren for unchristian conduct, have shown such a spirit of revenge that they seemed willing to go all lengths to injure the men and the cause they were compelled to abandon; but among Protestants, no such outlawed minister has ever undertaken to tell the world that his former brethren were engaged in some selfish design very different from the ostensible one. He has never undertaken to reveal any secret plots or conspiracies, for the simple reason, there were none to reveal.

But still, I am far from believing that frequent cases of discipline furnish proof of the comparative purity of the Church. Christian morals cannot be in the most healthy state, when there is a great deal of "ridding up" to do before every communion—when one man is drawn up for drunkenness, another for profane swearing, a third for quarrelling and fighting, while the congregation is convulsed, some blaming the officers of the Church for being too severe in one case, and some, for being too lenient in another. In the infancy of a congregation, especially if it is made up of heterogeneous and badly prepared materials, there is unhappily often a necessity for much of this: but let a minister have time to form the character of a congregation, till it contains a considerable number of members whose conversation is such as becometh the Gospel; the disorderly and irregular will not desire to join themselves to such a congregation, while upon those who do join themselves to it, a pure and holy influence will be exerted. And this, which, if you please, you may call *social discipline*, is far more happy in its effects, and affords far more conclusive evidence of the purity of the Church, than an abundance of what is called by way of eminence, *Discipline*, or is technically so called. If this kind of discipline is once established in a congregation, a resort to a judicial process may not become necessary in half a dozen of years. Let any

minister labor, say, twenty years in one place, and if he fails to rear up such a congregation as this, there must be something very defective in his mode of administration, or he must have very incorrigible materials to work upon. Its numerical strength may not be great, but its *moral power* will be great. It will have "salt in itself."

Perhaps in reference to this matter, we often are in danger of falling under an illusion in judging of times that are past. We look back to what are sometimes called the purer days of the Church; we see ministers and elders busily engaged in hanging out scandals and scandalous persons; we exclaim: "What faithful men they were! What a privilege to have lived in these times!" Doubtless they were faithful men; but it may still be a question, whether the times were, in all respects, so excellent. I once thought so, and, consequently, I supposed that Solomon's caution, "Say not that the former days were better than these," must be received with some grains of allowance. But I have finally, after some careful, perhaps I might also say, some painful consideration, come to the conclusion—for myself only, others must judge for themselves—that the state of Christian morals in almost any of our congregations is better than it was generally in the Church of Scotland in her most reformed and reforming times. Notwithstanding all that is spoiled in our hands, by reason of our sin and folly, it is a relief to the mind to think that, under the care of the Head of the Church, and the Governor of the nations, the state of the Church and the world is every year growing a *little better*. There is something of heaven in the thought. It helps to strengthen the feeble knees, to raise up the hands which hang down, and keep that which is lame from being turned out of the way.

When I entered the ministry I was almost led to believe, from hearing the opinions of those who ought to know,

that no minister could manage well the discipline of the Church, unless he was well acquainted with the "Pardovan Collections"—a work, which once held some such place in the Church, as the volumes of reports among the gentlemen of the bench and the bar. I borrowed the book and read it; with no great profit as it regarded the object in view, but it helped me to the conclusion above mentioned.

Some early cases of discipline in the Associate Reformed Church come now to be considered. And as there was one which may be reckoned among the few happy cases, in which discipline was followed with those good effects which we would desire to see always attending an ordinance of Christ, it shall have the precedence.

Rev. Robert Kerr, of the Presbytery of New York, and for some time pastor of the congregation of Newburg, was deposed for a violation of the moral law. At an occasional meeting of the Presbytery, at Neely Town, on the 14th of January, 1802, he was at his own request released from his pastoral charge. In a subsequent report to Synod, the Presbytery remarked: "They wish it were in their power to state, that other circumstances which have become matter of public speculation, are either to Mr. Kerr's honor, their own comfort, or the Church's peace. On this point, they cannot make a more particular representation, till their procedure in his case be finally closed." On the 28th day of May, 1803, the Presbytery, by the advice of Synod, proceeded to depose him from the office of the ministry. In April, 1804, "according to evidence produced before the Presbytery, that he had demeaned himself since his deposition, in so humble, and exemplary, and edifying a manner, as to satisfy the Presbytery of his penitence, and, in their judgment, to heal the wound inflicted by his fall, they had all freedom to readmit him to the exercise of his ministry, with the comfortable

hope of his future usefulness in the Church of God." And they never had cause "to be ashamed of their hope."

Mr. Kerr being now at the disposal of the Synod, was sent to labor as a missionary in the bounds of the Synod of the Carolinas and Georgia. In the year 1806, the Presbytery of New York reported to Synod, that they had "private information of his death." He was indeed dead.

It is but a few years since many old people were still alive, who remembered his visit to the South, and spoke of him with warmth and affection. Among other places, he visited Charleston, the commercial metropolis of South Carolina. There was no Associate Reformed Church in that city, and but a few individuals who adhered to her. The city was, however, pretty well supplied with churches; but there was little evangelical preaching, except in the Baptist church of which Dr. Furman was pastor, and perhaps in one or two Independent churches. Dr. Buist, who was at that time pastor of the "Scotch Presbyterian church," which perhaps had some connection with the General Assembly, was generally regarded such a preacher as was frequently to be met with in Scotland during the reign of "moderatism." Mr. Kerr was admitted to several of the city pulpits, enlisted the warm affections of the pious of the different denominations, and excited an interest in the subject of religion, such as was rarely known in the city till the days of Dr. Flinn. The writer was then on the spot; but he makes these statements as the general impression which he received from conversations which he heard; for he was then too young to form an opinion of his own. It is believed that Mr. Kerr died shortly afterward in the city of Savannah.

Messrs. M' Millan and Dickson.—But we must advance upon their case by regular approaches.

From about the middle, till near the close of the last

century, a strong current of emigration from the North of Ireland flowed into the north-western districts of South Carolina, and the adjoining parts of North Carolina and Georgia. Of these immigrants to the New World, some had belonged to the Associate, and the Reformed Presbyteries; but a majority of them were from the Synod of Ulster. The affinities of these last would rather have led them to join the General Assembly in this country; but in that day, the tone of preaching in that church in the South was not so evangelical as it is hoped it is at the present day. Many of the preachers had not such a clear perception of the difference between the law and the Gospel, that they could assign to each its proper place. Many of the Ulster people attended on the ministry of different preachers, but took time for consideration before they formed any ecclesiastical connection.

In the meantime, Dr. Thomas Clark, who had been about thirteen years pastor of a Burgher congregation at Ballibay, in Ireland, immigrated to the province of New York, in consequence of a call addressed to him by a people near the city of Albany. After some years, he visited the South, preached as an itinerant missionary over the entire tract of country covered by this North-Irish population, visited many families, and associated them in congregations at different points. He finally took charge of the congregation at Long Cane, South Carolina, where he continued to labor till his death, which took place in the year 1793. Many of the Ulster people were brought into the Associate Reformed Church by his ministry.

From time to time, other helpers came over from Ireland. Among the earliest of these was an Antiburgher minister, whose name was Peter M'Millan. It is but a few years since many old people were to be met with who remembered him well; and while they had not much else

to say in his favor, they spoke of him as a man of talent, and a good orator. And doubtless he would be so regarded by those who had only the opportunity of hearing him a few times. The whole truth, however, appears to be, that he had a powerful voice, some volubility, and a good deal of that wild and uncultivated eloquence, which, in certain states of society, bears off the palm for a few days. I have seen two productions of his pen: one of these, a postscript to Dr. Anderson's letters to Mr. Hemphill, now lies before me. This alone furnishes ample evidence that no upright judge and jury, sitting to administer Jack Cade's law, could have convicted him of scholarship.

The Synod of the Carolinas, in their Pastoral Letter, say: "When Mr. M'Millan came to this country he was a flaming Antiburgher, possessed of all the violence and prejudice of his party; so much so, that he declared, in presence of evidence yet alive, that he would as soon hold communion with the devil in hell, as with the Rev. Thomas Clark; yet, upon the first interview with Mr. Clark, he changed his principles, joined the union, and cheerfully became a member of the Associate Reformed Synod, and for more than twelve years, his conscience suffered him to continue in communion with said Synod." There may be no objections to strong language when it is called for; but the reader does not need to be told that a man who deals in such reckless asseverations, possesses no stability, and is not to be depended on. He is not an *earnest* man. Besides, such comparisons convey no positive idea. When made by some men, they are exceedingly equivocal. You must know the man, before you can know what you are to think. In the present instance, before you can estimate the degree in which Mr. M'Millan held a corrupt communion in abhorrence, you must know in what abhorrence he held the devil's communion. Some

reformers, so called, might learn a lesson here. When I see a man glorify himself by proclaiming that rather than believe this or that, or do this or that, he would see the Bible, the churches, the ministry, and the ordinances of Christ all involved in one common ruin (in substance all this is sometimes proclaimed), I am tempted to suspect that he has already played the traitor in his heart, and that it would not take much to make him cry, "Away with him! crucify him!"

Sometime after his connection with the Associate Reformed Church, Mr. M'Millan became the pastor of a congregation at Due West Corner, South Carolina. He prevailed on Mr. Dickson, another emigrant from the "Emerald Isle," who had pursued a course of study for some time, but had abandoned it, to resume his studies, and enter the ministry of the Associate Reformed Church.

Complaints soon began to be made of Mr. M'Millan's dishonesty in pecuniary matters, and the Presbytery found it necessary to admonish him to be more careful, and avoid contracting debts which he had not the means to pay. This was in the year 1798. The admonition, however, seems to have had little effect. At the same meeting of Presbytery, he was found guilty of intoxication and profane swearing, and censured accordingly. Again, at the first meeting of the Second Presbytery in 1801, he was found guilty of intoxication and rebuked. At the meeting of the Presbytery in the same year, "his Session declared that on account of the many reports of his intoxication, which were believed to be true, the congregation refused to continue him for their minister any longer." He denied, was put under process; and, indubitable proof having been furnished that he had been repeatedly drunk, he was silenced with but little prospect that he would ever again be restored. But next year, he came forward with a

petition for his restoration, signed by some of his neighbors. "The Presbytery consisting of Messrs. William Dickson and Alexander Porter and their elders, through his own ingenuity and Mr. Dickson's influence, he was restored; Mr. Porter only voted in the negative."

Mr. Dickson soon became a faithful follower of Mr. M'Millan in the use of the bottle. Indeed, there can be but little doubt that it was the "good feeling" which grew up between them in the tavern and the grog-shop, that induced Mr. M'Millan to have Mr. Dickson brought into the ministry. He needed him as a companion in his follies, and might need his help as a friend in his troubles. Thus, often are the interests of Christ and Christ's people, bartered away by wicked men that they may "fulfil the desires of the flesh and of the mind," as the gamester suspends his earthly all on the turn of a card, and beggars his family that he may indulge a hell-born passion. "One sinner destroyeth much good."

After his restoration, Mr. M'Millan continued to indulge his drinking propensities; but, at the next meeting of the Presbytery, to the great relief of the Church, the two gentlemen became *conscientious*, and handed in their declination of the authority of the Presbytery. At the same time, they entered their protest against the many and grievous apostasies of the Synod from the faith and practice of the Church of Scotland in the times of her purity, such as the alterations which were made in the Westminster Confession of Faith, burying the covenants, etc.; though long after all these sins had been committed, Mr. M'Millan declared before his Maker and the Presbytery his "determination to remain and abide with the Synod." Their departure was so hasty, it was so contrary to recent and repeated declarations on their part, that they found it necessary to apologize to their friends. Each said,

that the other hastened it to avoid censure. No doubt, each told the truth on the other, for they were both in danger.

The report of this transaction made by the Presbytery to the Synod, in which I recognize the pen of Mr. Porter, runs thus: "That Peter M'Millan, the oldest member of the Presbytery, who had been silenced for the sin of intoxication, was last spring restored to the exercise of his ministry, but not to his congregation. That at the meeting of Presbytery on the 2d of September, Mr. M'Millan and Mr. Dickson, the next oldest member, came forward and spoke at large about their zeal for the Church, the errors of Synod, the tenderness of their consciences, and concluded by informing Presbytery, that they had sent their declination to the Synod, with their reasons in full; and unless the Presbytery would follow them, they would neither touch, taste, nor handle with them."

It is unnecessary to detail the farther proceedings in the case of these men. Notwithstanding their declination, which could not be sustained as regular, they were, by the advice of Synod, laid under censure. But they fled to the Associate Church, and took refuge under the shadow of her wings. Whether the brethren of that Church long thought it a subject of great felicitation, that they had gained such an accession to their forces, I do not know. Of the subsequent history of the men, little is now recollected; and that little is not worth recording.

But the blinding influence of party zeal—into what strange company and strange measures does it sometimes lead good men! Of Dr. Anderson, long since gone to be with Christ which is far better, no one who knew his worth, and has anything like the right kind of feelings, will speak but with respect—respect, I mean, for his general character, as a scholar, a theologian of no mean

acquirements, and an upright, faithful, and devoted minister of the gospel. Yet, Dr. Anderson did permit that *drunken fellow*, M'Millan, to add a postscript to his letters to Mr. Hemphill.

Section 10.

Testimony bearing in the Associate Reformed Synod—Imputed Righteousness—Covenant of Works—Frequent Communion—Psalmody—Faith and Justification—The Kingly Authority of Christ—The Church's Unity—Secession, when necessary and justifiable—Evils of a divided Church.

HAVING in a former section laid before the reader the action of the Associate Reformed Synod on the subject of Testimony-bearing, containing her reasons for adopting the mode of occasional testimonies against particular errors as they arise; it may now be proper to give a brief account of what she has done in pursuance of this principle.*

The first of the occasional testimonies which she omitted is entitled, "An Act concerning the imputation of the righteousness of Christ." This testimony evidently seems to have been directed against an opinion which some speculative theologians, chiefly in New England, had propagated as an "improvement" in theology. The justly celebrated Dr. Jonathan Edwards, in his "History of Redemption," had stated in terms rather general and undefined, that the righteousness of Christ consists chiefly in His obedience to the mediatorial law, giving some countenance to the opinion that His merit consists wholly in His sufferings; others, following up the speculation, had advanced the idea that His obedience to the precept of the law makes no part of His justifying righteousness, and consequently that justification consists wholly in pardon. The

* Another case of discipline is deferred.

Synod shows from the scriptures that Christ's obedience to the precept of the law which man was under, is a part of that righteousness which is imputed to believers and received by faith, unto justification of life. No truly evangelical scheme can do without this doctrine.

The next occasional testimony is entitled, "An Act concerning the Covenant of Works in the relation it hath to unbelievers." I am not able at present to give the history of this "Act," farther than that it is evidently levelled against some Neonomian scheme, which contained within itself the germ of a gross antinomianism. Arminianism, equally with Calvinism, when rushed to an extreme, when carried into regions where a metaphysical theory instead of the Bible rules the day—degenerates into antinomianism. The one makes God set aside the law out of his general mercy and compassion towards weak, frail, erring mortals, the other makes him set it aside on account of what Christ has done as the Fulfiller and Magnifier of the law.

Next follows an "Act concerning the frequent administration of the Lord's Supper." In this "Act" the Synod earnestly recommends "the frequent administration of it." But she does not come out of her place, or go beyond her province so as to enjoin any definite frequency under all circumstances. She knew that Christians are the Lord's free-men: and that He has endowed ministers and sessions and private Christians with a good degree of Christian wisdom and discretion, so that they can best judge for themselves, what, under their particular circumstances, is most for their edification, in all cases which are to be regulated by the maxims of human prudence in agreeableness with the general rules of the word. Compared with some others, the fathers of the Associate Reformed Church were considerably in advance of their age. Hence, after the lapse of more than fifty years, very few things which they

settled need to be revised. As the circumstances of congregations are different, the Synod perceived that it must be left to ministers and sessions, in view of their own particular circumstances, how often the Lord's Supper may be administered to general edification—simply giving her advice, that in the ordinary state of things, it should be administered at least twice a year in every ministerial charge, and four times a year or oftener, in congregations where the minister and session deem it expedient. In case of this frequency however, the Synod advise that the Directory for public worship be carefully observed; that is, that there be no attempt to enforce the observance of the supernumerary days which custom had introduced in connection with the ordinance.

This was followed by an "Act concerning Psalmody." This "Act" is a defence and illustration of the doctrine contained in our Directory for Public Worship,—Doctrine which is good and profitable for men. It is neither intended to contain more nor less than the doctrine of the Directory.

When the question was submitted to the American Churches: "Adhere to the Old or adopt the New Psalmody," as it was generally expressed; but it was indeed the truth, "Adhere to the use of a *version* of the Psalms given by inspiration of God, or use in preference the *Imitations* of Dr. Watts," it is not doubted that many determined in favor of the old, from the mere force of custom and habit; but it is unquestionably true that an intelligent piety determined the choice of thousands. There was at the bottom of the choice the same pious feeling which made the Psalmist say: "Thy word is very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it." And this hindered them from taking offence at the occasional use of an uncouth line, or antiquated word in the received version. "The

word of the Lord is pure, it has been tried as silver." This was the argument, and what more was necessary? Dr. Watts had said some "unguarded things" concerning the Psalms of David. He had taught others to say them. Presbyterian ministers sometimes said things which, at least, did not sound well. Defences for the use of human composition in the praises of God were sometimes set up, which seemed at least to have a tendency to unsettle the minds of Christians as to the inspiration of the scriptures. It seemed to be a contest between the *divine* and the *human*. For many years now past, the advocates of human Psalmody have been more guarded. Candor, it is thought, ought to make them admit that, though the opposition made by the minor Presbyterian denominations to the introduction of human composition, was sometimes an annoyance to them, it has, at the same time, answered even to them a useful purpose. It taught them to be more circumspect, where circumspection was really needed. But the difference of opinion on this subject still exists, and is not likely to be soon adjusted. It is probably destined to exist till gradually worn away by meliorating influences. Amongst the inscrutable ways of Providence there may be a reason for this, which does not yet appear, but may hereafter be disclosed. Discussion, controversy has been tried—may yet be tried—but it will probably leave the parties about as they were before. But there is one mode of defending a Scriptural Psalmody which will never fail—let the proper means be used for promoting an intelligent piety in the Church. For this, let all labor like working men. There is no fear if Christians are only brought to realize that they are in the presence of their Maker when worshipping him, the language of their hearts will be:

"How sweet unto my taste, O Lord,
Are all thy words of truth."

It may be added, that in this Act the Synod enjoined the use of the version then in use "till another version equally safe and acceptable, and more adapted to the improved state of the English language, be prepared." From this it appears, that the Associate Reformed Church was not organized on any principle which makes it necessary for her sons to frown on every attempt to prepare a better version; and also, that the advocates of human composition have no reason to say when such attempts are made, that we have changed, or are in the way of changing our ground.

On the subject of Psalmody, the writer does believe that a firm, but moderate stand, is required, in the way of duty, from all her sons.

It may still farther be remarked, that in the aforesaid "Act" the Synod gave some directions about singing, and the kind of tunes which should be used. The spirit of her counsel in this part of the Act, I approve entirely; but I have no sympathy with the plan of imposing *rules* by authority, which are to govern people in the exercise of their discretion, about things which are left at large in the word of God, and are therefore to be regulated by Christian prudence. In many cases they interfere with that freedom of judgment and action which belongs to all men, as an essential right, deprived of which, they are thenceforth hardly *men*, and cannot be very good *Christian* men.

The next is an "Act concerning faith and justification" adopted in the year 1798. This Act is well worth a careful perusal. It was levelled against a system of doctrine broached by Mr. Jamison, which was not only hyper-calvinistic but anti-scriptural. For the errors against which the churches are warned in this Act Mr. Jamison was silenced. His case will be more particularly noticed so soon as some farther documents are obtained.

The next occasional testimony omitted by the Synod is entitled an "An Act concerning the Kingly authority of Christ." This Act was directed against a "principle" which denies to the Lord Jesus Christ "the exclusive right to ecclesiastical legislation." It contains much sound doctrine; and is well worthy the attention of those who make "bases of union," containing such propositions as are dictated by expediency, or which they judge to be necessary, that the church may carry with her all that they call her "former attainments," and impose these propositions upon simple-hearted Christians as terms of communion, as though the church possessed an original and inherent right of legislation.

The Synod of the West published in the year 1825, a "Warning against Hopkinsian and other allied errors." And since that time she has published some papers which may be called testimonies on slavery, evil speaking, the Sabbath, etc.

All these acts and testimonies, except a few of the last, were collected by the Synod of the West and published in a small bound volume in the year 1830. Much, very much, important religious information may be obtained from this volume. Those who have it in their possession would do well frequently to review it, and lend it to their brethren who have it not. There is a long appendix to the Act on Psalmody, which, besides its value as it regards the particular question, is of great general importance.

Speaking of the union between himself and the Church, our Saviour says: "I am the vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered." As the individual man, without Christ, that

is, separately from Christ, cannot bring forth spiritual fruit, but is cast forth as a branch that is withered; so no association of men can bring forth spiritual fruit, but must become a withered branch, if they do not as an organized body, abide in Christ, as a branch of the vine.

The Church is Christ's body; Christ has but one body; the Church of Christ is one; there is one "visible Church, which is also Catholic or universal under the Gospel—out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation." Confes., chap. xxv., sec. 3. All particular churches are members of this one visible Church which is His body. Id., sec. iv. As any member of a natural body must perish if separated from the body, so any member of this spiritual body must perish if separated from it. Not abiding in the body, it cannot abide in Christ. Not being joined to the body, it cannot be joined to Christ as the Head. It is the connection of each member with Christ the Head, and its connection with the body of which He is the Head, that is the source of its vitality. Nourishment is administered to all the members of the natural body, by means of the blood, which by an apparatus furnished and kept in constant operation by the Creator, is propelled throughout the entire system. Because the Roman Apostasy has abused the doctrine of Catholic unity, making an adherence to the Pope, and an obedience to all his commands, lawful or unlawful, essential to that unity, this is no reason why Protestants should undervalue or practically deny the Bible doctrine on the subject.

Paul declares the necessity not only of the union of the body to Christ, but also of the union which exists among all the members of the body, in order to the spiritual life, health and growth of the whole body and all its members: "But speaking the truth in love may grow up unto him in all things, which is the Head even Christ.

From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted ; by that which every joint supplieth according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body to the edifying of itself in love." Eph. iv. 15, 16. I have made a slight change in the punctuation of this passage, which the critical reader may adopt or reject, at his pleasure. Again, he speaks of the "Head (Christ) from which all the members by joints and bands having nourishment ministered and knit together maketh increase with the increase of God." Col. ii. 19. Let us analyze these passages :

1. The Church, which is Christ's body, is united to Him as its Head.

2. There is a union between all the members of the body not less real than that which exists between the body and the head.

3. The invisible bond which unites the body to the Head, and unites the members together in one body, is the energy or the effectual working of Christ by His Spirit.

4. The visible bond is love—the love of the Head to the members, of the members to the Head, and to each other.

5. The life, health, and growth of the body—its increase in the conversion of sinners and the edification of saints, is the result of the healthy and harmonious action of all the members of the body, each one in its place performing its proper functions.

I am simply endeavoring to state the doctrine of the Bible on this subject, without inquiring whither it may carry me. It is however far from my thoughts that all the different branches of Christ's Church should drop their confessions of faith and terms of communion, and with them many precious truths, which should be contended for earnestly, and rush together in order that the idea of "one

visible church" might be more fully realized. This would but give us another set of Babel-builders, and the result would be another Babel. But on the other hand, it must be an exceedingly dangerous thing to sever any of "those joints and bands," by which the "nourishment" is conveyed to all parts of the body. If it is done through pride and passion, how great is the wickedness! If it is done to promote the purity of the Church, how great is the folly! For of what use can purity be, if the means of preserving it are such as to bring on spiritual syncope and death? It may be that it is here we are to look for one cause of the languor of the Church, and the low state of religion in all branches of the Church. I say in all branches of the Church, for I really do not believe that among them all there is any great difference as to the manner in which they appreciate the bond which binds them together as members of one body, or as to the degree in which they enjoy the presence and blessing of the Church's Head. I am to be understood as speaking of evangelical churches: for indeed it is by an abuse of language that any other associations of men are called churches.

It is our incumbent duty to inquire how we may maintain a testimony for the purity of the Gospel and its ordinances, "in this dividing time," without *backsliding* into the denial of the precious truth, that all who belong to the Saviour, in whatever denomination they may be found, "are the body of Christ and members in particular."

The fathers of the Secession Church in Scotland seem to have been attentive to this. Hence, they did not withdraw from the Church of Scotland till they were forcibly thrust out for testifying against errors and abuses of no common magnitude. And when they constituted themselves into a Presbytery for the administration of government and discipline, they were careful to have it under-

stood, that they did not make a secession from the Church of Christ in Scotland, but from the judicatories of the Church of Scotland, which had become corrupt through the influence of a prevailing party, and were perversely bent on a course of corruption and backsliding. And they still desired to keep alive their sympathies with all the faithful men, whom they had left in the Church of the Establishment, exhorting them to labor for reformation, in the hope that God would yet gather into one the dispersed of Israel. And when they emitted their Act, Declaration, and Testimony, so far were they from desiring to form a separate party, interest, or concern of their own; so far were they from lifting up a testimony in favor of a *secession* doctrine and worship, that they lifted up a Testimony for the "doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the Church of Scotland," which they regarded as in danger of being subverted by her own misguided sons. They chose their position slowly, cautiously, and prayerfully; and they chose that position which appeared to them the most favorable for promoting the cause of Christ in the Church of Scotland. I am persuaded that this part of their history has never yet received all the attention it merits, either from friends or foes.

Mr. Alexander Gellatly, who first planted the Associate Churches in America, as quoted by the Ruling Elder, page 44, says: "Our secession from the judicatories is not a secession from the Christian, catholic, visible church; this is our New Testament Mount Zion, unto which a Gospel ministry and Gospel ordinances were primarily given. 1 Cor. xii. 28. But our secession from a corrupt part of the catholic visible body, upon account of the defections and backslidings continued in it, and from which they refuse to reform, though the proper means have been used to reclaim them." But since Gellatly's day, as if

the work of schism were a mere pastime, how many have made secessions for things of very trifling importance, without once stopping to inquire whether or not they were separating themselves from our "New Testament Mount Zion."

The *substratum* of the two Associate Presbyteries, which, with the Reformed Presbytery constituted the Associate Reformed Church, was of Anti-burgher texture. But such men as Annan and the elder Mason were capable of perceiving clearly the evils of a divided state of the Church, the sinfulness of needlessly perpetuating divisions, or of refusing to use the proper means for healing them when a favorable opportunity was presented. Accordingly, when Dr. Thomas Clark, who was of the Burgher connection in Ireland, immigrated with many of his people to the Province of New York, they at once made fraternal overtures to him, to unite with them in building the house of the Lord in this New World. Dr. Clark was a man of kindred spirit. He saw as well as they, the folly—the exigency of the case requires a stronger term—the wickedness, of *nurturing* divisions in this country on questions which, growing out of the connection between Church and State in Britain, and reviving the traditional feelings engendered by old feuds and animosities, had hitherto separated brother from brother; and, placing them in deadly array against each other, had exhibited in the Church the unhallowed spectacle of a border warfare between rival clans. Afterward Messrs. Telfair and McKinlock came over from Scotland; similar overtures were made to them, and they, in like manner, united with the true American "Mother Presbyteries." Thus the Associate Body in this country had begun to seek the "truth and the peace," and to seek union for the sake of preserving the "truth and the peace," before the birth of

the Associate Reformed Church. They had begun to be a "Union Body." In all this, Mr. Marshall cheerfully concurred with his brethren. In a letter to Mr. Telfair he says: "Dr. Clark's papers in reference to an epidemical healing please me much, and breathe much of that candor and piety, which become the honest man and the sincere Christian. The most furious beasts that roam through the forest hurt not those of their own kind, yet that witnessing body has been torn limb from limb, by a controversy that has hurt us more than all the enemies of religion have or can effectuate. If both parties would lay aside all prejudice, and give conscience a fair hearing, they would find the breach much more widened by mountains of ill-nature, than by diversity of sentiments about a system of principles." Well and truly said. Men's first thoughts are often the best. But after all this, Mr. Marshall fell under other influences, and became the leader of those who dissented from the union, thus perpetuating the "breach" which was much more widened by ill-nature than by a regard for sound principles. Oh, that the epidemic of which Dr. Clark wrote, and in which Mr. Marshall rejoiced, would fall upon the churches. The work of union would be rendered easy. But up to the present time, a very different kind of epidemic has been raging, and often threatening to lay waste some of the fairest portions of the heritage of God.

A question put to ministers in the Associate Reformed Church at their ordination is as follows: "Do you resolve to adhere thereto (to the Confession of Faith) in opposition to all Deistical, Popish, Arian, Socinian, Arminian, Neonomian, and Sectarian errors, and all other opinions which are contrary to sound doctrine and the power of Godliness?" What is meant by "Sectarian errors?" We must go back some centuries for the answer.

Section 11.

The Brownists in England—Influence of their Principles on the Puritans—Sectarian Errors—Rev. Alexander McCoy and Rev. Robert Warwick organize the Reformed Dissenting Presbytery in 1801—Their “Testimony”—Effect of Mr. Warwick’s Ministry.

FROM the days of Queen Elizabeth, the Puritans in England contended for a more perfect reformation of the Church. Many of them, rather than incur the guilt of schism, preferred remaining in the Church, so long as there was the least hope of accomplishing a reformation by their labors and sufferings, while others seem to have thought no more of separation than if it was a mere every-day business. Among these latter, the Brownists, who derived their name from a popular leader, became prominent. They maintained that the Church of England, and all other Reformed Churches, were so corrupt, that it would be a sin to join with them, in praying, hearing the word, and the sacraments. They held that every congregation which could conveniently assemble in one place, was competent to exercise all the functions of the Church of Christ; and, regarding almost every question relating to the external order of the Church, of such importance that it should be made a term of communion, they secluded from their fellowship all who did not fully coincide in judgment with them on these points, however blamelessly they might walk in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord. Hence their antipathies against the visible Catholic Church of Christ, which is universal under the Gospel, and against every part and parcel thereof, were strong; their sympathies with the children of God, which were found in all the regular protestant Churches, were weak indeed. By their antipathies they were governed much, by their sympathies, not at all. And this is fanaticism.

Their principles worked like leaven in the body of the Puritans. The corruptions of the times disgusted men's souls, the oppressions soured their minds, the conflicts whetted their spirits; many were driven into everything which was extravagant in theory, and extreme in practice. Even not a few of the Independents grew so fierce for toleration, that they became intolerant toward all who did not agree with them in their peculiar notions. Such were the "sectarian errors" which came up during the civil wars, like one of the plagues of Egypt, and afterwards flourished in the days of the Protectorate. Such are the "sectarian errors" which every Associate Reformed minister is solemnly bound to oppose. I am *not* certain but in the progress of the Secession Churches they began to work like leaven. I am *not* sure but that Dr. Clark thought he saw them working in some parts of the "witnessing body" in the year 1791. Otherwise it is difficult to understand the following words in his Pastoral Letter to his former charge in Ireland, written at Long Cane, S. C. "May the Lord save his (William Craig's) offspring from right and left hand extremes. May they still own the same good cause in this sinful dividing time. The Donatist heresy is become common; every difference in sentiment, almost every offence is like to be made a term of communion. And, though it be a sort of Donatism in reality, yet some suppose it to be a real reformation." They do indeed. Hence, they must have an unwieldy Testimony, two or three or four times as long as the doctrinal part of the Confession of Faith, filled up with all imaginable statements of opinions, and all manner of confutations of opposite opinions, till one becomes bewildered; disgusted to think that sensible men should thus employ their time and talents; grieved to think that good men should hope to gather into one the dispersed of Israel, by such unlikely expedients.^c I *am*

sure that these "sectarian errors" have produced some unhappy fruits within the borders of the Associate Reformed Church, as well as in some other churches.

We now enter upon a case of Discipline which gave rise to a new sect, whose history strikingly illustrates the folly of making almost every slight shade of difference, on almost every question which may happen to come into debate among Christians, a term of communion.

It has been already noticed, that in the year 1790 the Synod adopted an "Act to amend the Constitution of the Associate Reformed Church." The substance of that part of the Act which relates to the power of the civil magistrate *circa sacra*, was in the year 1799 incorporated in the text of the Confession of Faith. No person, it is believed, has ever pretended to say that there is any discrepancy between the doctrine of the Act, and the doctrine of the amended Confession of Faith.

In the year 1795, Mr. Alexander M'Coy came before the Second Presbytery of Pennsylvania as a candidate for licensure, the Presbytery consisting of Messrs. Riddel, Henderson, and Warwick. He objected to the doctrine of the Act. The Presbytery, after endeavoring to remove his scruples, allowed him some time to make up his mind. In less time than was granted him, he appeared before the Presbytery, declared himself satisfied, received licensure, and was afterward ordained as Pastor of a congregation. Yet in the year 1799, after the appearance of the new edition of the Confession of Faith, he appeared before the Synod, and handed in his declinature, alleging as his reason, the doctrine of the Synod on the subject of civil magistracy.

The year before this withdrawal of Mr. M'Coy, Rev. Robert Warwick, who was originally of the Burgher connection in Ireland, but had immigrated to this country in

1792, and subsequently became the pastor of a congregation at Laurel Hill, Pa., was sent by his Presbytery as a supply to the congregation of Mill Creek, near Cincinnati, Ohio. A call was made out for him by the congregation, and by him forwarded to the Presbytery. Though the regular steps had not been taken, the Presbytery, in view of the extraordinary nature of the case, sustained the call, which being presented to Mr. Warwick, he accepted, and soon after removed with his family to Mill Creek. Up to this time, and for some time afterward, it was not known that he was at all dissatisfied with the proceedings of the Synod; but he soon began to show symptoms of uneasiness. The errors of the Synod, the sin of altering the Confession of Faith, became with him frequent topics of private conversation, and were introduced into the pulpit in no stinted measure. He became less edifying to his people, and less acceptable to the community at large. At length he was charged with misrepresenting the Synod, and was called to account. Refusing to appear and answer to the charges exhibited against him, he was finally suspended from the exercise of the ministry by the Presbytery of Kentucky, into whose bounds the congregation of Mill Creek had now fallen, but not without the advice of Synod, after he had been repeatedly cited, and due time allowed him for reflection.

Some time after this event, Mr. Warwick had an interview with Mr. M'Coy; and finding that they perfectly agreed in relation to the evil deeds of the Synod, civil magistracy, the Solemn League and Covenant, and the points contended for by Lord Warristoun and the Marquis of Argyle, they, in the year 1801, formed themselves into a Presbytery, under the name and style of the Reformed Dissenting Presbytery. In the year 1809 they issued their Testimony; and now their organization was complete.

They had put on all their armour as a militant body ; and were in the possession of a magazine, which would furnish them, as occasions might require, every necessary weapon of offence and defence.

Of this document it is sufficient to say—1. That it shows quite too much bitterness toward the Church which they had left. 2. It is as strictly conformed to established orthodoxy as its authors knew how to make it. 3. It shows that, in the opinion of its authors, they are more in the right on some points, than either the Sceders or the Covenanters, or at least that they can out-argue them. 4. On the vexed questions which divided the old Covenanters in Scotland, and sent them as often to Acts of Parliament as to texts of Scripture for their proofs, it rather inclines to the modern Reformed, than to the modern Associate side. On one question, however, which indeed is the most tangible of them all, it divides the difference as nearly as possible—the American civil constitution is regarded as so corrupt, that it would be sinful to hold office under it, yet not so corrupt but that Christians may vote for civil officers.

Of the people who were drawn away from the Associate Reformed Church by Mr. Warwick, some have returned, and some have gone to other churches. But the tone of his preaching was calculated to destroy the confidence of his people in the great body of Christ's followers, and infuse into their minds the most bitter prejudices against all other portions of the household of faith. On all his hearers who were not well grounded, and settled, and built up in Christ, it had these effects. Wherever, therefore, anything occurred to weaken their attachment to him, they felt as if truth and mercy had forsaken the Church ; and either dropped the very semblance of a religious profession or joined the Campbellites or Universalists. A few

years ago, the house in which he preached was inclosed in a field and was likely to be converted into a barn.

Having been a few years Mr. Warwick's neighbor, I can, however, notwithstanding all this, express my hope and belief, that he was a good man, and aimed at faithfulness in his own way. But his temperament was unstable, his passions violent, his prejudices strong, his judgment weak.

When he settled on Mill Creek, an extensive field of usefulness lay before him. Had he pursued the proper course he might, with even tolerable diligence, have laid the foundation of numerous congregations, which would have increased in numbers and influence, and become the parents of other congregations. Some years afterward, that fertile tract of country, known as "Symmes' purchase," which contains the present city of Cincinnati, could still show but five or six Presbyterian congregations, all of which were weak, and many of them distracted by the effects of the revival which gave rise to the Western New Lights and Shaking Quakers. Had Mr. Warwick kept it duly before his mind that he was sent to this people as an ambassador of Christ; and, carefully avoiding all such questions as "gender strifes," and turn men aside after "vain janglings," had he preached to them Christ's salvation, he might have been the instrument of great good. But he scattered the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made him an overseer, and rendered his ministry unacceptable to many, unprofitable to all. The subject is painful; but just so, many good men have mistaken their duty; and just so, others still may mistake, unless they profit from the lessons of experience.

Through the influence of an Elder who has been long known in our Church judicatories, and has filled some high civil offices, a portion of the congregation was induced to

remain in the Associate Reformed Church, and now (1851) constitutes a pastoral charge in the First Presbytery of Ohio. Those who may wish to see a more particular account of the difficulties produced by Mr. Warwick's course, are referred to an article from the pen of Gov. Morrow, in the "Christian Intelligencer," vol. viii., p. 36.

The reformed Dissenting Presbytery has seldom numbered more than three or four ministers, and often not more than two. Some of their congregations yet survive, but it is believed none of them are in a thriving condition.

P. S.—I find that in a recent paper I have fallen into a slight error. The Theological Seminary in New York did not actually commence operations till Dec. 1805.

Section 12.

The Associate Reformed Church from 1799 to 1811—A Presbyterian Congregation formed in New York in 1716—Associate Congregation in New York organized in 1756—Dr. Mason's Labors in that City—Inter-communion with other Evangelical Churches.

THE business of the historian is to state facts, without inquiring who of his readers might prefer that some of his facts were buried in oblivion. He must write true and faithful history, or write not at all. "Nothing extenuate, set down nought in malice," should be his motto. From this course he must not suffer himself to be diverted by the captiousness or insolence of men.

In the case of Messrs. M'Millan and Dickson, the facts which were stated in a late Number of the *United Presbyterian* were notorious in the South forty or fifty years ago, and are still to be found in authentic documents. From a card which appeared in the September Number of this Periodical, the reader has learnt, that, according to the statement of some individuals, which I have no disposition to discredit, Mr. Dickson took himself up at a future

period of his life, and that after laboring for years in the ministry of the Gospel in another denomination, he carried with him to the grave the kindly sympathies of his people. With pleasure I record this. So let his flesh rest in hope and his memory be blessed.

The remark has been made by some writer that a reader of the Old Testament history may readily fall into the error of supposing that the entire course of the Jewish nation was marked with apostasies, insurrections, captivities, and other national disorders and disasters, and be tempted to ask, What advantage after all did the seed of Abraham enjoy in consequence of God's having taken them as a peculiar treasure to himself? It is forgotten or overlooked, that though such events follow each other in rapid succession in the history, yet in fact, long periods of time often intervened between occurrences which are placed almost in juxtaposition by the historian; and that during these periods the nation enjoyed great quietness and prosperity—the laws were observed, piety prevailed, wealth increased, so that it might be truly said, "Happy is that people whose God is the Lord." The peaceful, and happy, and prosperous times of a nation afford few events of such a character as to afford much employment for the pen of the historian. A similar remark may be made in reference to the Church.

From the year 1799, when the constitution and standards of the Associate Reformed Church were settled, till about the year 1811, little beyond what has been noticed took place on which it is necessary to dwell. Streams were going forth from the Theological Seminary to water the vineyard of the Lord; the Church was gradually lengthening her cords and strengthening her stakes; her ministry and membership were receiving frequent accessions to their numbers. The tongue of calumny was not

indeed entirely silenced. Those who had dissented from the union continued, in some places, as they still do in certain localities, though the original ground of quarrel against her as a *Union Church* is partly forgotten, to breathe suspicions into the minds of such of her people as they can get to listen to them, and occasionally they succeeded in producing uneasiness in some of her congregations; but her progress was little more retarded by these annoyances, than that of a chariot drawn by noble steeds, by the friction of the wheels.

As the event above alluded to as having happened in the year 1811 led to much discussion, and finally to the dismembership of the old General Synod, it requires careful consideration. But before bringing it into view, it is proper to go back and bring up a narrative, which, should these contributions ever assume the form of a regular history, may be transferred to another place.

It appears that about the beginning of the eighteenth century, there were a few Presbyterian families in the city of New York, who were in the habit of meeting together on the Lord's day for social worship. Episcopacy being the established religion in the province of New York, they of course labored under all the disabilities which were common to dissenters in that intolerant age. Occasionally a Presbyterian minister passing between the Southern and Northern colonies visited them; but in at least the first case of this kind, they were forbidden by the Episcopal Governor to hold their meetings in the Reformed Dutch Church, which had been kindly offered to them, and were obliged to betake themselves to a private dwelling. About the year 1716 they were, however, organized into a congregation, and obtained a settled pastor. Under his labors or the labors of his successors, they prospered till the year 1752, when an attempt was made to lay aside the

authorized *version* of the inspired Psalms, and introduce in its room the *imitations* of Dr. Watts. The change was resisted by a portion of the congregation, who appealed and remonstrated, till the year 1756, when the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, at that time the highest court in the Presbyterian Church, gave permission to make the change. Finding that farther resistance would be in vain, they withdrew and were organized into an Associate congregation. Rev. John Mason, D. D., of Scotland, was called to be their Pastor. He labored among them with much acceptance and success till the year 1792, when he was called by his Master to enter upon the services of the Upper Sanctuary. He was succeeded by his son, the late Dr. John M. Mason. Some years after he became their Pastor, he was chosen Professor in the Theological Seminary. After an experiment of a few years, finding that his engagements in the Seminary rendered it impossible for him to discharge his *parochial* duties fully, he began to devise means for relieving himself from his embarrassment. His first proposal was, that the congregation should call an assistant pastor, to whom those duties, usually called parochial, should be assigned. This was rejected on the ground that the additional burden which it would impose on the congregation, would be oppressive to the poor. He next proposed that they should build a larger house of worship, not doubting but that in a city whose population was rapidly increasing, the house would soon be filled, so that without oppressing the poor, the congregation would be able to support another pastor. This proposal being coldly received, he then resolved as the only remaining expedient, to resign his charge of the congregation.

The old church stood on Cedar street; a second congregation which had been organized some time before, had erected a house of worship on Chambers street. Dr.

Mason proposed forming a third church, with the understanding that they were not to expect from him more than the ordinary services of the pulpit; and that as soon as practicable they should call an assistant pastor.

At the resignation of his charge, the Doctor delivered before the Presbytery a speech, which was afterward published, and extensively read and admired as a specimen of the very highest order of eloquence, by scholars of all creeds and professions. I cannot withhold from the reader the introduction to this speech.

“ Mr. Moderator :

“ If the circumstances under which I now address this Presbytery did not deeply agitate my mind, I should have foresworn the best affections of human nature. In the disruption of any ties which do not bind us to misery there is something painful; but in the disruption of ties which form one of the most tender relations of life; which time has made venerable, friendship sweet, and religion sacred, there is something at which the heart trembles and shrinks away. I own that I have trembled; I own that I have shrunk in the anticipation of this hour. Seventeen years of a comfortable, a cherished, and, I trust, not altogether a barren ministry, create feelings which the touch of rudeness would profane; and claims which none but the highest authority can set aside. I have peculiar causes of attachment to my people, and to the place where they worship. Both are, in some sense, my inheritance. Here my father prayed, and God heard him; here my father preached, and God gave him seals of his ministry, and crowns of his rejoicing. The memorial of his faithfulness is perpetually before my eye; and in the spot over which I now stand his flesh rests in hope. I have entered into his labors. The seed which he sowed I have been

honored to water. I have seen many of them who were the friends of his earlier and later days, who have also been my own friends, gathered peacefully to the tomb. I see others of them waiting till their change come. I meet every Lord's day; I discern around me now, the faces of not a few whom I may present before the mercy seat and say, 'These are the children whom thou hast given me.' Assuredly were affection the only thing to be consulted, instead of cutting the cord which unites me to them, I should seek to entwine it more closely with every ligament of my frame. But I am not my own; I am not theirs. I owe a nobler allegiance than can grow out of their love; and to that allegiance do I bow when I ask to be released from my pastoral charge."

A number of persons entered warmly into the project of forming a third church, with Dr. Mason for their pastor. They were soon recognized as a congregation, and while their house of worship was preparing, they were kindly offered the use of the house of which Dr. Romeyn of the Presbyterian Church was pastor, at such times as did not interfere with their own services. This circumstance introduced the two congregations to the most intimate acquaintance; occasioned each frequently to wait on ministrations of the pastor of the other; the consequence of which was a high degree of mutual affection, confidence and esteem. On the first occasion that Dr. Mason administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to his congregation, it was, on consultation of the session, thought proper to admit Dr. Romeyn and his people to the communion. When Dr. Romeyn next administered the Lord's Supper an invitation was given to the people of Dr. Mason's charge, and was accepted. The intercommunion thus begun was continued.

At a meeting of the General Synod in 1811 a committee

of inquiry was appointed, on motion of Dr. Gray and Mr. Dick, to ascertain the facts of the case. After stating the above facts in their report, the committee add: "But it is not viewed by Dr. Mason and the people of his charge as anything else than the application of the principle expressed in the xxvi. chapter of the Confession of Faith, sec. 2. Nor as involving the question of communion with any other church than that one with which they are in the providence of God so peculiarly connected. Nor is it contemplated to continue after they shall have obtained a separate place for public worship, which they are at present making preparation to build."

Two other ministerial brethren, Messrs. Matthews and Clarke, had also gone into the practice of intercommunion thus introduced.

When the Report of the Committee was read, it was moved by Messrs. Henderson and Dick:

"*Resolved*, That the Synod do declare their decided disapprobation of the deportment of said brethren in the premises, and command them to return to the established order of this Church."

The resolution was negatived. This gave very general offence, especially in the West and South. Remonstrances were sent up to Synod from the Presbyteries of Monongahela and Kentucky, and also from at least one of the Southern Presbyteries. The public mind became excited. The subsequent course of Dr. Mason had no tendency to allay the excitement. In the progress of the discussion on the subject, he took higher ground, and finally adopted the principle that intercommunion with evangelical Christians of other denominations was both lawful and a duty, when God in his providence afforded opportunity, not only under peculiar or extraordinary circumstances, but at all times.

It has sometimes been intimated that Dr. Mason was guilty of something like duplicity, or at least, that he did not act with Christian frankness in first pleading the extraordinary circumstances in which he was placed as an apology for his practice, and afterward coming out as its bold and open advocate. But I regard the imputation both unjust and ungenerous. No man was ever more free from the arts of duplicity and cunning; no man was more open, and direct and magnanimous in his bearing, at all times and under all circumstances. But what was at first only entertained as a doubt in his mind, *i. e.*, that the practice of the Associate Reformed Church on this subject was too exclusive, had by this time grown into a conviction. He had become satisfied, perhaps in part by bringing the powers of his mighty mind to bear too much on one side of the subject, and in part from hearing the insufficient and absurd arguments by which the other side was too often defended; that it was his duty to invite all the members of evangelical Churches, in good standing in their respective Churches, to participate in the ordinance of the Holy Supper as often as the Table was spread in his own congregation.

In cases of controversy it is not the business of the historian to make himself "of counsel" for either of the parties. He is to record facts and opinions. Often must he inquire into the real state of the question, which is not always its apparent state. Let us endeavor to ascertain,

1. What was the doctrine of the Associate Reformed Church at the time of her organization on the subject of communion.

2. What were Dr. Mason's views on the same subject.

3. What were the views of the brethren who opposed him.

4. Without taking it for granted that either Dr. Mason's

views or the views of the brethren who opposed him, either were, or were not in unison with the received doctrine of the Associate Reformed Church, it will be our duty to collect and bring together the facts necessary for forming a correct judgment as to how far either of the parties coincided with, or had departed from the received *doctrine* of the Church. That Dr. Mason's *practice* was an innovation on the *practice* of the Associate Reformed Church, does not admit of a doubt, and therefore it is not made a question.

Section 13.

What was the Doctrine of the Associate Reformed Church at the time of her Organization on Intercommunion?—Confession of Faith on this Subject—A Profession of Faith in Christ and Obedience to Him the term of Communion in Christ's Church—Creeds and Confessions—Mr. Ralph Erskine and Mr. Alexander Gellatly on Intercommunion—Extract from "The Constitution of the Associate Reformed Church"—Overtures by Mr. Annan to Synod on Communion—Reasoning on this Subject.

THE reader will remember, that according to our proposed plan, the question which comes first to be considered is, What was the doctrine of the Associate Reformed Church at the time of her organization, on the subject of communion?

Whatever may be thought by sciolists and ultraists, and all those who, satisfied with custom and routine, enjoy a happy immunity from all perplexing doubts and inquiries, the question, how far it is proper to extend communion to all who profess to follow Christ, has always, by the wisest and best of men, been regarded as both a delicate and a difficult one. But as all theories on the subject are found on trial to be encumbered with more or less difficulty, in a divided state of the Church, it happens that, whatever doctrinal differences may exist among evangelical Christians

on this question, the difference, in practice, is never very great, except now and then, when the public mind is under some occasional excitement. Those of the most liberal views generally find ere long, that there is need of great caution and prudence in managing the affair of "inter-communion" with Christians of other denominations, who differ from them in matters of greater or less importance. There is always, in fact, little intercommunion; because edification does not require that there should be much of it.

It may, perhaps, naturally enough be supposed that the doctrine of our standards, *i. e.*, of our Confession of Faith and Catechisms, should be decisive of the question now before us. But, for a reason hereafter to be noticed, this is not the fact, nor does the supposition hold true in reference to any denomination of Christians who practise on a more restricted plan; but we have to consult some more subordinate standards, if we would learn their views. Yet the doctrine of the Confession and Catechism is to be carefully attended to in conducting our present inquiry.

Conf., chap. xxvi., sec. 2.—"Saints by profession are bound to maintain a holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God, and in performing such other spritual services as tend to their mutual edification, as also in relieving each other in outward things, according to their several abilities and necessities. Which communion, as God offereth opportunity, is to be extended to all those who in every place call on the name of the Lord Jesus."

"Saints by profession" are those who profess the true religion. These are *bound* to maintain a holy fellowship and communion among themselves. It is their incumbent duty. They are under a moral obligation to do so. This holy fellowship and communion is to be maintained, 1st. In the worship of God. But administering and receiving the Lord's Supper belongs to the worship of God. 2. In

such other spiritual services as tend to their mutual edification. But the due observance of the Lord's Supper tends to the edification of Christians, and this is a spiritual service. Therefore saints by profession are bound to maintain a holy fellowship and communion in the use of this ordinance. 3. In relieving each other in outward things. Therefore saints by profession are bound to maintain a holy fellowship in this respect also. And lest it should be supposed that this holy fellowship and communion should exist only among such saints by profession as belong to the same ecclesiastical organization, it is added: "Which communion, as God offereth opportunity, is to be extended to all those who in every place call on the name of the Lord Jesus." Calling on the name of the Lord Jesus is a Scriptural phrase, which describes a follower of Christ—a saved sinner. Those call on the name of the Lord Jesus, who believe and obey him.

It is not forgotten, that some have contended that the words, "which communion" relate only to a part, and that the less spiritual part of the communion described in the preceding sentence. I confess I can have no respect for any such subterfuge; for a mere subterfuge it is, though good men may have resorted to it. It represents the venerable Westminster Divines as defining, with the utmost care, the limits of the holy fellowship and communion in outward things, and leaving their readers to guess, or infer, how far it may be extended in the worship of God, and other spiritual services. It represents them as attending to the tithing of mint, anise and cumin, and neglecting the weightier matters of the law. It represents them as limiting our obligation to perform such deeds of charity as relieving the distressed in outward things, to those who call on the name of the Lord Jesus! It charges upon them such a violation of the laws of language as we nowhere else find them guilty

of; for according to the fixed laws of language, the words "which communion" convey the entire and identical idea of communion which is described in the foregoing sentence. True it is, that the proof-texts which are cited under this part of the section, speak of ministering to the necessities of others in outward things; but in a parenthesis we are referred to the texts cited under the letter *c*, and a fair proportion of these relate to a holy fellowship in spiritual things.

But we have said that this is not decisive of the question, "What was the doctrine of the Associate Reformed Church on the subject of communion at the time of her organization?" It certainly does show what she, in common with the Westminster Assembly, believes to be the Bible doctrine on the subject; but it does not inform us what regulations the Westminster Assembly might, on a change of circumstances, have thought it expedient to adopt, or what regulations the Associate Reformed Church, under her circumstances, found it expedient to adopt, to govern the application of the Bible doctrine to cases as they occur in practice.

The reason is this: All men may know, that one great object of the Solemn League and Covenant (to which the labors of the Assembly were to be subservient) was, to use its own language: "The perservation of the Reformed religion in Scotland, in doctrine, worship, discipline and government—the reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland, in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, according to the word of God, *and the example of the best Reformed Churches*—to endeavor to bring the churches of God in the three kingdoms to the nearest conjunction and uniformity, in religion, confession of faith, form of church government, directory for worship and catechising, that we and our posterity after

us may, as brethren, live in faith and love, and the Lord may delight to dwell among us." Now, not only does it appear on the face of this declaration, but it is a historical fact, that there was at that day a prevailing desire among the more pious and intelligent of all the Reformed Churches to bring the churches in the British Isles, and on the continent, to such an agreement in all the things here mentioned, and to preserve and perpetuate such an agreement, that they might all live together in faith and love; and that, when a member of the Reformed Church in any of the British Isles should be providentially on the continent, or a member of any of the Reformed Churches on the continent should be providentially in any of the British Isles, there might be no doubt or hesitation as to the duty and lawfulness of extending to him a holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God, and all other spiritual services; thereby visibly and publicly recognizing their relationship to each other as brethren in Christ Jesus, in such a manner that it would be known and read of all men. Hence, every movement which seemed to threaten division, schism, separation, was regarded with disapprobation and alarm. Hence, the friends of the Westminster Assembly opposed, with their utmost diligence and zeal, the "gathering of churches out of churches." They would, by all the means in their power, prevent the rise of different sects or denominations covering the same territory, and having ecclesiastical constitutions more or less differing among themselves. The design failed. A question, therefore, which they did not anticipate, was sprung on many of them before the close of their earthly pilgrimage,—it was, indeed, substantially the same question with which the Associate Reformed Church had to do at the time of her organization. On what principles, or to what extent, may distinct bodies of Christians, differing from each other

in matters of greater or less importance, have communion with each other? If we look a little beyond the surface of things, we shall find that it was really this question which gave rise to all the subsequent "conferences" about a "comprehension," a "toleration," or some plan "whereby tender consciences may be relieved." Hence, also, a later attempt to define "the essentials in religion," in order that the holy fellowship and communion might not be extended *beyond* those who really "call on the name of the Lord Jesus." All failed; or, at least, resulted in nothing of any immediate practical utility. It is evident then, that however easy it may be to deduce the theory of communion from the Scriptures; when we, in our circumstances, come to reduce the theory to practice, we have to do with a question which was not before the Westminster Assembly, though it was subsequently presented in some form to the minds of many of its members.

Shorter Catechism, Question 95. "To whom is baptism to be administered? Ans. Baptism is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible church, till they profess their faith in Christ and obedience to him," etc. Here we are taught, that all who profess their faith in Christ and obedience to him, are entitled to baptism, which is the initiating ordinance. They are thenceforth to be recognized as members of the visible Church; consequently, as having a right to all her privileges, and to a seat at the Lord's table among the rest. A profession of faith in Christ and obedience to Him is the only, the sole, and the whole condition of church fellowship. No association of men calling themselves a Church of Christ, should be satisfied with less, none should require more. If any Church has included more than this in her terms of communion, she should strike it out immediately and submit herself to Zion's Lawgiver and King. How dare she retain it? If

it is thought necessary, in order to preserve the former attainments of the Churches and to keep pace with modern improvements, to have a book called a Testimony filled up with all sorts of statements and opinions, on all sorts of subjects about which Christians in their heated moments, or in their idle hours, have thought it their sacred duty to wrangle, and dispute, and divide, it should be disposed of in some other way, and not placed among the terms of communion in the Church. A profession of faith in Christ and obedience to Him, we have the best authority for saying is **THE TERM** of communion in **CHRIST'S CHURCH**. Men may organize societies on some other foundation and call them churches; they may even, if they please, since nothing is withholden from them that they imagine to do, mount them on the back of some popular hobby of the day; but they are not Christ's churches, as the event, sooner or later, will show. All this is plain—I had almost said self-evident: but then the question arises, What constitutes a profession of faith in Christ, and obedience to Him: in other words, what constitutes visible Christianity? This question involves the whole and the only difficulty on the subject of communion.

There must be some fixed rule or standard by which this question may be tried—a standard other than the Scriptures, though founded on the Scriptures. So, at least, the Church has thought back almost to the times of the Apostles. Hence that little compendium of Christian doctrine, called, "The Apostles' Creed." It is not likely that the Church will see well how to get along without something of the kind, till that time come when the light of the sun shall be as the light of seven days. I can conceive it possible, that, after that second visit of the "day-spring from on high" which the promises and prophecies of Scripture have authorized the Church to expect, she

may be able to get along very comfortably and prosperously without a written creed ; but till that day, let us not think of innovation—let us not imagine that we can “put forth the precious from the vile,” without an aid which the Church has found to be necessary in all ages past, while God cheered her on with evident tokens of His presence and approbation. We cannot obtain such a standard by drawing up a list of “essentials in religion.” This would be to treat Christianity as though it were one of the exact sciences, and we need not wonder if the Spirit and word of God leave us without the necessary light. Yet we know that there are some errors in doctrine and practice which are the death of the soul, and some Christian doctrine and duties in which is the life of the soul. The Creed, or Confession of Faith of the Church should be simple, concise, containing only such statements of doctrine as are clearly founded on the word of God, or indeed carry their own evidence to the well-informed Christian mind, that they are the very truths of God. The Church should neither raise her standard so high as to exclude any of Christ’s obedient disciples, nor bring it down so low as to admit to her embrace any of the children of disobedience. Yet the nearest approximation to this is all that is to be hoped. In applying the standard to applicants for Church privileges there will always be need—I do not say for the judgment of charity, for the Church is required to render the judgment of justice, or to judge righteous judgment according to the measure of light afforded her ; it is but just that Christ’s friends should enjoy the provision He has made for them, and that His enemies should be excluded from it ;—but there will always be a necessity that the standard should be applied in the spirit of meekness, charity and forbearance. Yet, having in the fear of God, and according to the measure of light afforded her, fixed her standard,

the Church should never, on the plea of charity, or in order that she may give a greater extension to her communion, so far lose sight of it, or depart from it, *as to render it nugatory, or hinder the ends of edification.* She may sometimes have to exclude some on account of their disobedience, of whom she may yet hope that they are God's children; for even God's children are more or less obedient, and more or less disobedient. Hence, as there may be those who are visibly Christians, *i. e.*, Christians to human appearance, while they are not so in truth and reality; so there may be those who in truth and reality are Christians, that is, converted persons, and yet not visibly, or to human appearance, Christians. It is those who profess their faith in Christ and obedience to Him, who are entitled to sealing ordinances. But the profession must be a credible one. Such, it is believed, were the views entertained by the Associate Reformed Church from the earliest period of her existence.

We have a right to presume that it will cast some light on the question before us, if we can ascertain what were the views of the two original parties which formed the Associate Reformed Church. Now, it is a well known fact, that, when the fury of the persecution had left the Scotch Covenanters (of whom we all profess to be the children) without an ordained ministry, they sent Mr. James Renwick over to Holland, and that he received ordination from the Classis (Presbytery) of Groningen, notwithstanding that, in their view, and in the view of Mr. Renwick, there were still some "remaining corruptions" in the Church of Holland. Against these he was permitted to testify, and under this protest he was ordained, on a profession of his faith, according to the Westminster formularies. Mr. Renwick's protest was doubtless entered in the spirit of meekness. There was no "lifting up a testimony"

against them as aliens, corrupters, apostates, in the fierce spirit of party. All this was as it should be. It was Christian-like. Three times does the Reformed Presbyterian Church in this country, in a book entitled "Reformation Principles," call the ministers of that Classis "pious" and "godly ministers;" and to this day does the Reformed Presbyterian Church return her thanks to that Classis, for this "remarkable condescension." But now, is it tolerable to suppose, that this young man should receive from or through these "godly ministers" his authority to administer the Lord's Supper, while yet he would have refused to sit down with them at the Lord's table, the above mentioned protest being always supposed? Or had any of these "godly ministers" come over to Scotland after his return, to visit and comfort his suffering and afflicted brethren of the covenant, would they have refused the holy communion to such a beloved guest, it still being understood that they would not have this expression of Christian love construed into an approbation of "the remaining corruptions" of the Dutch Church? To have refused; to have said to their guest, "Stand by, we are holier than thou," would have been an original way of testifying their gratitude. Would Mr. Renwick, would the suffering Covenanters who had received such a precious benefit from that Classis, have done a deed which, at this day, notwithstanding all that the sectarian spirit has since done to curdle the milk of human kindness, we can hardly contemplate without a feeling nearly allied to disgust? Could they have *consistently* done this thing? *Credat Judæus Apelles; non Ego.* There would have been no compromise of principles, no complying with the defections of the times, no approbation of any sinful term of communion, no abandoning of their testimony. But there would have been something savoring not only of ingradi-

tude, but of rudeness and incivility in the refusal; but these are not Christian virtues. No; but they would have regarded this as an opportunity offered in the providence of God, to "extend the holy fellowship and communion" to all those who in every place call on the name of the Lord Jesus.

In the early papers emitted by the Seceders, I have met with little bearing directly on the question now before us, till we come to the adherence given in by Mr. Ralph Erskine. His words are: "I intend and understand no withdrawing from ministerial communion with any of the godly ministers of this national Church, that are groaning under, or wrestling against, the defections of the times, even though they have not the same light with us, in every particular contained in the aforesaid testimony." Indeed, we are assured that the seceding ministers did hold communion with the sound parts of the Establishment for some years; and it is probable that the practice was never wholly broken off till the lines were fully drawn, and even the faithful ministers in the Establishment had committed themselves against the secession testimony. Under this change of circumstances, it is not easy to see how the Seceders could have continued it, without abandoning their cause, which they believed to be the cause of God. It is, moreover, a very probable supposition, that the entire breach of communion was as much the deed of those in the Establishment as of the Seceders.

We have something to our purpose from Mr. Alexander Gellatly, the father of the Secession Churches in this country. I quote from the Ruling Elder, page 43: "To prevent mistakes, let it be remembered, first, that I am not to speak of the basis of communion in the Church invisible, the members thereof being the elect only; this does not affect the present question. Nor, secondly, am I to speak

of the basis of what is called catholic, or occasional communion, with other particular Churches, differing somewhat in principle from that particular Church whereof we are stated members. As there is so much dependence on circumstances in this matter, I believe it is but very general thoughts any have given or can give of it ; such as Mr. Shield's on Church Communion, page 25 : ' If we were in Africa or Asia,' says he, ' we would join with all Christians holding the same fundamentals, against Jews, Turks, and Pagans, though not with heretics. ' " Here we see that the early Seceders made no difficulty in supposing that circumstances in Providence might exist, in which, consistently with the utmost purity of the Church, and with all good fidelity to the cause of truth, and to the testimony which they held, occasional communion, that is, communion under extraordinary circumstances, might be held " with the members of other Churches differing somewhat in principle from that particular Church whereof we are stated members." The question is not, whether they were right ; but, considering the urgent necessity which lay upon them to examine the subject in all its bearings, the conflicts which they had to maintain with the Establishment in Scotland, and the many circumstances which tended to drive them from moderate to ultra ground, it may be a very proper question, whether *we* are *right*, if, in the progress of social sentiment on this subject, any of us have come to think that they were in a pernicious error.

Define doctrines as we may, let the Church lay down rules of administration as she may, and even though she should pile them one upon another, still circumstances will often occur when the apostolic maxim, " let all things be done unto edifying " must become **THE RULE** of duty. I would not seek to have it otherwise. I would frown upon any attempt to destroy all individual responsibility, by

merging it in the social responsibility of the mass, the society, the body. Take away a man's individual responsibility, and he never can stand upright as the Lord's freeman. He cannot have this noble consciousness. In vain will you expect from him anything nobly good. But backed by the authority of the body, and not held in check by a sense of his own individual accountability, he may become a scourge to his kind. Liberty must be regulated; but it may be regulated to death, regulated into a heartless despotism. Christ's ministers are, indeed, in some respects, likened to oxen, but never to the ox on the treadmill.

Let me embrace the present opportunity to correct an error into which I inadvertently fell in a former communication. An extract which was credited to Mr. Gellatly, it appears, on a second examination, should have been credited to a higher source—Mr. William Wilson, of Perth, one of the four original seceders. His words are: "Our secession from the judicatories, is not a secession from the Christian, catholic, visible Church; this is our New Testament Mount Zion, unto which a Gospel ministry and Gospel ordinances are primarily given. 1 Cor. xii. 28. But our secession is a departure from a corrupt part of the catholic, visible body, upon account of their defections and backslidings, continued in, and from which they refuse to reform, though the proper means have been used to reclaim them." From this statement we make the following deductions: 1. A Gospel ministry and Gospel ordinances belong to, are the property of the Christian, catholic, visible Church. 2. It is by virtue of its union with this Christian, catholic, visible Church, that any particular church has a right to a Gospel ministry and Gospel ordinances. 3. If any particular church is not a part of the catholic, visible body, or does not acknowledge herself

such, she appropriates to herself that which does not belong to her. 4. As their secession was only a departure from a corrupt part of the catholic, visible body, their connection with the body, in all its sound parts, remained. 5. Therefore, they could have communion with all the sound parts of the body, as God in his providence afforded opportunity; that is, on fit and suitable occasions.

Come we now to the organization of the Associate Reformed Church. One of the first steps was to emit a pamphlet, entitled, "The Constitution of the Associate Reformed Church." Article VIII. is as follows: "The members of Synod also acknowledge it to be their duty to treat pious people of other denominations with great attention and tenderness. They are willing *as God affordeth opportunity, to extend communion to all who in every place call on the name of the Lord Jesus*, in conformity to His will; but as occasional communion, in a divided state of the Church, may produce great disorders, if it be not conducted with much wisdom and moderation, they esteem themselves and the people under their inspection inviolably bound, in all ordinary cases, to submit to every restriction of their liberty which general edification renders necessary."

To this article an explanatory note was appended, as follows: "The principle expressed in this article is not a new principle adopted by the Synod. It is one of the received principles adopted by the Secession, [we have seen that it is,] and it is set in a very strong light in chapter 26 of the Confession of Faith, which largely describes the communion of the catholic Church. The members of Synod do not mean to draw any other conclusions from it than were drawn by their pious ancestors, in times of the greatest zeal for the purity of religion. [We have seen that they did not draw any others.] No objection can there-

fore be justly stated against it as it stands in the Article, but what may be made to it as it stands in the Confession of Faith. The application of the principle to particular cases may indeed be attended with some difficulties. We are not, however, accountable for these difficulties, as they arise from the divided state of the Church of Christ. The article is guarded, and cannot, without the most evident perversion, be construed as a license to hold unscriptural communion with other Churches. It is the intention of the Synod not to go into connections with any denomination which are inconsistent with the spirit of what is usually called the covenanted reformation."

A short time afterwards, the Synod appointed a committee to bring in an Overture for the Illustration and Defence of the Doctrines of the Confession of Faith. The committee consisted of Mr. Annan and the elder Mason. The Overture has always been ascribed to the pen of Mr. Annan. In this superficial age, when so much of the time of students of divinity is spent in learning to dress and address, to cull flowers of rhetoric, to arrange words, to round periods, it would be good for many of us if we had the tithe of his theology and general knowledge. From the illustration of the 26th chapter, we make the following extract :

"That a temporary, or what is called occasional communion with sister Churches may lawfully, in some instance, take place, is what no man of understanding, who is not much pinched to support some favorite and false hypothesis, will deny. The terms of it are not materially different from the terms of stated communion, only making allowance for a variety in innocent customs and forms. There are, doubtless, points of external order in Churches which may be called indifferent ; such as, whether we begin public worship with prayer or praise, whether, in baptism,

we sprinkle once or thrice, whether, in consecrating the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper, we pray once or twice, whether we give tokens of admission to the Lord's table, or not, if otherwise proper care be taken to guard against an unhallowed communion; and some things may be lawful and expedient in one Church which, though lawful, would not be expedient in another; there is also a difference between a Church formed and one which is only forming, and between a Church advancing in reformation, and one falling back from former attainments.—By occasional communion we do not mean the admitting a person to our communion, whom it would be sinful to continue in it; but a person who, on account of local circumstances, cannot continue in it."

Again: after declaring that an occasional communion should by all means be avoided, if it would involve us in a direct or implied apostasy, or be construed as an acquiescence in any sinful term of communion, the Overture proceeds:

"But the question is concerning the regular orderly Protestant Churches, who have declared their orthodoxy in their Confessions of Faith, adhere thereto, and walk in the order of the Gospel, though differing from us in some external modes and forms. We cannot pretend to unchurch these sister Churches, or pronounce their communion unclean, and in all cases improper to be touched. We could not defend such a principle from reason or scripture, and so will not advance it. . . . From these sister Churches we never separated. Our fathers never thought of pronouncing their communion unclean; far less did they ever think of totally rejecting it. Knox held communion with the foreign Churches. Welsh with the Protestant Church of France. Moncrieff with the Church of Holland when he studied at Leyden. Renwick received ordination in the Church of Holland. And it is a fact

that Rutherford, Henderson, Bailey, etc., held communion with their brethren in England, while they attended the Westminster Assembly. It was with the greatest reluctance that the ministers of the Association (the Secession) first withdrew from the established Church of Scotland. They did it with holy fear and humility, considered it as an awful and important step, still declared they meant no separation from the Church of Scotland, but from a corrupt party in that Church; and they held communion with several ministers in that Church for some years after their separation. But now, schisms and separations are with many a light matter; they tear and divide in a wanton manner, only to gratify pride, passion, and ungodly zeal."

So much from one of the fathers, who had more to do in forming and modelling the Associate Reformed Church than any other three men in his day. When reading these extracts from the Overture, and from the Little Constitution, do we not feel that we are conversing with men who, having the fear of God before their eyes, had learnt to be sober, to be reasonable, to be prudent, to be circumspect, to guard against all unreasonable and dangerous extremes, whether on the right hand or the left. O, how unlike many things which have since been written on both sides of the question! I wish I could, without too long a digression, give more at length some reflections which press on my mind. With such examples before us, what is to be thought of the conduct of those men who, in their "ungodly zeal" for some favorite object, act as if they were ready, and sometimes even declare that they are determined to disorganize every Church which stands in their way; who are ready to sacrifice the peace, the purity, the edification of the Church, everything, unless they can have both Church and State reformed in the very way, and by

the very means which their heated imagination dictates as the only proper way and means?

Soon after the organization of the Synod, three ministers, Messrs. Henderson, Smith, and Logan, gave in a paper at an extra-judicial conference among the members, in which, with some others, they made the following demand: "Will the Synod give up the scheme of occasional communion in all ordinary cases, and confine the privilege to the members of our own Church?" to which it was replied, "that the Synod never meant to allow it except in extraordinary cases." Here we see that three ministers, all of whom were sticklers for purity, orthodoxy, and former attainments, and were especially fearful of anything like innovation, were still perfectly willing that the Synod should hold the doctrine of occasional communion with some other Churches in extraordinary cases. And in the progress of these inquiries I expect to show, that, had the late Dr. Mason gone no farther than this, a numerous and weighty portion of the brethren who opposed him, would neither have felt nor expressed much dissatisfaction. I expect to show more—that the doctrine of occasional communion, as contained in the foregoing extracts, has received something more than the tacit approbation of the Synod of the West.

In the year 1799 the present Constitution of the Associate Reformed Church was published. In the Act, adopting the Confession of Faith and Catechisms, ect., the Synod say: "the terms on which any person or persons shall be admitted as a member or members of this Church, are, a profession of faith in the Holy Scriptures, together with an approbation of the Confession of Faith," etc. Here the doctrine of occasional communion, as held by our covenanting ancestors, as held by the Secession Church in her palmy days, as set forth in the Little Constitution

of the Associate Reformed Church, and in the Overture which the Synod recommended as in substance a useful book, is left untouched ; is neither affirmed nor denied, approved nor rejected. The wording of the Act leaves room for it ; but it is left as a subject upon which, as Mr. Gellatly says, "only some general thoughts can be given," because it has "such a dependence on circumstances."

But I shall hazard an opinion as to the kind of cases in which the Synod, in that early day, and a majority, at least, of her members for some years, if not to the present day, would not have considered themselves bound to "submit to a restriction of their liberty;" in other words, would have extended the holy communion beyond their own members. It will be best done in the way of example. I candidly confess that in such cases I never did, and without some great and unexpected change of sentiment, never will, consider myself bound to submit to any restriction of my liberty. One of our ministers is dispensing the Lord's Supper. A member of the Associate, or a member of the Reformed Church, of good report among the brethren, presents himself and says: "I belong to the Associate or the Reformed Church, (as the case may be,) but here I have no opportunity of testifying my love to my Saviour in the Church of my fathers. I cannot see my way clear to become a stated member of your Church ; for your profession does not embrace some things which, I think, it ought ; but I entirely approve of it as far as it goes ; and it contains the main things, that is clear. I think I can join with you in this particular act of obedience without sin, and to my spiritual advantage." And all this he says, not in the proud, ungodly spirit of party, but in the spirit of meekness and love. I ask, where is that minister of Christ who could muster the hardihood to reject such an application ? Would precious truth suffer by granting it ?

The Church or her members be involved in any direct or implied apostasy? Any encouragement be given to disorderly persons? What harm could result? Where could there be any sin? I declare I would not reject such an application, though I might be overruled by a session; but to the honor of the Eldership be it said, that I have never had much to do with a session which would have raised any strong objections. Is it not a fact, that there is nothing in our terms of communion to exclude Seceders or Covenanters? If they are excluded they exclude themselves; and on themselves be the responsibility. No part of it shall ever rest on my shoulders. On this principle, under circumstances somewhat peculiar, I have, in two or three instances, admitted Seceders and Covenanters to sealing ordinances. Will any of the brethren of those Churches say I did wrong? How? Why? I solemnly declare that I am under no apprehension that I permitted a sacred ordinance of Christ to be profaned by suffering one of their approved members to join in it. I wish I could say as much for every other act of my life.

Take another case. A member, of good report, as before, of the Old School Presbyterian Church, applies to one of our ministers who is about to dispense the Lord's Supper, and says: "I am not a member of your Church, but I love you because I think you love Christ, and I have a strong desire to join with you in publicly testifying our common love to Him who loved us. I am far from home, in bad health, and have little hope that I shall ever have an opportunity of communing in my own Church." The minister or an Elder says something to him about Psalmody. He replies: "That is a subject which I have never been called to examine; you may be right, but it would require some time for me to investigate the subject, before I could form an enlightened opinion. This, however, I

can say, the Psalms given by Divine inspiration are precious to me, and I would not willingly or knowingly do anything to bring them into disrepute." I ask, where is there a minister of Christ who *could* reject such an application? The truth is, I believe, none of us *would*; and we may just as well say so at once, and remove from ourselves the imputation of a needless, unfeeling, unchristian exclusiveness, which, I am persuaded, never did belong to the Associate Reformed Church as a body.

Reader, I hear that you have made yourself somewhat famous for deeds of charity and benevolence. They say that a poor man, ready to perish with hunger, came to your door and begged you, for God's sake, to give him a morsel of bread, and that you ordered him to begone because he was not a citizen of your State, and his skin was not of the same color with your own. Is this true? No; it is as false as Satan himself; it is a base slander invented by some of my enemies. Well, I almost thought so; yet the story derived an air of probability from the fact, that when a disciple of Christ who was far removed from his country and kindred, and was hungering and thirsting for the bread and the water of life, besought a minister of Christ to minister to his wants, you argued stoutly that it was the minister's duty to send him away empty, because he did not belong to OUR CHURCH; and that if he did faint by the way, it was no other body's concern but his own.

But all this is a very different thing from admitting to our communion, as an ordinary practice, the members of other evangelical Churches. In such a practice it is hard to see any propriety. Nor is it at all necessary. Edification does not require it. Every regular Church possesses ample means for the edification of her own members. Her shepherds can furnish abundant provision for their own

flocks, so that they do not, as an ordinary thing, need to wander abroad in quest of other pastures. Besides, when we speak of "evangelical Churches" we use very indefinite language. Churches are sometimes so called by way of courtesy. And if any particular church abandons her fixed principles of administration, she may be led on, step by step, till she takes the enemies of Christ to her embrace as well as her friends.

It would involve us in gross inconsistency. We declare that an approbation of the Confession of Faith is the condition on which any person can be received as a member of this Church; and, then, we must admit to our communion, as a matter of course, persons who, it is well known, object to some things in our standards, and have taken their stand in other Churches just because they do object to these things; and who are, perhaps, making a zealous opposition to them. And we admit them again and again, which amounts to the same thing as admitting them to the privileges of stated members, while they are no way bound to perform the duties of members.

Such a practice would in a short time render a Confession of Faith, as used by the Associate Reformed Church, or, indeed, by any Church which uses it, either as a standard of Christian profession or a test of orthodoxy, useless and unmeaning. Before it can be consistently adopted, the Church must be revolutionized—that is, the "adopting Act" in our constitution must be rescinded, and the Confession of Faith, Catechisms, Directory for Worship, etc., must cease to be used as a part of the standard by which we try whether a person professes faith in Christ and obedience to Him. It would subject us every day to the liability of admitting to our communion persons who might the next day bring a reproach upon the Christian profession, while yet we have no control over them.

It would require us to admit to the communion table persons who are known to believe and practise things for which we would discipline our own members. We might refuse to admit a person as a member on account of some defects in faith or practice; he could go away and join another Church where these defects would not stand in his way; and then, because his local situation rendered it more convenient, he could come back and enjoy Christian privileges with us as often as he should please. The consequence would be, that we would soon have to overlook in our own members, great departures from the integrity of a Christian profession. These are not the *things* which should be done unto edifying. ●

Section 14.

The Question of Communion settled—Members of the Church should submit to every Restriction of their Liberty which general Edification might render necessary—Dr. Mason's Views on Inter-communion—Reflections on the general Question.

IN the fellowship meetings which were common in some parts of the Associate Reformed Church, when from the scarcity of ministers they had many more silent Sabbaths than at the present day, and at other times, the writer distinctly remembers, that, after reading one of Newton's sermons or a chapter from some of Hervey's works, an individual would sometimes remark in substance, "I wonder if it would be wrong to hold communion with such an Episcopalian as Newton or Hervey." The remark produced a few moments' silence, when some one would reply, "Well, I do not see that it would be wrong in itself; but all Episcopalians are not such, and they have some superstitious usages among them which it would be wrong to countenance; it might give rise to a practice which would lead to great disorders in the Church, and open a door for the entrance of errors in doctrine and corruptions in wor-

ship." To this, after perhaps some farther conversation, a general assent would be given, and so the subject was dismissed. The final conclusion was, that it was the duty of the members of the Church to "submit to every restriction of their liberty, which general edification might render necessary." And these were Associate Reformed people, and they were a people who had carefully read, and in general approved, every exhibition of principles which the Synod had put forth from the first. It was thus that the question of communion was settled; and for myself, I have more confidence in a settlement of this or any similar question when made by simple-hearted Christians, comparing and weighing the honest convictions of their own hearts, than if it were the result of volumes of controversy from the "disputers of this world."

And it was just so that the question of communion was settled or left by the Associate Reformed Church when her organization was completed. Without pronouncing everything which might pass under the name of "intercommunion" inherently sinful, she saw many reasons why her members should "feel themselves bound to submit to every restriction of their liberty which general edification rendered necessary." In the absence of specific scriptural rules—as amidst the endless variety of circumstances under which they might be called to decide and act, a specific rule could not always be expected—general edification was to be the rule. And so is the apostolic counsel, "Let all things be done to edifying." That latitudinarianism on the one hand, and on the other that exclusiveness which has no tendency to promote edification, is not of God. I trust it is too late in the day for the opinion to be made to prevail, that, irrespective of edification, or if you will, of Christian expediency, all communion with Christians of other evangelical denominations is sinful *per se*. For my

own part, I never believed it, and never will, because I am sure I never can.

When laying before the reader the views of the Associate Reformed Church at the time of her organization on the subject of communion, I omitted the notice of an "Act for amending her Constitution," in which the subject was touched on. It was once intended to introduce an extract from it, but on reflection this did not appear necessary, as it contained only the general statement that the doctrine of the "Little Constitution" was simply intended to guard against latitudinarianism on the one hand, and on the other, that bigotry which appropriates to any branch of the Church the character and privileges of the Church Catholic. We always find the Synod in the middle between two extremes, where truth loves to dwell. The position is a safe one in a moral point of view; but those who occupy it are often exposed to no small annoyance. It is too tame for the fanatic, the enthusiast, and the fierce polemic. The individual or the society occupying it, is exposed to the fire of both the extreme parties. It is an interesting fact, that parties occupying the contrary extremes, though at daggers drawn with each other, will sometimes lay aside their hostilities, and even seem to embrace each other in loving friendship, that they may make a combined assault on some moderate conservative party, which does not wish to fight either of them, but would vastly prefer keeping the "unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace."

The question which comes next to be considered is, What were Dr. Mason's views on the subject of communion? But it does not appear necessary to dwell at such length on it as was once intended. The Doctor's work entitled "A Plea for Sacramental Communion on Catholic Principles," is in the hands of many of our readers. To

do justice to his argument would require a whole section of this volume to be given up to it.

Perhaps it would not be far from the truth to say, that Doctor Mason labored to prove, that, as a constant practice and irrespective of any peculiarity of circumstances, communion may not only lawfully be held, but *should* be held with Christians of other evangelical denominations, which the fathers of the Associate Reformed Church, and before them, the "old Seceders" admitted might lawfully exist under extraordinary circumstances.

But it may be a question whether the difference between Dr. Mason and his brethren arose from a diversity of views on the subject of communion, or whether it had not its origin in the different light in which he and they regarded some incidental matters. The latter is the opinion of the writer. Dr. Mason's *principles* of communion were those of the Associate Reformed Church as contained in her standards, though perhaps very different from some *local opinions* which prevailed here and there in the body. Indeed, they were the identical principles which are exhibited by most Presbyterian denominations in the general rules or directions which they lay down for regulating "the communion of saints." Whence, then, the difference? Answer: Dr. Mason had come to regard some matters which kept different branches of the Church apart, as of less importance than his brethren regarded them, or than himself had formerly regarded them. Indeed, we might say, that the controversy hinged on one single point—Psalmody. Suppose Dr. Mason, after he had gone into the practice of intercommunion, and had written his book in defence of the practice, to have retraced his steps, and come to regard the question of Psalmody as he once did;—that is, suppose he had again come to regard the use of human composition in the praises of God an unwarrant-

able innovation, a corruption of the worship of God,—the controversy between him and his brethren would have at once come to a pause; for there would have been little left worth contending about.

Dr. Mason's *was not* the latitudinarian scheme of communion. That scheme is pretty well represented by Dr. Ely, who alleges that as "a man may hold a damning error without being damned by it," an Arian or a Universalist may give such evidence that he is a renewed man that he may be admitted to the communion of saints. This scheme proceeds on the principle that the tree may be *good* though its fruit be *corrupt*—that a man may bring forth *evil things* out of the *good treasure* of his heart—that in determining the question of a man's piety, his principles of belief may be entirely left out of view. Such was not Dr. Mason's scheme. Far from it. Before he could sustain a man as a visible Christian, having a right to the privileges of the Church, he must know how he stood affected towards the system of Gospel truth. Repeatedly does he declare, with all the earnestness of his nature, and with all the thrilling eloquence of which he was such a perfect master, that he could have no Christian fellowship with men who corrupt those precious doctrines which relate to the person, offices, or work of the Saviour; to the way of the sinner's acceptance with God; or to the renewing and sanctifying work of the Spirit. No man was ever a more zealous defender of the "doctrines of grace," or would have been more unwilling to sign a truce with those who corrupted them, or would fritter them away. It is well, if at the present day we—I mean we ministers and people of the Associate Reformed Church, and some other Churches which boast of their steadfastness—are disposed to guard as sedulously against whatever would corrupt the faith of Christ, as Dr. Mason was.

So far as known to the writer, few if any intelligent men ever contended that Dr. Mason's doctrine of communion, viewed abstractly, was unscriptural; but it was alleged that, in the present unhappy divided state of the Church, it could not be carried out into practice without leading to consequences which the Scriptures condemn, and which would have an injurious influence on the purity and order of the Church. It was sometimes alleged that the attempt to bring all evangelical Christians together at the Lord's table, was premature—that such communion could not properly exist, till the causes are removed which render necessary at least some of the distinct ecclesiastical organizations of the present day,—and that these causes will not probably all be removed till the Millennium. This was perhaps about the truth, and as much as should ever have been said against his views.

Though he introduced no new principle of communion, he did maintain that some things should not be insisted on as essential to a profession of obedience to Christ, which the Associate Reformed Church did, and still does, think necessary. His "plea" was therefore in favor of an innovation in the *practice* of the Associate Reformed Church. Psalmody may indeed be said to be the question on which the controversy mainly depended. This once out of the way, the different regular branches of the Presbyterian family will soon come together. To render his "plea" a perfect one, he should have endeavored to convince his brethren, either that they were wrong in regarding the use of human composition, a corruption of the worship of God, or that they attached too much importance to this question. Unless some such change could be produced on the minds of his brethren, he might have foreseen that his effort would produce division instead of union. That his "plea" did not contribute to the settlement of this question is mani-

fest. The advocates of human composition are neither declining in their numbers or zeal. That the cause of an inspired Psalmody is not losing ground is evident from one fact. Those who publish books as a trade, soon learn to know what books will sell. Perhaps it is not extravagant to say, that ten Bibles with the Psalms are now produced for the market, for every single one thirty or forty years ago.

To have prepared the mind of the Associate Reformed Church for embracing the change meditated by Dr. Mason, a change of sentiment in relation to Psalmody would have been previously necessary. Had any minister still in favor of the exclusive use of the book of Psalms in the praises of God, gone about to act on his theory, he would often have found himself placed in embarrassing circumstances; that is, had there come to be much intercommunion.

Nor would this have been all that was necessary. Dr. Mason might have acted on his views, without having at any time at the Lord's table a more *promiscuous* company of Christians than is sometimes found communing together in denominations which reject his views with the utmost abhorrence; but another attempting to act on his plan would either soon have desisted, or would have carried it much farther than he would have done. In order to its being safely acted on, in order to prevent serious abuses, it would have been necessary that some such *confederacy* should be carefully formed between those Churches whose members might commune together, as was said to have been proposed by a prominent individual, a few years ago, as a substitute for every plan of *union* which had been before those Churches which were lately engaged in a course of negotiation. Indeed, it is highly probable that Dr. Mason had some such thing in view, to render his plan more practicable and safe; and that the plan of union or

confederacy with the Reformed Dutch Church was designed as the first step towards it.

There are, no doubt, places where a person will not see the ungodly workings of the sectarian spirit, and the evils of a divided state of the Church, as Dr. Mason and others have depicted them. There are some tangible points of difference—all know precisely where the difference lies, they treat each other's opinions and scruples with respect,—they “agree to differ.” But then, there are places where two, or three, or four different denominations exist on the same ground, their members intermingled in general society, but standing apart in their ecclesiastical capacity on account of things which are of no practical importance, where the desolating effects of the sectarian spirit must be visible to the most careless observer. If two or three denominations agree in matters of doctrine, worship and discipline so nearly, that the only intelligible difference among them is in the pronunciation of that word *shibboleth*, this difference must be preached on, and harped on, to make it appear of the most tremendous importance, whether it will or not; and if argument fails, if it will stubbornly refuse to appear of such importance that the glory of Emmanuel's kingdom depends on it, the argument must be strengthened by the officiousness of the tale-bearer, the malevolence of the slanderer, and all those appliances which produce evil thoughts and evil surmisings. A spirit is generated which, after spending its strength in testifying against the “apostasies,” and the “defections,” and the “backslidings” of other Churches, recoils on the denominations which produced it, and begins to tear the bowels out of her congregations. The world looks on—the wicked laugh among themselves—the youth become ashamed of the Church of their fathers and begin to scoff.

I am not one of those who will frown on every honest attempt to promote more good nature and good will among the Churches. Dr. Mason's name will never be mentioned by me as a fit subject of denunciation. The most and the worst that can be said of his work is, that it was, perhaps, a premature, and not altogether a judicious, while it was certainly, in some respects, an abortive attempt to introduce what all must regard a better era in the Church—the era of harmony, good-will, and brotherly love. It will have its use. It gave an impulse to the Christian mind in our country, and the Churches must be “dull of learning” if they do not learn wisdom even from the partial misdirection of that impulse.

Section 15.

Opinions of those who opposed Dr. Mason on Communion—The Monongahela Presbytery—The Presbytery of Kentucky—Causes which conspired to widen the Breach and led to the Dismemberment of the Old General Synod.

THE question which comes next to be considered is, What were the views of the brethren who opposed Dr. Mason on the subject of communion?

But it may be well to premise, that we shall have nothing to do with local opinions, or the opinions of individuals. It seems necessary to give this notice beforehand; for nothing is more common than for men to suppose that the opinions which they, and others with whom they have been more closely associated, have always held, are, and always have been, the views of the whole body, the public authorized declarations of the body to the contrary notwithstanding. Such persons will sometimes not be able to travel a hundred miles from home without witnessing in the Church to which they belong, something which they will think not quite as it should be; or, indeed,

be ready to pronounce a sad innovation, a grievous departure from the footsteps of the flock. It is this weakness of human nature which often throws Societies into a state of turmoil. Some local opinion, struggling for the ascendancy is a frequent source of distraction and division in the Church. And in such a contest, when men's minds are excited, whatever is most extravagant, and violent, and ultra in its character, is most likely to obtain the victory. Simple, honest truth, like a modest, unobtrusive man in a tumultuous assembly, is thrust into a corner, and its voice is not heard. The Society is driven on ground, which sober reason will afterwards pronounce untenable, but which it will be the work of a generation or two to abandon with safety and with dignity.

Local opinions, leading to corresponding habits of action, often grow up insensibly, and become strong enough to contend for the mastery, when, during a long period, nothing occurs to direct attention to the grounds and reasons of any practice in the Church. From the organization of the Associate Reformed Church, until the excitement occasioned by the innovation of Dr. Mason, nothing had occurred to elicit inquiry on the subject of communion. A pretty uniform practice had prevailed. It had been introduced by men of revered memory; and none doubted that it was scriptural and right. And, indeed, in the discussions which afterwards arose, it was not taken up as an open question, but as one which was to be decided by precedent and former practice. Hence the stock of biblical knowledge in the Church was not increased. But fortunately, the Synod of the West was not induced to take higher or more exclusive ground than that which had been formerly occupied by the Church; though causes were not wanting to induce her to do so, and some persons were not entirely satisfied. We do believe, that "in the present divided

state of the Church," our declared principles on the subject are, at least, so near right, that it would be difficult to propose any material alteration, which would conduce to edification. With us this is a weighty consideration. "Let all things be done unto edifying." Our practice may be open to some objections. But in "the present divided state of the Church," no theory of communion which I have seen is without its difficulties. Difficulties of a very serious nature indeed press on some of them. I do not say we should be satisfied, though we do the best we can under present circumstances. *There should be more union and communion among Christians.* The labored *apologies* which are sometimes made for the want of that union and communion which should exist—the ingenious reasonings which are employed to show that *all* the consequences of division are not evil and only evil, (in which, to some extent, we concur,) furnish abundant proof of the general feeling that there is great guilt somewhere, perhaps some guilt everywhere.

When the subject came under discussion in the General Synod, memorials were sent up from the Presbytery of Monongahela, the Presbytery of Kentucky, and the Synod of the Carolinas. Portions of these memorials were published by the Synod of the West, in a narrative of the grievances which led to her separation from the General Synod. The Presbytery of Monongahela say:

"As a decision of the important question of communion is expected at the ensuing meeting, they hope Synod will not recede from the general ground taken by the venerable fathers of the Church on that subject. Without attempting an exposition of the 26th chapter of the Constitution in favor of it, they beg leave to offer the following documents, which appear to them incontestably to prove 'that restricted communion in the seals of the new covenant' was the

avowed doctrine of this Church when first organized. Her first Constitution affords evidence of this fact. By referring to articles 6, 7, and 8 of this instrument, which they do not transcribe, to avoid being prolix, in which a distinction between *fixed* and *occasional* communion is established, (the distinction is exploded by the advocates for extended communion,) and as they consider 'the people under their inspection inviolably bound in all *ordinary cases* to submit to every restriction of their liberty, which general edification renders necessary,' nothing can be more clear than that they did not view communion with other Churches, 'in the seals of the new covenant,' to be duty, daily and every day, but that they were to be governed in it by existing circumstances.

"In the 'Overture' of the year 1783, the most satisfactory of all their publications, which, whilst it gives a just exposition of the nature, defines with equal precision the extent to which it is to be carried, its extension to Christians of other denominations is limited to extraordinary circumstances. (Page 117.) 'That a temporary, or what is called occasional communion with sister Churches may lawfully, *in some instances*, take place, is what no man of understanding, who is not pinched to support some favorite and false hypothesis, will deny.' (Page 118.) 'We will not pretend to unchurch all the Protestant Churches, or say that their communion is so impure, that it would contaminate us to touch, taste, or handle it in *any case*.' (Page 119.) 'We cannot pretend to unchurch those sister Churches, or pronounce their communion unclean, and *in all cases* improper to be touched.' Whether these sentiments accord with those recently avowed by some members of this Synod, may be easily decided."

Another publication, though not judicial, but entitled to equal credit, so far as matter of fact is concerned, places

the matter beyond all possibility of doubt. They refer to the Ruling Elder (page 78). "At an extra judicial conference, these three gentlemen, viz., Messrs. Henderson, Smith and Logan, gave in a paper in Mr. Henderson's hand-writing, to the following purport,—'Will the Synod give up the scheme of occasional communion, in *all ordinary cases*, and confine the privilege to the members of our own Church?' The reply is in the following words—'And with regard to the demand concerning occasional communion, it was remarked, that the Synod never meant to allow it, but *in extraordinary cases*.' In the printed extracts for 1811, curious as it may appear, this same sentiment is brought forward, and by the advocates for extended communion, too. (Page 29.) 'But it (intercommunion) is not viewed by Dr. Mason and the people of his charge as anything else than the application of the principle expressed in the 26th chapter of the Constitution, sec. 2. Nor as involving the question of communion with any other Church than that one with which they are, in the providence of God, so peculiarly connected. Nor is it contemplated to continue, after they shall have obtained a separate place of public worship, which they are at present making preparations to build.'

"To these facts they would subjoin, as additional evidence, the uniform practice of the ministers and people of this Church since its formation. Not so much as one solitary instance of communion with other Churches from 1782 till 1811. If intended [extended] communion is to be established, let it be candidly acknowledged that the principle is *novel*, and the practice an *innovation*." Thus far the Monongahela Presbytery.

Now, it is evident that this Presbytery did not regard communion with the members of other Churches, *in all cases*, inconsistent with the principle of "restricted com-

munion" as adopted by the Associate Reformed Church. Such communion, they admit, may take place in extraordinary cases, without any violation of the principles of this Church. The Overture of 1783 they say is the most *satisfactory* of all the publications of the Synod, and in this "its extension to Christians of other denominations is limited to extraordinary circumstances." Such extension, then, could not be *unsatisfactory* to them. When they say "not one solitary instance of such communion from 1783 till 1811," they are to be understood as saying that no instance of extended communion, not thus "limited to extraordinary circumstances," had taken place. They could not have intended to affirm that no instance of such occasional communion as had from the first been allowed by the Synod had ever occurred. They could not safely have affirmed that never, in one solitary instance, had a member of some Secession Church abroad, when transiently in this country, been admitted to communion in any of our congregations.

A man is to be regarded as acknowledging all the reasons by which he justifies his conduct. The foregoing extract was published by the Synod of the West as a part of the pleadings by which she vindicated her separation from the Old General Synod. So also was what follows:

In a letter to the General Synod, the Synod of the Carolinas says: "On the subject of communion, we beg leave to observe, that we have no objection to its extension, in extraordinary cases, to ministers and Christians of other Churches sound in the faith, etc., but in organized Churches which are separate and distinct from each other, we can see no inconsistency in their having separate tables." This needs no comment.

There is much good sense and propriety in the remark

with which the short extract just given closes. So long as different Churches keep up separate organizations, for reasons which to themselves seem sufficient, we can see no inconsistency in their having separate tables, but a great propriety in it. Some may allege that their doors should always stand open for the admission of one another's members to the Lord's Table, to testify to the world their union and brotherly love. But it seems that entire union does not exist, for they suppose they have sufficient reasons for remaining separate; and should a practice be introduced to testify more than is true? And as to brotherly love, it is, to say the least, very problematical whether it would be increased by a practice which edification does not require, and which may lead to confusion and disorder. Except in some such extraordinary cases as those which were described in a preceding section, it is doubtful whether applications for communion in another Church will often be made with an eye single to the glory of God and to the edifying of the Body of Christ.

I am not certain that the Presbytery of Kentucky would have cordially subscribed to the doctrine of the above extracts. Old conflicts had diffused, to a considerable extent, among the Associate Reformed in Kentucky, a spirit of antagonism to other Churches, especially to the General Assembly Presbyterian Church, which, though it might have been shared by individuals in other places, was never universal in the Church. The historian must state what he believes to be fact. It is believed that any person who will carefully compare the papers sent up by the Monongahela Presbytery, with those emanating from the Presbytery of Kentucky, will perceive some slight shades of difference; and that he will also be forced on the conclusion, that, had these Presbyteries sat down and compared views, with each other, they could not have acted in concert in

opposition to Dr. Mason, without calling in the aid of that spirit of Christian forbearance which is the Spirit of Christ.

In proof that Dr. Mason's practice was an innovation on the established order of the Associate Reformed Church, the Presbytery of Kentucky state as a fact, that "the Rev. Messrs. Annan and Dobbin, the one for admitting a minister of another denomination to preach in his pulpit, and the other for preaching on the Monday after a sacramental occasion, by invitation from a minister of a Presbyterian Church, made acknowledgments before Synod that they would be more circumspect for the future." Mr. Annan might have been to blame. I cannot say whether or not, unless I know to what denomination the minister belonged. But the Presbytery place it entirely on the ground that he was of "another denomination." Here I demur, and hope the day will never come when our ministers will refuse to exchange pulpits occasionally with ministers belonging to other Churches which are sound in the faith. Mr. Dobbin's conduct appears to me entirely justifiable. Good old Mr. Dobbin! I love you for that;—but you ought not to have surrendered "the liberty which we have in Christ." I would preach on the Monday after a sacramental occasion, or the Monday after any other occasion, on the invitation of any decent minister of Christ, glad of an opportunity to proclaim the Gospel of salvation to my fellow-men. It is sorely to be regretted, that a father of the Church should ever have been called to account for such a deed. No Synod or Presbytery, it is hoped, will ever in future make such an unwarrantable stretch of the prerogative. The days of such *Pope-ing* are numbered.

This Presbytery, however, produced some pretty strong arguments against the practice introduced by Dr. Mason;

but it is believed that enough has been said to show the ground occupied by the opposing brethren.

It was proposed to inquire further, whether Dr. Mason or his opposing brethren most nearly agreed with the views originally held by the Associate Reformed Church. On farther reflection, however, this question does not appear to fall properly within the province of the historian. He will therefore take the liberty of excusing himself from entering on the inquiry. The reader will not find it difficult to decide for himself.

The controversy on the subject of communion, which soon drew the subject of Psalmody into debate, led to the dismemberment of the Old General Synod. The writer, however, believes that this consequence might possibly have been delayed, and by the adoption of other measures, been entirely prevented, had not other causes conspired to widen the breach, and hasten the crisis. These were:

1st. A series of papers appeared in the *Evangelical Record*, from the pen of Rev. James M'Chord of Kentucky, which he afterwards revised and published in a small volume, entitled, "The Body of Christ." In this work the author presented a new view of the relation subsisting between Christ and those whom He represented in the covenant of grace. He had studied Theology in the Theological Seminary of New York. Having, in a casual conversation, remarked that he had obtained the hint on which his view was founded, from Dr. Mason, meaning that he had extended to the Federal system of Christ a principle which Dr. Mason had applied to the Federal system of Adam; this, in the state of men's minds at the time, gave rise to a vague suspicion that Dr. Mason would prove to be the "Professor Simpson" of the American Church, and corrupt the faith to the very core.

2d. A commission, clothed with powers which many of

the brethren regarded as unpresbyterial, was sent by the Synod to try an issue between Messrs. Rankin and Bishop. It had no tendency to satisfy their minds that the commission, in their report to Synod, made some remarks which appeared to cast reflections on the Presbytery of Kentucky.

3d. The tendency towards centralization in the Old General Synod.

In all ages there has been a natural tendency towards the accumulation of power in the hands of ecclesiastics in large cities. Hence the origin of Metropolitans in the early ages of the Church, and the superiority conceded to the Bishops of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, etc. If those who occupy these *heights* in the Church, were always distinguished among their brethren for their wisdom, prudence, and piety, the evil would not be so great; but this is not always the case. This centralization in the Old General Synod was perhaps promoted by a theory on the subject of Church power, held by Dr. Mason and others of his day. It was certainly facilitated by the ratio of representation in the General Synod, which was so small that most Presbyteries were entitled to send nearly one-half of their members as delegates. Hence, only a few Presbyteries near the place where the Synod held its annual meetings, could be fully represented. This placed the decision of questions almost entirely in the hands of a few men residing in and near the cities of New York and Philadelphia. And the grievance was aggravated by the refusal of the Synod to meet at Pittsburgh, where the Western Presbyteries could be as fully represented as those in the East. This part of our history seems to read a lesson to the Synod of the West. No discontents are known to exist, but they may arise. Human nature in its best estate is but human nature at the best. A Presbytery has

brought the matter before our General Synod. A delegation of a minister and an elder from each Presbytery would be competent to manage all the business which can come before the General Synod. At a reasonable expense of time and money, all the Presbyteries could be equally represented. The present (Feb. 1852) ratio was fixed when the Old General Synod was a small body compared with the Synod of the West at the present day.

Before proceeding to the organization of the Synod of the West, the matters above mentioned must come under review. But as an important document has been furnished us by the kindness of a friend, which will enable us to set the case of Mr. Jamieson fully before our readers, it will be the subject of the next section.

Section 16.

The Case of Rev. John Jamieson, a Member of the Second Associate Reformed Presbytery of Pennsylvania, concerning Deviation from the Standards and Misrepresentations of Facts—He is suspended from the Ministry—Thoughts suggested by the Trial.

HAVING been furnished with the original minutes of the Second Associate Reformed Presbytery of Pennsylvania, we are now prepared to present to the reader a view of the case of Rev. Mr. Jamieson.

At a meeting of the Presbytery held at Brush Creek meeting-house, August 12, 1795, the following minute was adopted:—"According to an injunction from a committee of the Associate Reformed Synod, agreed to cite Mr. Jamieson to attend next stated meeting of the Presbytery at Yough meeting-house on the 3d day of November, at 10 o'clock, A. M., and for our authority and the causes of so doing, to put into his hands a true copy of the appointment of Synod, and a copy of the appointment of the committee of Synod, of which the following is a true copy:

“At a meeting of the Associate Reformed Synod, held at Philadelphia, May 27th, 1795, and continued by adjournment: It being represented to Synod that the Rev. John Jamieson, a member of the Second Associate Reformed Presbytery of Pennsylvania hath spread through the country false and injurious reports respecting the proceedings of the Synod, charging them with a judicial toleration of [the-use of] Watts’ Psalms in families—with abolishing the days of fasting and thanksgiving usually observed at the celebration of the Lord’s Supper, and of permitting irregular and pernicious methods of solemnizing marriage—particularizing and exposing to public odium the names of individual members of the Synod; and it having been farther represented to Synod that the said Mr. Jamieson hath taught erroneous doctrines, affirming that the Church judicatories possess not only a ministerial and executive, but also a legislative authority, and that the first act of saving faith terminates on the eternal election to life of him who exercises it. Therefore the Synod resolved, unanimously, that a committee, vested with Synodical powers, be sent to the Second Presbytery of Pennsylvania, directing them to inquire immediately into the premises, and for this purpose to collect testimony, and to call Mr. Jamieson before them, the said committee assisting them herein, and proceed as the case shall require; and in case of the said Presbytery’s declining to take up the business, the said committee enter on it themselves, and report their proceedings therein to Synod at the next meeting; and they are likewise enjoined to take cognizance of any other errors or irregularities which may be stated before them. And in order to enable the committee effectually to accomplish the object of their mission, they are hereby empowered to convene said Presbytery; the committee are farther directed to give timely intimation thereof to the parties concerned, and

the Rev. Messrs. Alexander Dobbin and John Young, with Mr. James M'Clanahan, Ruling Elder, are appointed a committee for the purposes herein mentioned, and of their appointment and authority this shall be their sufficient warrant."

The Presbytery met on the 3d day of November; and after the record of some other transactions, the following minute appears:

"Received from Rev. Messrs. Alexander Dobbin and John Young, a committee of the Associate Reformed Synod, a copy of their appointment to convene this Presbytery, a copy of which is inserted in our former minutes.

"Said committee presented to the Presbytery a memorial respecting some doctrines, and misrepresentations of facts, advanced by Rev. John Jamieson of which the following is a true copy."

"A memorial drawn up by the committee of Synod, consisting of Rev. Messrs. Alexander Dobbin and John Young, respecting some doctrines advanced by the Rev. John Jamieson, a member of the Second Associate Reformed Presbytery of Pennsylvania, supposed to be deviations from our standards, and some misrepresentations of facts.

"1. That the said Mr. Jamieson at Hanna's Town, either on the last Sabbath of June or the first of July, in the year 1794, asserted that the Associate Reformed Synod had made an act allowing or approving the singing of Watts' Psalms, Sternhold and Hopkins, or anything that families pleased in family worship, another act setting aside the Fast days usually held at the celebration of the Lord's Supper, that they had attempted an act setting aside the publication of the Banns of marriage, that thus the worship, government and discipline of the Church are nearly given

up for a price or a loaf of bread—that the Psalmody was given up to prevent banishing a rich man who paid a large stipend, from Mr. Annan's congregation—the Fast days to favor the merchants or rich men of Dr. Mason's congregation—and the publication of the Banns was to have been given up to secure the marriage money to the clergy—and that he mentioned Messrs. Annan and Mason as the authors of the reasons which he assigned; and that on the same occasion and at the same place, he asserted that the uniformity maintained by the Synod was an agreement to disagree, and that he declared that uniformity was necessary to salvation, or words that bore the same import. To be witnessed by William Findley, Esq., John Hutchison, James Walker, Samuel Findley, Joseph Cook, John Kirkpatrick, Alexander Porter.

“2. That the said Mr. John Jamieson, on the Monday after the last sacrament which he held at Loyal Hanna, asserted that the Synod, by breaking through the Presbyterian rule of transmitting its acts to Presbyteries and sessions, had done much mischief. Witnesses, William Findley, Esq., Rev. Alexander M'Coy, Messrs. James Walker, Samuel Findley, John Hutchison, James M'Intire, James Stuart.

“3. That the said Mr. John Jamieson, at Hanna's Town on the aforesaid last of June or first of July, 1794, after having declared that we are Presbyterians as well as those who belong to the General Assembly in America, brought a charge of giving up the standards generally against Presbyterians of different denominations, and introduced the complaint that Dr. Priestley was addressed from every direction on his landing, in such a manner as to impress the minds of the people with the idea that the clergy, as such, had done so, and alleged that they would not be thus forward to address a Gospel minister. Witnesses, Charles Pollock and the former gentlemen mentioned.

"4. That the said Mr. John Jamieson, at Yough meeting-house, on the Monday after a sacrament, dispensed sometime in the summer of 1794, went to improper lengths in declaiming against the judicial transactions of the Red Stone Presbytery, and expressed and conducted himself indecently after coming down from the pulpit. Witnesses, Col. Morton, Messrs. Matthew Mitchel, Henry Westbay, Zaccheus Wilson, Rev. Matthew Henderson.

"5. That the said Mr. John Jamieson, at John M'Cready's, in a sermon preached sometime late in the summer of 1794, advanced that we are to exercise faith for our sanctification much in the same manner as for our justification, that we are to go on in the use of means by believing and trusting in God without looking or expecting the fruits in our own experience, that going on in this way we have no right to doubt or question our state, that in the ordinary way a person may be forty or fifty years, or even all his life, converted, and not know it, or know anything about it, that it would be inconsistent in such a person even to call his state in question, or for the minister to question it. Witnesses, Messrs. Alexander Porter, James M'Intire, John Hutchison. Doctrines to the same import were inculcated at an examination held at Mr. Findley's. Witnesses, Messrs. William Findley, Alexander Porter, John Hutchison.

"6. That the said Mr. John Jamieson, on the Friday of the sacrament lately held at Mr. John M'Cready's, asserted that in the direct act of saving faith we are to believe our election in the first instance, our being included in the covenant in the second, and our being in Christ in the third. Witnesses, Rev. Alexander M'Coy, Messrs. Alexander Porter, William Findley.

"7. That the said Mr. John Jamieson, in a discourse at Mr. John M'Cready's, on a week day when the congrega-

tion was called to determine about dividing the congregation, and also on the Fast day of the late sacramental solemnity at the same place, asserted that we have no right to offer the Gospel to the reprobate, having nothing to do with them, that all who hear the Gospel are called to believe that they are elected, that the Gospel offer and our conviction of its embracing our case, is a sufficient warrant for all who hear it to believe their own election, and that the Gospel minister has no right to preach damnation to any. Witnesses, Rev. Alexander M'Coy, Messrs. Alexander Porter, David Proudfit, William Findley.

"8. That the said Mr. John Jamieson, on the Monday after a sacrament over Conemaugh in the summer of 1794, asserted in support of the allegation that the Gospel minister has no right to preach damnation to any, that the word *damned*, in Mark xvi. 16, and such like texts where it occurs, does not mean eternal damnation. Witnesses, David Findley, Rev. John M'Pherrin.

"9. That the same thing was advanced on the first Sabbath he preached at Mr. M'Cready's after the aforesaid sacrament. Witnesses, Messrs. William Findley, Alexander Porter, John Hutchison, James M'Intire.

"10. That the said Mr. John Jamieson, on the Fast day of the sacrament lately held at Mr. John M'Cready's, taught that the elect are justified from eternity. Witnesses, Rev. Alexander M'Coy, Messrs. Alexander Porter, William Findley, James M'Intire, John Hutchison.

"11. That the said Mr. John Jamieson, on the last Sabbath of June, or first of July, taught and enforced the necessity of uniformity in such a manner as to infer that a legislative authority is vested in Church judicatories. Witnesses, the same as for what was asserted on the same day mentioned on the first page.

"The same position was advanced in a subsequent con-

versation in the hearing of Messrs. Alexander Porter, John Renwick, and William Findley."

This libel, with the list of witnesses, was put into the hands of Mr. Jamieson. Our present (1852) Book of Discipline had not then been adopted; and the Presbytery agreed to proceed according to the practice of the judicatories of the Church of Scotland.

Mr. Jamieson denied the several charges contained in the first article "in their present form," but substantially admitted most of them to be true. The second article he acknowledged. The third, he partly denied, and partly acknowledged. To the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth, he was silent or made no reply. The tenth and eleventh he denied.

After a tedious trial, and much apparently patient and impartial hearing and weighing of testimony, the Presbytery found some of the charges proved, some proved in part, and others not proved. They then very wisely and properly, we think, passed a resolution calling on Mr. Jamieson to present in writing to the Presbytery at its next meeting, his faith on an article which appeared to be proved, viz.: that he had asserted that "the minister of the Gospel had no right to preach damnation to any." This seems to have been regarded as involving the main matter in question as to his doctrinal belief, and to have been so understood by Mr. Jamieson.

They also passed the following resolution: "The Presbytery think it incumbent on themselves to caution and enjoin it on Mr. Jamieson, in future, to desist from the manner in which he has thought proper to hold up to public view the proceedings of the Associate Reformed Synod; and the Presbytery are of opinion that the only constitutional step, whereby, in present circumstances, this should be effected [that is, any necessary reform] is by way

of petition and remonstrance; in which steps, as far as the Presbytery allege the Synod has acted inconsistent with Presbyterian rules, they shall readily concur." Mr. Jamieson needed this caution. Other ministers of that day, and in later times, needed it. Any other course is revolutionary, anarchical and mischievous, whether it be pursued by ministers, elders, or private members of the Church. But this regular constitutional, Christian method of seeking the removal of real or imaginary evils, does not suit all men. There will always be murmurers and complainers, who would be unhappy if they had nothing to murmur and complain about. Such men are exquisite judges of the discipline of the Church; and their zeal for her "purity" so "consumes" them that they have neither strength nor ability left to exert themselves for the honor of Christ's kingdom.

In compliance with the request of the Presbytery, Mr. Jamieson produced the following paper:

"1. The Scriptures so connect election and salvation together, that without the one the other cannot be, and whether we shall be saved or not is just as much a secret, as whether we are elected or not, for we can no more see and know what is to come, than what is past, but by either being revealed to us or gathered from evidence; we are not to expect it to be revealed to us that we are elected and shall be saved; we can only expect to learn it from evidence; as election and salvation, then, are so inseparably connected together, that the one cannot be without the other, whatever is a warrant or ground to believe that I shall be saved, which we call the direct act of faith, must equally oblige me to believe that I am elected; for to believe the one, that is, that I shall be saved, but refuse to believe that I am elected, is to separate what God hath joined together in His revealed word; and as election is

first in order, why not believe that first which is first?—What is my salvation, but just the execution of the decree of my election?

“2. As none of the elect either will or can be damned eternally, and as the reprobate neither can nor will be saved, but will be inevitably and eternally damned, I can preach damnation to none unless I was sure he was reprobate. I can offer salvation to all the congregation before me, but cannot denounce eternal damnation on any of them, for Christ came not into the world to damn the world, but to save. And I am only an ambassador in his stead, ‘As my Father sent me, even so send I you.’ The Father sent Him, then, not to damn, and so not to denounce damnation on the world, but to save; and so only to preach salvation I am sent, then, with no other commission than He was, and so can exercise no other. And, therefore, all those texts of Scripture which say, *he that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned*, can only be so far used by us in preaching as follows: he that appears to us to believe, we are to approve of as acting right, and treat him accordingly, and he that believeth not or appears not to believe, we are to condemn as acting wrong, but for us to say that he will be eternally damned would be to do what we are not competent for, and would be inconsistent with the method of salvation; for sinners’ eternal salvation or condemnation doth not depend on their believing or not believing, but on Christ’s having died for them, or not having died for them.”

This paper was referred *simpliciter* to Synod. In the meantime appointments, as usual, were given to Mr. Jamieson, and the students of Theology were continued under his care. The Synod judged all the articles to be proved, except the one respecting Dr. Priestley, pronounced the exposition of Mr. Jamieson’s views in the paper copied above,

inconsistent with the standards of the Church, and suspended him from the exercise of the ministry. He was never restored. The historian will close with some thoughts suggested by this trial.

1. The Synod's "directing" the Second Presbytery of Pennsylvania to bring charges against Mr. Jamieson, appears to us; and we believe, at the present day (1852), would be generally regarded as an unwarrantable stretch of power. Was not the Presbytery competent to manage its own business? Did it not belong to the Presbytery in the first instance, to judge whether the peace or purity of the Church required that charges should be tabled against Mr. Jamieson? If he was in the habit of holding up the members of other Presbyteries to public odium, and his Presbytery did not check him with sufficient promptitude, they might very properly have complained to his Presbytery, and called on them to bring him to account, and their Presbyteries might have joined in respectful application of this kind; but the act of the Synod bringing her authority to bear on the Presbytery, seemed to imply a suspicion, either of a want of competency, or a want of fidelity on the part of the Presbytery. There was here a tendency to the centralization of power of such a nature as must always be dangerous, if not checked. A few individuals, who, by their position or some other accident, may obtain a control over the source of power, may oppress all those who cannot, with a good conscience, aid them in carrying out all their favorite views.

2. That Mr. Jamieson was a hyper-calvinist, that is, that he leaned towards fatalism and anti-nomianism, and was in some danger of running even into Universalism, appears pretty evident. Having a strong and inquisitive mind, with some pride of intellect, he pushed his inquiries into the theory of salvation so far that he perplexed himself

with subtleties which were unprofitable to himself as a minister of the Gospel, and worse than unprofitable to his hearers. Still, had he been on good terms with his brethren, and they with him, private brotherly counsel and admonition might have saved him to the Church.

3. There is, however, much reason to believe that Mr. Jamieson's manner was such, as to render this milder course impracticable. That he was not tender of the reputation of his brethren, and did not duly study the peace of the Church, appears evident from the testimony. There was much of the demagogue about him, and if he could not rule the whole Church, he would tear it, and at least head a party. In all this, however, he no doubt had prevailed on himself to believe that he was most conscientiously pleading the cause of God. There is a tradition that when the subject was before Synod, Dr. Mason said, that, with some explanation, Mr. Jamieson's views might be suffered to pass as harmless; to which Mr. Jamieson replied in a manner so harsh and offensive as to preclude all further attempts at conciliation, that his doctrine needed no explanation.

4. There is some reason to believe that Mr. William Findley, Esq., and Mr. Jamieson were not on the best of terms. Mr. Findley was an Irishman, a warm politician of the republican school, who served a number of years in Congress and was reputed a man of talent. Of course he had no special affection for England; for everything American he would stand up. Mr. Jamieson was a Scotchman, and like many of his brethren who emigrated to America at that early period, he could see nothing in this country at all to be compared with things over the water. As everything had degenerated here, it was natural for him to suppose that the "attainments," and the "discipline and government," and all that was precious in the Church in Scotland, were given up, or in the way of being given up.

That all things were tending to ruin, both in Church and State, would appear to him most evident. It was next to impossible that a minister and an elder of such opposite feelings and sentiments could get along comfortably together, during one of the most exciting periods of our national history. Hence Mr. Findley's testimony is often very strong and positive in its statements against Mr. Jamieson.

5. On the more abstruse points of Theology it is very improper to call upon a minister's hearers, generally, to testify as to what doctrines he teaches. Some may be incapable of comprehending his meaning; some may overlook qualifying phrases, on which, often, all depends. Often has a minister to pass a subject by, with a mere incidental remark; he may suppose that his hearers, from their having heard him treat the subject at length, will be able to comprehend his meaning; but this may not always be the case. Some of Mr. Jamieson's doctrinal sentiments as presented by witnesses look very ill; but as understood by Messrs. M'Coy, Porter, and Proudfit, who were students of Theology under him, or when they had stated the explanations which they had heard him give, we can easily comprehend that, after all, his faith was not so very heterodox.

6. Some of the charges made by Mr. Jamieson against the Synod were not far from the truth. There is no doubt that it was then in the intention of many of the members of Synod, to dispense with the publication of the Banns of marriage as soon as it could be done with propriety. But Mr. Jamieson did very wrong to go about among the simple-minded people, before they had an opportunity of learning the reasonableness of the change, and "trouble them with words"—telling them that there were members of Synod in favor "of irregular and pernicious methods of solemniz-

ing marriage," thereby disturbing the peace and edification of the Church. No doubt the publication of the Banns was once a prudential measure; but when the ends in view could be otherwise secured by a change of circumstances, there was no reason for continuing a practice which usually set the young people a tittering and furnished all with a pleasant subject of gossip and laughter as soon as they got out of doors.

That the Associate Reformed Synod intended to "abolish" or set aside the usual fast and thanksgiving days at the celebration of the Lord's Supper, was not, and could not be true, to use Mr. Jamieson's own language, "in its present form;" for those days never had a constitutional existence in the Associate Reformed Church, and so needed not an "Act" of Synod to abolish them. They depended entirely on custom, and that custom by no means an ancient one. But "custom, with an iron rod, rules four-fifths of mankind." Hence, it will often produce a greater uproar to dispense with a mere custom than to violate some principle of the moral law. How easy in such a case to make a disturbance in the Church, by crying out that a new race of "Babylonian idolaters" are going about with axes and hammers to break down "the carved work of the sanctuary."

The Synod never thought of authorizing any other Psalmody than the received version of the Scripture Psalms. But there is a tradition that when the Act was passed prohibiting the use of any songs of merely human composition in congregations, it was moved as an amendment that "families" should be added; but Mr. Annan opposed, for the reason that "every man is prophet, priest, and king in his own house," and the amendment was dropped. But all that any candid man, who is acquainted with Mr. Annan's views and practice, would infer from this, is, that he de-

sired to preserve a sound principle of government, that it is better to leave room for some possible irregularities or evils, than to hamper the free determination and choice of men's minds, by a great number of minute rules authoritatively imposed, thereby rendering them mere *automatons*. From the testimony of Messrs. Dobbin and Henderson the tradition appears to be true.

7. Dr. Priestley was a Socinian, but he was also a scholar and a philosopher. Having had some connection with the "Birmingham riots," he comes to this country, and, like Kossuth, was hailed as the representative of the liberal principle in England. Presbyterians, and in some instances Presbyterian ministers, may have joined in an address to him. Dr. Ewing, a Presbyterian minister in Philadelphia, and a professor in the University of Pennsylvania, entertained him as a man of science. But on Sabbath morning he conducted the philosopher to his pew, in company with Mrs. Ewing, and ascended the pulpit alone, thereby refusing to acknowledge Dr. Priestley as a minister of Christ. This polite way of testifying his disapprobation of the philosopher's religious principles, would have a better effect, to say nothing of the Christianity of the thing, than if he had repulsed him with incivility and rudeness.

8. Mr. Jamieson's attack on the Red Stone Presbytery, on the Monday after the communion, admits of no apology. It could not edify the congregation to launch out into invectives against ministers of another denomination, especially as their proceedings in no way affected him or the people of his charge. Better to have no fast and thanksgiving days connected with the communion, than *abuse* them as he did on this occasion.

Section 17.

Rev. James McChord's Theory of the Atonement—His book entitled "The Body of Christ"—He is suspended from the Exercise of the Ministry by the Associate Reformed Synod—Joins the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church.

HITHERTO the writer has derived his information chiefly from public documents; but we have now arrived at a period when many of his facts will be furnished by personal recollection. As a few brethren still remain whose memory reaches back to this period, should he fall into any material errors, he will be thankful to any of them who shall point them out, and furnish him the means of correction.

The present chapter will be devoted to events which are of some interest in themselves, and were followed by important consequences.

Rev. James McChord was born in the city of Baltimore in the year 1785. While yet in his infancy his parents moved to the State of Kentucky, and settled near Lexington. His mother was a member of the Associate Reformed Church and worshipped with the congregation under the pastoral care of Rev. Adam Rankin. At a very early period of life he showed a fondness for reading and study, and gave evidence of a vigorous and inquiring mind. At the age of twelve years he had made considerable proficiency in Geography, History, and other kindred branches of science. At the age of thirteen he commenced the study of the languages in the Lexington Academy. In 1801 he entered Transylvania University, and after prosecuting his studies for about two years in that institution, he commenced the study of law in the office of the celebrated Henry Clay. Being required to spend a portion of the Sabbath in recitation his conscience became uneasy;

this uneasiness, leading to a serious change of views and feelings, resulted in a determination to devote himself to the work of the ministry.* In the year 1805, having been previously taken under the care of the Presbytery of Kentucky as a student of divinity, he was sent on to the Theological Seminary recently established in New York under the care of Rev. J. M. Mason, D. D.

Having completed the ordinary term of four years in the Seminary he was licensed to preach the Gospel in the year 1809. A profound theologian, an impressive speaker, talented, eloquent, and possessing a brilliant imagination, he was regarded by almost all who heard him as a workman who needed not to be ashamed. There are those still living who can testify that he was the first preacher who really engaged their attention.

In the year 1812 he published a series of papers in the *Evangelical Record*, a monthly periodical edited by Rev. R. H. Bishop of the Associate Reformed Church, and two Presbyterian ministers. These he afterwards revised, and published in a small octavo volume entitled "The Body of Christ."

As a general fact, Calvinistic theologians, having always believed in a limited atonement, but an unlimited offer of the Gospel to sinners of mankind without exception, had often been called upon by their Armenian opponents, to reconcile these (to them) apparently contradictory ideas; and they had attempted to do so with more or less success. Some however had attempted to lessen the *apparent* discrepancy, or to remove it entirely, by modifying the Calvinistic view, so as to render it, as they thought, less vulnerable, and therefore more easily defended. Hence the Hopkinsian or indefinite atonement theory; which

*Memoirs of Rice, page 171.

supposes that Christ did not die for any individual of the human family in particular, but for sin in the abstract; and that the atonement was only a grand expedient devised by the Most High to relieve Himself from a necessity, imposed by the justice and holiness of His nature, of punishing sin, and thus leave Him at liberty to bestow or to withhold pardoning mercy, according to His sovereign good pleasure, to sinners whose unexpiated guilt still remained. This, or something like this, is the view of the Beecher school, so far as they think it worth while to have any ideas on the subject, though, on many other points, there is no sympathy between them and the Hopkinsians. With this theory, now (1852) in its dotage, but at that time earnestly striving for universal dominion, Mr. McChord was not satisfied. Who indeed could be? But he seems not to have been entirely satisfied with the Calvinistic method of removing the difficulty above noticed. He hoped to accomplish something towards relieving the commonly received Theology of the Presbyterian Churches from what he regarded an embarrassment. Hence his new view.

It is with some diffidence the writer undertakes to give the reader some idea of Mr. McChord's theory. Many years have elapsed since he read, "The Body of Christ;" and his other avocations do not now allow him time to peruse a work which has ceased to be interesting except as a matter of history. Its outlines are as follows: *That* Christ did not die for the elect as such, but for *His body*, which however will never include any but the elect—*that* His body consists of all those who at any time are in a state of vital union to Him, is capable of continual growth, and of the utmost expansion, bounded only by the determinate counsel of God, and will in the end include all the redeemed from among men—*that* the covenant of grace is

capable of embracing sinners of mankind indefinitely, the number, and the particular persons being limited, and defined only by the decree of election—that there is no such union between Christ and believers as that which is commonly denominated the legal or decretive union—that the Holy Spirit is the only bond of union between Christ and believers—that believers become members of His body and are placed under his representation the moment they are born again and exercise faith—and that regeneration introduces an individual into the federal system of Christ, and places him under His representation as the second Adam, even as by natural generation he was introduced into the federal system of the first Adam, and placed under his representation.

It is believed that Mr. McChord's theory did not disturb the commonly received doctrines of the atonement, as a plenary satisfaction for sin, of regeneration by the Spirit of God, of justification by faith, and of the necessity of holiness as that which evidences our faith and fits us for heaven. At least, whatever injury his theory might do to any of these precious doctrines if pushed to its consequences, it is certain that he still held and preached them, as evangelical ministers generally do. It did, however, disturb the commonly received Calvinistic Theology *as a system*.

The Presbytery of Kentucky, deeming the book unsound in its theology, took it into its consideration and appointed a committee to examine it. In October, 1815, he was put on trial and called to answer to a libel consisting of nineteen counts. The great length of this document forbids its insertion in this place. The reader will very naturally wonder how the book could contain so many distinct errors.

To account for the number of counts contained in the

libel, it is to be remarked, that Mr. Rankin, who was perhaps constitutionally inclined to jealousy, was now approaching his second childhood, and had become more so than in his better days. Though his congregation had dwindled down to a mere skeleton in comparison to what it once was, he was suspicious that every minister who seemed disposed to spend much of his time near Lexington was seeking his place. Mr. McChord had refused calls from a distance; and by an arrangement of very doubtful propriety, made at the instance of that portion of the Presbyterian congregation who admired eloquence, he preached regularly on the afternoon of the Sabbath in the room of their pastor, Rev. Mr. Cunningham. This was little acceptable to Mr. Rankin, and, with perhaps other causes, led to an unpleasant state of feeling between him and Mr. McChord. Though a man of noble feelings, and generous impulses, Mr. McChord was nevertheless of an irritable temperament. In his book he made frequent flings at the principles and practice of the Associate Reformed Church on psalmody and communion. How far a feeling of settled dislike towards Mr. Rankin prompted these, it would be difficult to say. They could not but be very galling to Mr. Rankin, as the father and long the champion of the Associate Reformed cause in Kentucky. Nor could his brethren of the Presbytery regard them with indifference. These, therefore, formed so many distinct charges against him. Still, the libel went needlessly into detail.

After a protracted trial, Mr. McChord was found guilty on all the specifications contained in the libel, and suspended from the exercise of the ministry. He appealed to the General Synod. A severe bodily indisposition preventing his attendance at the next meeting of the Synod, he sent on a request that his case should lie over till the next sub-

sequent meeting. The matter being regarded by the Synod as one of grave importance, it was referred to a committee. On the report of the committee the Synod granted his request; "but as the prominent characteristic of his book, viz: the denial of the personal representation of the elect by the Mediator, either in the covenant of grace, or in the fulfilment of the covenant by His obedience and sacrifice, was an error of too great magnitude to spread for a whole year or more," he was enjoined to submit to the decision of the Presbytery, by abstaining from the exercise of his ministry. He submitted; but complained—bitterly and pathetically complained—of the injunction, as virtually adjudicating his case, and condemning him unheard—as prejudging his case, and thereby so far committing themselves that a free and impartial trial was not hereafter to be hoped for—as subjecting him to all the shame, and pain, and loss of a regular suspension. The utmost, he said, which the Synod ought to have done, was to enjoin silence on the points at issue. He submitted; but under a momentary excitement, which he afterwards perhaps regretted, he published an appeal to "Churches better informed;" and signified his intention to submit his case to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, should the final decision of the Synod be against him. It perhaps contributed to increase the bitterness of his feelings, that he regarded an individual member of the committee who was likely to exert a great influence over its deliberations, as "hostile to him from a feeling of mortified pride." It is proper, however, to remark, that both that good man, Dr. Proudfit, and that great man, Dr. Mason, approved the procedure.

At the next subsequent meeting of the General Synod, Mr. McChord attended. Before entering on his case, a motion was made by the individual just now referred to,

that he should be required to say whether or not he relinquished his appeal to "Churches better informed," and his intention to submit his case to the General Assembly in the event above mentioned. He said he had relinquished both.

After an able and remarkably eloquent speech in support of his appeal, the matter was given into the hands of a committee. On the report of this committee the Synod adopted the following resolution as its final judgment: "That so much of the libel presented by the Presbytery of Kentucky against Rev. J. McChord, as goes to charge him with denying that any are represented in Adam who are not united to him by natural generation, thereby making representation consequent on natural generation; and so much of the libel, as charges him with denying that any are represented by Christ in the covenant of grace, until they are united to Christ in regeneration, thereby making representation in Christ consequent to regeneration, is relevant and true."

Mr. McChord declined the authority of the Synod; applied to the Presbytery of West Lexington, and was received as a minister of the Presbyterian Church. He continued to preach in a church which had been built for him, and which is still called "The McChord Church," until near the year 1822, when he departed this life.

The individual to whom reference has twice been made, was a man of respectable talents, of pleasing manners, of fascinating speech, possessing indeed all the exterior accomplishments which constitute the finished gentleman. He had for some years been the pastor of a congregation in the interior of the State of New York, and had run himself deeply in debt. Having resigned his charge, he received a call from the congregation of Newburgh, of which Rev. Dr. M'Carrel is now (1852) the pastor. Scarcely had he

entered on the new charge, when he received another call from a Presbyterian congregation in the city of Albany. He laid the matter before the Presbytery of New York; urged as a reason for resigning the Newburgh charge, and accepting the call from Albany, that the salary at Newburgh *would not*, but that promised at Albany *would*, enable him to discharge his debts. The congregation at Newburgh consented; the Presbytery released him; he accepted the new call. The clerk was directed to furnish him a certificate of dismission; but not till after the approaching meeting of the General Synod, in which he was to serve as a delegate from the Presbytery; which, to the writer who witnessed these proceedings, he seemed forward to do. A minister of the Presbyterian Church *in fact*, though, legally speaking, still a minister of the Associate Reformed Church, he sat in her highest judicatory, watching for the interests of the General Assembly. It was well understood, that the moment Mr. McChord's case came before the General Assembly, there would be a conflict between the two parties which then divided that body—the Hopkinsians, or “improved Calvinists,” as they loved to be called, and the Calvinists of the old school. This, the gentleman of whom we speak, was desirous to prevent. Hence his motion going to compel Mr. McChord to abandon his appeal to the General Assembly.

He had not been long settled in Albany till rumors of a very unpleasant nature began to be circulated concerning him. Of the proceedings in his case little is known, and they are foreign from our subject. Suffice it to say, that he doffed the clerical gown, and embraced the profession of a stenographer, in which capacity he subsequently acted on some important occasions.

An anecdote may here be related which shows that the children of this world, though wise in their generation, are

not always wise. Shortly before Dr. Mason sailed for Europe on account of his health, this individual was to officiate in his pulpit in the afternoon of the Sabbath. Towards the close of the morning's service, the Doctor made a favorable reference to the person who was to address the congregation in the afternoon. The design was apparent; he wished to direct the attention of the congregation toward inviting him to fill his pulpit during his absence. But the speaker in the afternoon must return the compliment. He pronounced a long and fulsome eulogy on the Doctor. It required no soothsayer to predict the result. The Doctor's color changed, his face became cloudy, a frown, no unmeaning frown, sat on his brow. Within a few days it began to be rumored that, before leaving the pulpit, the Doctor said to him, "Now, Mr. ———, you have put it out of my power to do what I intended."

Section 13.

The Constitution and Standards of the Associate Reformed Church—
 Liberty of Opinion on Subjects not embraced in these Standards—
 Covenanting—Did the Associate Reformed Church ever recognize it
 as a moral Duty?—Propositions established by this Church regard-
 ing public Covenanting.

THERE is a chapter in the history of the Associate Reformed Church, which perhaps requires more careful attention and more serious consideration than it has yet received.

It was remarked in the proper place, that when the union between the Associate and Reformed Presbyterians was consummated, in the year 1783, those sections of the Westminster Confession of Faith which treat of the power of the civil magistrate in matters of religion were reserved for future consideration. In the year 1799 the necessary alterations were made, and the constitution of the Associate Reformed Church was finally settled. In the

Act receiving the Confession and Catechisms, as thus amended, the Synod declared that the aforesaid Confession and Catechisms contain "the true and genuine doctrine of the Associate Reformed Church;" and in the Act approving the Confession and Catechisms, Form of Government, and Directories for Worship, the Synod did also declare that they consider these, "their fixed testimony by which their principles are to be tried," and also, "the Constitution and Standards of the Associate Reformed Church, in all matters relating to doctrine, government, discipline and worship." The reader is here referred to the two adopting Acts at the beginning of the book.

This language is plain and perspicuous. Is the inquiry made whether any doctrine or principle is a doctrine or principle of the Associate Reformed Church, the appeal is to be made to her "fixed testimony by which her principles are to be tried"—to the book which contains "the true and genuine doctrine of the Associate Reformed Church." And to nothing else is the appeal to be made, or you may obtain a spurious doctrine, not the *genuine* doctrine, of the Church. If you appeal to anything else, you apply a false test; a test which she has not only not authorized you to use, but to which she has positively refused to submit her principles. She has received nothing as an article of faith which is not contained in her Confession and Catechisms which contain her "true and genuine doctrine;" she has received and declared no principle in relation to doctrine, government, discipline, or worship, which is not contained in her standards. All matters not embraced in her standards are outside of her constitution, and make no part of her public profession. They may be true, or they may not be true—she has treated them as matters of private opinion or of doubtful disputation. All this seems so very plain that it needs but to be stated. And unless we have precise

ideas here, and abide by them, it is impossible to foresee into what confusion we may plunge ourselves.

If a doubt exist with respect to the meaning of any part of our constitution, an appeal may properly be made to any of our occasional testimonies, which may serve to cast light on the question ; or to transient acts of the Synod, or to the writings of those who may be called her standard authors. But we can *legitimately* appeal to any of these, only for the further elucidation of some articles of her *received faith* ; that is, of her constitution and standards, which she has received in her adopting Acts. And if it should appear—the case is a possible one—that there is, on some points, a discrepancy between her fixed testimony, and some of her occasional testimonies, her fixed testimony must have the precedence ; and this, for the reason that, as her members have pledged themselves one to another, in her constitution, a covenant previously made cannot be changed or disannulled by any future application of its principles, or comment on its doctrines.

In some transient acts and other papers, the Synod had declared her views on particular subjects before her constitution was finally settled. These declarations, if incorporated in her constitution and standards, become a part of her fixed testimony. Any of them not thus incorporated, she evidently intended to pass over and leave as matters of private opinion and Christian forbearance. And the very fact that they did previously undergo consideration, and call forth expressions of opinion from the Synod, and from individual members, furnishes the most conclusive evidence that they were not passed over from any want of care or attention, but deliberately, advisedly, and with design. Concerning these, her members may be fully persuaded in their own minds. They may entertain different opinions concerning them, and yet, of none can it

be said that they have denied any doctrine belonging to the received faith of the Church, for she has declared nothing concerning them. Her members cannot be required to consent to any specific propositions concerning them, or any of them, as a condition of their enjoying Christian privileges. They may believe, or they may disbelieve, what any individual, or body of men have "received to hold" concerning them, and the Church will bear them harmless, provided they do not deny or violate any principle contained in her standards. And long may they enjoy this liberty. May no man be permitted to wrest it from them. The Church has not affirmed them in her book which contains her "true and genuine doctrine," neither has she denied or repudiated them; so that, to the charge that she had denied any of them, she could always, she could to this day, declare that she never did any such thing. Is this hard to understand?

The much and the long agitated questions concerning public and explicit covenanting, and the "binding obligation" of the British covenants, are among the questions which she has left to take care of themselves. She has refused to endorse any class of opinions concerning them. She has affirmed nothing in her standards to which she requires the assent of her members. She soon found that the more Christians are induced to give heed to such questions, the more they are inclined to divide off into factions, a plain proof that they are not of God. What factions? Why these—some contending for ecclesiastical, but not national covenanting; some contending for national covenanting; some for the "binding obligation" of the British covenants on the natural posterity of the covenanters; some for their obligation on the members of the Church and their successors, as a body corporate, helping the argument to limp along, by alleging that, as the

universal Church of God has some kind of interest in the British covenants, there is no impropriety in supposing that their obligation may be everywhere acknowledged, by the Christian Hottentot and the Christian Jew, as well as by the Scotch Presbyterian. And if it were possible to bring the subject of covenanting back into the Church with something of the force of a *living principle*, all these questions would again come up for warm and earnest discussion, to the neglect of many momentous interests.

But here it may be necessary to distinguish. It is freely admitted, nay it is maintained, that public social vowing, or covenanting with God, is a moral duty under the New Testament. This is unquestionably the faith of the Associate Reformed Church—her “*received faith*,” for it is contained in her Confession and Catechisms. And as she holds no principles but such as are practical, and practicable, her members have always endeavored, and do still endeavor to practise it, in various ways, but especially when they take Christ’s yoke upon them, and when they receive the sacraments. So far we have the “received faith” of the Associate Reformed Church. But it has been admitted by our fathers, and will be admitted by us their descendants, that occasions may arise, when vowing or covenanting in some more extraordinary manner may appear to be expedient and necessary. Times of prevailing apostasy, for example, may call for such occasional covenanting; and the duty may be performed while at the Lord’s Table under an extraordinary call to her members, to vow solemnly to the Lord their God, that though all men forsake Him, yet will not they; or it may be performed in some more extraordinary manner. But here, as so much depends on circumstances which cannot be particularly specified; and as, at the most, this extraordinary covenanting is only an ordinary duty, made occasional by

extraordinary circumstances; and as wise and good men may differ in opinion as to the proper seasons for engaging in it; the Synod finally declined making anything concerning it an article of faith, or an additional term of communion. And the citations which are made from the writings of the fathers, and from some early documents emanating from the Synod, which show that at one time the prevailing opinion in the Church was perhaps in favor of inserting something concerning this occasional covenanting among her terms of communion, are of great value, in as much as they afford evidence that it was not omitted through inattention, but on mature deliberation.

It is moreover admitted—and this is also considered of much worth in the argument—that years after the constitution of the Church was settled, some of her ministers, from the force of habit, or from an unwillingness to depart from a usage which time had rendered venerable, did make some kind of covenanting besides that which is taught in the Confession of Faith, after some sort, a term of communion. Within the memory of some yet (1853) alive, a question put to parents on presenting their children for baptism, was to this effect: “Do you believe public and explicit covenanting,” etc. So late as 1818 this question was proposed in my hearing. The history of the case may be of importance, as it tends to show that the change was not made lightly, or from a love of change, but in the view of sufficient reasons.—Owing to the unsettled state of things in the western part of the Church, the writer held the call of the congregation which he finally accepted, nearly a year under consideration, during which time he preached to them as a stated supply, not having been yet ordained. In the meantime the sacrament of the Supper was administered to them by one of the fathers. On the day following several children were baptized, and this

question was proposed. Though there were persons in the congregation who had some ideas on the subject, he was well persuaded that not one of those who presented their children at that time knew anything about it. He mentioned the circumstance to another father, remarking at the same time, that as he did not think the question a necessary one, and did not believe that any Christian was bound, as a condition of enjoying Christian privileges, to be able to give an intelligent answer to it, or so much as to know what the administrator meant by it, he hoped the question would never be proposed again, if he was to be the pastor of that congregation. This father replied that it had once been his own practice to put the same question, but having heard the matter discussed at a Presbyterial meeting many years ago, he had discontinued the practice. In a conversation held a year or two afterwards with an elder of the congregation under the care of the father first alluded to, he also mentioned the circumstance. The elder stated that recently the Session had conversed with him on the subject, and had suggested that he ought either to cease proposing the question, or instruct the people on the subject; for many of them really did not know what the question meant—(how many in any Church have any tolerable ideas on the subject?)—and that he had, on reflection, concluded to dispense with the question. And this, so far as is known to the writer, was the end of it in the Synod of the West. It will do no harm to add, that the elder has been written to, and the answer confirms the writer's memory in reference to this fact, and another which will be hereafter stated.

Time, experience, and reflection operated a change in this, as well as in some other matters of habit and opinion. Opinions will change, habits formed on mere opinions will change, and it is well that they often do change. How

otherwise could there be any progress? how could the world ever become wiser? of what use were experience? It is therefore not the part of wisdom to stereotype them, by giving them a place in the "fixed testimony" of the Church, as articles of that faith which never changes, but is like its Author, "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever."

But now, it is and will be most strenuously maintained, that the Associate Reformed Church never did in *any manner or form* recognize, as a moral duty, or as a divine ordinance in New Testament times, that which commonly passed under the name of the "important duty of covenanting"—that important duty which the Church may give her members a dispensation to neglect, and call it "liberality." Shame! Nothing is clearer to my mind than that she never did. And here I have a man who has as good a right as any other man alive or dead, to be called the father of the Associate Church in America, to support me. Dr. John Anderson says, and says it truly: "Any covenanting which the members of the Associate Reformed Church have proposed as warrantable, bears no reference to the covenant engagements entered into by our fathers; whereas, the covenanting practised by the Associate Presbytery is such as is at the same time a renewing of those solemn covenant engagements." ("Letters to Mr. Hemphill," page 86.) If I am told that this is but a small distinction, I see no reason why I may not freely admit it; for the question is but a small one at best; and never becomes important till an attempt is made to fasten it on to the Church of Christ as an "enslaving tradition." Then it must be opposed at all hazards, just as we would oppose any other doctrine or commandment of men.

The history of opinions is often important, as without the light it sheds, we may be at a loss what to make of

them, or what to do with them. It was the controversies which subsequently arose about the lawfulness of the covenants, particularly the Solemn League, and its obligation upon posterity, which gave the subject of covenanting all its importance. But for the excitement thus produced, men would never have thought of such a term of communion. The proof of this assertion, if proof is called for, is that, nowhere throughout Christendom is such a term of communion thought of, except in a few of those Churches which have derived their model from the Scotch Church; nor has such a term of communion existed elsewhere, from the apostolic age down to the present. It is, in its history, as well as in its very nature, local, and therefore unfit to be made a part of the true Catholic religion of the Gospel. And let the impression fade from the minds of men, that posterity are under some kind of obligation in consequence of certain politico-religious transactions of their ancestors in Britain two hundred years ago. The entire subject of covenanting will soon lose all that factitious interest, which has rendered it such a prolific source of division and contention in the Church. Dr. Anderson regarded it as of little value except in so far as it served to keep alive this impression.

But there are things of a later date in the history of the Associate Reformed Church, which show that she occupies the position in reference to covenanting which we have assigned her.

In the year 1821, a committee was appointed by the Synod of the West, to confer with a similar committee of the Associate Church on the subject of union. Dr. Riddel, on behalf of our committee, presented the following proposition, which, if quoted at all in this argument, should be quoted entire: "We assert that public religious vowing or covenanting is a moral duty, to be practised when the

circumstances of Providence require it; but as the duty, from its nature, is occasional, not stated, and there is, and may be, a diversity of sentiment respecting the seasonableness of it, we agree that while no obstruction is thrown in the way, every Scriptural facility shall be afforded, to those who have clearness to proceed in it, while its observance shall not be required of any, in order to Church communion."

This was a proposal to make what had all along been held in the Associate Reformed Church as a matter of private opinion, *ostensibly* a term of communion. We say *ostensibly*; for the qualifying clause with which the proposition closes, and which we have put in italics, reduces it back to a mere matter of private opinion. It was the *appearance* which it presented of something, which it was well understood would, in practice, amount to nothing, which was, at that day, one strong objection to it. And to this day, whenever the subject of covenanting is insisted on as an important duty and urged as a term of communion, but with the proviso, that those who do not see their way clear to engage in the duty, will be indulged in the neglect of it, it is the *appearance* which is kept up of more than is really intended, that calls for earnest and severe animadversion.—But let us proceed with our inquiry :

Though on a superficial view, it might appear that the Associate brethren had all they desired, this was far from the fact. Dr. Riddel then proposed the following query, or queries: "Must a recognition of the principle, that the Church possesses the right of making covenants, in support of such principles, worship, or Church order, as she may approve? And is the Church authorized, on the principles of descent, succession, or any other principle, to bind posterity to embrace her views whether approved or not, or incur the guilt of perjury in case of refusal? And must the application of this principle, to the perpetual

obligation of the national covenant of Scotland, and the league of the three kingdoms, be a *sine qua non* of union?"

Those who know that Dr. Riddel was a finished scholar, and a very accurate writer, will wonder how he came to express himself so incoherently—but let that pass. The answer was in the affirmative, so far at least as we are at present concerned; and it brought "the expected union to an issue." That is, the prevailing opinion in the Associate Reformed Church at that time, if we take Dr. Riddel as its exponent, was not more satisfactory to the Associate brethren than it had been to Dr. Anderson. That is, again, Dr. Riddle *did not* "assert" the doctrine of the Associate Church in reference to covenanting. In the face of this notorious fact, are we still to be told that the Associate Reformed Church has always held, and has sanctioned, the ideas of our Associate brethren on this subject? Let the honest truth be admitted; there is a difference—but a very unimportant difference if it could only be agreed on all hands to make it a matter of Christian forbearance.

But would the proposal of Dr. Riddel, to add this article to our creed, and accept the Associate testimony with some amendments, have met the general approbation of his brethren? I say positively it would not; though, had it been pressed, it might have torn the Church to pieces. Well do I remember the reception it met with in one of the two Presbyteries which then composed the Synod. There was not a man to say a word in its favor. The opposition was unanimous, earnest, decided. Here I write with very solemn feelings. Those with whom I frequently met at that day in council, ministers and elders, are now all in their graves, with two exceptions, one of which is the elder above alluded to, and whose recollection

in this instance also, though he was not at that meeting of Presbytery, assures me of the correctness of my own.

But there is more than individual recollections—there is documentary evidence of the general fact. No sooner did the matter come fairly before the Synod, after time given for reflection, than we find two members, Messrs. Magaw and Steele, entering their dissent from a resolution approving “the doctrine and proposals” of our committee. The number of dissenters would have been at least double, had not sickness and other causes detained some of the members at home. With what unanimity and cordiality the vote of approbation was given cannot now be positively known, but on this question also the record casts some light. Who seconded the motion? Dr. Riddel himself. Who offered the motion? A man who was continuing his connection with the Associate Reformed Church under a dissent, with the intention of continuing it no longer than was convenient to himself, and who did embrace the first favorable opportunity of passing into a Church in which he could have more liberty than with us. Did he really approve those proposals? I have no such thought; but he wished to gratify Dr. Riddel, his early patron and friend, and cared little how much the Associate Reformed Church was fettered with covenants and testimonies. Under these circumstances, and perhaps on second thought, finding that an amiable love of union had carried him farther than he could himself approve, Dr. Riddel soon brought “the expected union to an issue.”

It is believed that the following propositions are now established:

1. That a doctrine of covenanting in some respects similar to that held by our Associate brethren, but differing from it in one important point, and as they have always contended, falling far short of it, was generally held

by the members of the Associate Reformed Church at an early period in her history, and obtained the sanction of the Synod in some early deeds.

2. That when she settled her standards she gave no "deliverance," in reference to this occasional and extraordinary covenanting, though for years afterwards it prevailed and perhaps does still prevail among her members as a matter of private opinion.

3. That the proposal in 1821 to make it a part of her creed was earnestly resisted and promptly abandoned.

4. That as when the question is asked, What does this Church hold? What does she believe? the answer is to be derived from her authorized standards, the doctrine of occasional or extraordinary covenanting makes no part of her received faith, which is but another name for her declared faith.

5. That were the views of our Associate brethren on this subject, our "*received faith*," we must occupy a very unpleasant position before the world—a position which could afford us none of the pleasures of contemplation. Whether it is otherwise with any Church now existing, which professes this doctrine of covenanting, is a question for themselves, not for us.

Many of our people are uninformed in the nature of the duty, and some of them really do not believe in it. Are we—have we been instructing them? Is it a frequent theme of pulpit inculcation among us? I believe not. Why this silence, this neglect? If we have suffered the subject to pass into oblivion, should we not rouse up and thunder it from all our pulpits? Do we intend to do so? If not, what *do* we intend? Is it only to give a cold, but civil assent to it, to please our Associate brethren and effect a union? Why has there not been a word said among us—no not a single word since the year 1787, now nearly

seventy years—about engaging in this duty like earnest men who really believe what they profess? Is there no call for it? Let us lay no such flattering unction to our souls. Let us not—let no Church which makes such a profession, hope to acquit herself from the charge of a highly criminal delinquency, by pretending that she does not engage in an important duty, only because there is no “occasion” for it. If I believed in the doctrine of covenanting as handed down to us by tradition—if I believed it to be a great and important means of preserving true religion in the world, I would say there is a loud call for it—a call louder than in the days of the Solemn League. With both my eyes open, one resting on the history of the past, and the other observing the signs of the time, what else could I say? One great end of the Solemn League was “the extirpation of Popery and Prelacy.” This end is not yet effected—far from it. The last, the decisive struggle is at hand. Popery is reviving—the beast which received the deadly wound from the sword is healed; and, like a lion couchant, lies in wait, ready to spring on his prey. Never since the days of the Stuarts has there been a more general conspiracy to crush the Spirit of Protestantism and liberty over the entire face of God’s earth. The Catholic States of Europe, leaning on the great colossal Power of the North, whose religion permits an easy coalescence with them, are plotting against the religion of the Bible, as earnestly as when the League of the British Isles was formed. And for Prelacy there are perhaps five, there are perhaps ten Prelatical Churches now in the world, for every one which existed at that day. The great overshadowing Methodist Church, which is Episcopal, and therefore Prelatical, has sprung up but yesterday, and alone far outnumbers all the Prelatists with which our fathers had to contend. If covenanting is the great means of defending true religion against

its enemies, (for though I do not believe it, we must call all those enemies if we adopt the ideas of the Leaguers,) it is high time we set about it in good earnest, instead of keeping up a noise about it, as a mere thing of profession. Do we mean to show our faith by our works; or what *do* we mean?

PROSPECT HILL, ILL.,

Jan. 28th, 1853.

Our work is done. We feel very keenly the imperfect manner in which it is done. We found the most difficult part of our work was making the selections. To select from the vast amount of material which was the production of his pen that which would do justice to him as a writer, and at the same time that which would interest and profit the reader, was no easy task. We have done the best we could under the circumstances. If the Doctor sometimes seems to write sharply, it must be attributed to his conscientious sense of duty, and the fact that for a long series of years he had, as an editor, very often to assume the attitude of an opponent. We never knew a man as intimately as we knew Dr. McDill, in whom there was exhibited so much of the spirit of charitable forbearance for those who opposed him. You are asked to read candidly what he has written.

This book, as the result of our humble effort, is placed in your hands. May that God, who raised up the subject of it, bless it to you, and to the advancement of His own glory. Amen.

THE END.