

THE
PRINCETON REVIEW.

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No. III.

ART. I.—*The Writings of St. John, with special reference to the Recent Assaults on the Gospel of St. John.* [Translated from the German of Dr. LANGE, with additions by Dr. PHILIP SCHAFF.]

THE writings preserved by the Church under the name of John, with all their diversity, corresponding to the diversity of their literary species, have so many and so important peculiar traits, and have these traits, too, so much in common, that, with a better developed taste in regard to biblical style, we shall be no more able to ascribe them to different authors, than to attribute the different masterpieces of one great painter to different masters.

The peculiarities of the matter of these writings are: (1.) The depth and fulness of the christological idea of Christ and his kingdom (*the Word*); (2.) The spiritual concentration of the depth and fulness of the Messianic life in the personality of the Lord, making heaven and earth a symbolism of Christianity, of its struggles and its triumphs (*Love*); (3.) The universalism of Christianity, grounded in God, embracing and shining through the world (*Life*); (4.) The festive spirit of the assurance of victory, wherein Christ in his imperial power

ART. VII.—*Exposition and Defence of the Basis of Re-union.*

DR. MUSGRAVE'S speech in explanation and defence of the Report of the Joint Committee is so able and exhaustive, so representative and historic in its character, that we give it entire for preservation and future reference. With the author's approbation, we take the very complete report of it given in the *Presbyterian Banner*, except in a single head, which, for the sake of abbreviating, we take from the *Presbyterian*.

DR. MUSGRAVE'S SPEECH ON THE NEW PLAN OF RE-UNION.

I have already, Mr. Moderator, made a very brief explanation of the character of the three papers submitted by the Joint Committee. But I wish to make a few additional remarks with respect to each of them consecutively.

The first paper, as you will notice is the Plan of Union, containing the basis on which it is proposed this union shall be effected. That basis is to be overtured to the Presbyteries, and is the only paper which will be sent down to the Presbyteries to be acted upon by them. This basis is our common standards—the Confession of Faith, including of course the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, agreeably to former decisions of the General Assembly, they being regarded as included in the expression, “our standards.”

RE-UNION ON THE STANDARDS.

Now, sir, this is simple. We shall have but one question before us. Are we prepared to approve of the re-union of these two Assemblies upon the simple basis, the Confession of Faith, our common form of government and discipline, the doctrines and the policy which both of the branches receive and adopt? Well, sir, I am compelled to say that, much as I have desired this union for great objects and for the glory of God, I would never have given my consent to this union upon any other conceivable basis. My objection to all the overtures heretofore sent down was, that they add something to the standards, and, to say the least, they were

ambiguous, were liable to be differently construed, and, in my judgment, opened the door for the introduction of errors which no sound Calvinist will ever agree to indorse. Give us our pure, time-honored, Scriptural standards, and then we can all stand upon them as the rock upon which our fathers have ever stood, and upon which I pray Almighty God our successors will ever stand till the end of time. Now, sir, we have had a frank and a very kind interchange of opinions in the committee. We have been, as your representatives, allow me to say, faithful to the trust committed to us, loyal to Christ and to God's truth. We have said to coming men and Presbyterians that when we make the standards the basis of this union, we mean what we say—these standards, nothing else, nothing more and nothing less. We have said that we mean to maintain the system of doctrines taught in those standards, because we believe them to be according to God's Word, with constancy and fidelity. In other words, we meant and wanted to be understood that we never intended to allow brethren to impair the integrity of that system. If any such errors are propagated, those who are engaged in it must expect to be disciplined. We will maintain, God helping us, the purity of doctrines taught in our blessed Confession. That is distinctly understood, and I rejoice that in the preamble to one of the papers we distinctly announce that we recognize each other as sound and orthodox bodies, thus advertising to all the world that the reason why these two great branches of the church are to be united is because we believe each other to be orthodox and sound in the faith. So that it must be plain enough that a united church, founded upon our Confession, each branch recognizing the other as sound and orthodox, will never tolerate heresy. Why, sir, I have not changed my theological views and my conscientious convictions of duty in the least degree in regard to that, and though I may not live long, I will endeavor as in the past, by God's grace, to defend and maintain the purity of our doctrines. That is understood, that we receive the Confession sincerely, and that we mean to maintain and defend it.

On the other hand we have understood each other on the question of liberty. We have said to our brethren "You

have possibly misunderstood our branch. You, through some representations made in the papers by anonymous writers especially, have received the impression that the Old School church will tolerate no difference of opinion; that we are obliged, every man as before his God, to accept a certain theory; and that any man who undertakes to review, or to state or illustrate doctrines in any degree different from those of Princeton, for instance, is to be considered as a heretic and to be disciplined." Well, we have disabused them of that. We have said—"Brethren, there have always been shades of difference in the Old School church; and in a body of such intelligent and conscientious men, there must of necessity be differences of opinion." Why, sir, as long as men think at all—and may the day never come when one man shall think for all the rest—as long as men think, they will differ in some respects. Now, sir, we have said to them that we understand that there is to be allowed in this united church a reasonable degree of liberty; that men are not to be made offenders for a word; that we will not encourage persecution, or needless prosecution, if you prefer it, but will allow just such liberty in the united church as has been freely allowed in the Old School branch of the church. Well, that satisfied them. Now, sir, we understand each other. We are both sound, orthodox bodies, pledged to that old Confession, understanding each other that we mean to maintain it in its integrity; and, on the other hand, that we will allow all reasonable differences of opinion, that is to say, such differences as are consistent with maintaining the integrity of the system. No opinion is to be tolerated that would be subversive of our system of doctrine. Thus we arrived at an harmonious conclusion, and, so far as I could judge, every man in that Joint Committee agreed that this was fair and just, and I think it is. What more can we ask than that this basis should be our common standards, with this understanding between the parties, that it is not to be received insincerely, with reserve, that there is to be no toleration of material doctrinal differences, while a reasonable liberty will be allowed? I thank God that we have reached this result. Now I can subscribe to it, for one, with all my

heart ; and sir, I would be glad if the other Calvinistic and Presbyterian bodies would unite with us upon this same broad, solid, Scriptural basis.

WHY REFER TO THE PRESBYTERIES.

Why send down this basis to the Presbyteries? Why not consummate the union *here and now*? I think our committee were of the opinion, that, if it had been expedient, these two Assemblies would have the constitutional right to consummate the union at once. Though I have great respect for the opinions of others, God has so made me that I must do my own thinking. I believe the Assembly has the right to consummate this union at once, if it were best to do so. If you have in your basis the Smith and Gurley amendments, or any thing besides the simple standards, then I think the Presbyteries must approve. But here is no constitutional change, and we could unite by resolution, upon the basis of our common standards, as we did with the Associate Reformed body. But it is said that the Associate Reformed was a *small* body. Does the size of the body affect the principle? It is said also that that reference is unfortunate, because the union was *unhappy*. This is strange logic. What would you reply to one who should say that a certain marriage was *unlawful* because it was *unhappy*? It is also said that it is proper to consult the Presbyteries in a matter of so great importance. Has not that been done? Have not your Presbyteries said that they would approve, if you would omit certain amendments to the first or doctrinal article that *are* omitted? It looks very much like a quibble to say that the Presbyteries have not been consulted. Well, notwithstanding this, we thought it would not be expedient to consummate the union at once. It is said that thirty-one Presbyteries, some of them our largest and most influential ones, have said that it would be unconstitutional, or unwise, to do so, and have insisted that any new basis must be submitted to them before the union is perfected. We have thought it best to defer to them, and send this basis down. We did not want an inharmonious union—a contest, at the start, as to

the constitutionality of the matter. I am very sanguine in my hope that the great mass of these brethren will consent to come in, and give us a union that will promote the harmony and efficiency of the church. The submission of this basis gives these brethren what they call their right of approving or disapproving, and removes all causes of complaint on that ground. But while thus submitting this basis to the Presbyteries, we have felt that other interests should be consulted. Instead, therefore, of providing that the *next* Assembly should count the votes, and perfect the matter, we propose to adjourn.

We propose to adjourn the Assemblies—these Assemblies now sitting, to the month of November, giving the Presbyteries the opportunity of voting in October, so that next November, having received their answers, if they are favorable, as I doubt not they will be, then in November the Assembly can take such order as will enable the Assembly of 1870 to be an Assembly of the united church, making arrangements for the manner in which that Assembly shall be organized.

REASONS FOR TWO-THIRDS VOTE.

Well, now, sir, a word of explanation in regard to a change which perhaps you have noticed. Hitherto, we, the committees, have recommended that three-fourths of the Presbyteries shall be necessary to determine this question, and we seriously considered that point, and after the most mature deliberations it was thought, that under existing circumstances, and in view of the great interests involved, a two-thirds vote was more proper and judicious. It did not seem to us to be right to allow a minority of one-fourth to govern the church in the settlement of this grand question. Minorities have governed the world, the church of God; and, sir, in direct accordance with one of our fundamental principles, we thought a majority should govern. Why, sir, even with respect to constitutional changes, our government demands nothing more than a majority vote. It is not right that a small minority should control and govern the church of God. There are, sir, we also remark, some Presbyteries from which we do not hear, we know not from

what cause. It is not peculiar with respect to this question. Some have noticed it for many years. No matter what questions you send down to the Presbyteries, there will always be a number of them that will make no response; and, unfortunately, our government requires us to count them as dissenting. Now, sir, if I have been correctly informed, for I have been out of the house on these committees almost all the time during your proceedings, I cannot, therefore, speak, perhaps, with that accuracy that I might if I had been present and heard the thing; but I understood that some thirty Presbyteries sent up no report. Well, now, are all those thirty Presbyteries opposed to union? I don't believe it. I can't believe it. And yet, sir, in counting the votes, you must count them as dissenting. You can only count the votes for and against, and the question must be determined by the majority of the votes returned. Well, sir, that is a very grave consideration in this matter. If we could be certain that all Presbyteries would make a return, then, perhaps, it would not only be safe, but wise and proper to make it three-fourths.

But, sir, knowing that in all previous time many Presbyteries failed to send up a report; and even upon this question of union, that has so stirred the hearts of the great masses of our people throughout the length and breadth of the land, even on this grand question of union, thirty Presbyteries, if I am rightly informed, send no answer to your overtures—thirty-five the stated clerk tells me, and that increases the weight of my argument—thirty-five Presbyteries! As prudent men we thought it would not be judicious to measure the result by requiring a three-fourths vote, if all the Presbyteries should not be heard from. Not that if I were not certain that three-fourths of all the Presbyteries would not sanction this thing, I would seriously doubt whether the time had come for us to consummate it. But I felt, like my brethren of the committee—I felt unwilling that thirty-five negligent Presbyteries, or owing to the miscarrying of their responses, or to the neglect of their stated clerks, or from any cause, that thirty-five silent Presbyteries should turn the scale against the consummation of this blessed union. No, sir, we looked at it carefully and we thought that two-thirds is the proper number, and I trust

the Assembly will agree with us. Surely from what we know of the great heart of the Presbyterian Church, whose pulsations are felt in every section of our land,—surely if two-thirds of these Presbyteries say ay,—we ought to take it as the voice of God in his providence.

CONCURRENT DECLARATION.

Now, sir, in regard to the articles contained in the second paper, called the Declaration, &c., I have already stated to the Assembly that that don't form a part of the basis. They are not adopted, as I take it, nor a covenant, but they suggest to the Assembly what are suitable arrangements. I will not repeat what I have said, except to call your attention to that important distinction. They are not terms of the union. They may be annulled or modified, as any future Assembly may deem proper. We told our brethren that we were unwilling to tie the hands of the future church of God, and I for one was very decided upon that point; and I will say to you that I would have risked, yes, risked the failure of this union at the present time, rather than concede that these articles should be unchangeable, though I cannot foresee that there will be any necessity in the future to change them. I am neither a prophet, nor the son of a prophet; but I think I have some little common sense, and I felt that it would be unsafe for us to imperil the future by trammelling the church of God, preventing it from exercising its liberty and from dealing with circumstances as they might arise in the providence of God. Sir, we were very decided and determined that those articles should not form a part of the compact, but that they should be suggestions and recommendations, in order that the Presbyteries should get an understanding between the parties. But, sir, it is due to fairness that I should say, and I repeat it now publicly, in order that it may have a response from this house, we did say to these brethren—"We will not consent to make these articles a covenant; we won't adopt them as a legal compact, binding upon the future; yet we are acting in good faith and as honorable men, and we say to you that we will not change them at any future time without obviously good and sufficient reasons." And I, for one, will feel bound in

honor to maintain those articles, so long as they can be maintained without serious detriment to the interest of the church of God ; and I hope this Assembly will understand it so, in all honor and in good faith, when we have said that we proposed these arrangements, that we did not intend that they should be ephemeral, nor that we should take advantage of our numerical majority and allow them to conform to our peculiar interests and wishes. No, I told the brethren of the other side that they could trust my church ; that they were men of honor and good faith ; and if you ratified this thing, you would stand by it, and future Assemblies would stand by it, until, in the progress of events, some good and sufficient reason should exist for their modification.

SAFETY OF THE PROPOSED BASIS.

Now, sir, I have but a few more words. Perhaps I have already occupied too much time ; but my apology is in my official relation to the committee. Permit me to say a few words in regard to the general subject. I believe that the basis we have proposed is perfectly safe for the church of God. If I thought otherwise, I would not advocate it, I would not consent to it. In my conscience and before God, I believe that the doctrines of our beloved church are safe on that basis. I believe that the whole body of the other branch are orthodox, in our sense of that word. That there are some men among them, as perhaps among us, whose theology neither you nor I could indorse, I admit ; but if we wait to consummate this union until we are ready to indorse the opinions of every man, we will wait certainly until the millennium.

No, sir, there is no perfect church on earth. No matter how long you would wait ; why, sir, you would never have it. I venture to say that if you would not organize this General Assembly until you were satisfied that every man—every minister and every ruling elder constituting your constituency—until you would believe that every man of them, clergymen and ruling elders, were perfectly orthodox, you would never have a General Assembly of the Old School Presbyterian Church !

Now, sir, all that I cared for was that the law should be right; that if any opinions were propagated which seemed to us to be inconsistent with an honest subscription to our standards, we should not be obliged to try the man upon a Gurley law, or upon a Smith law, but upon the old law of our Westminster Confession. If the law is right, it is our fault if we don't justly apply it.

Well, sir, so much for that. I believe they are sound and orthodox as a body, just as I believe we are. I will not go into any detail here. Suffice it to say, Moderator, I have considered it my duty, as an individual, to satisfy my own conscience with respect to that vital point, not simply on account of my past personal history, and my public testimonies on this subject, but in the fear of God, and in order that I might discharge my individual duty to Christ and to God's people. I have carefully endeavored to satisfy my own mind with regard to that vital point. It would not be proper for me to state the process which I adopted—the methods, nor to detail the operations. All I shall say to my brethren is this: that with no undue prejudice for or against them, I have endeavored to inform myself as to the character of the other branch; and the result has been that I, for one, am satisfied that they are substantially sound, and that there is no material difference between us; and that, as to those points upon which we divided, thirty odd years ago, they have all passed away. We are no longer troubled with them, and they will not corrupt us.

CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

Why, sir, the change of circumstances is almost radically entire. I will not enter into that, lest I should speak too long. There were causes in operation from 1828 up to 1838, which we had good reason to dread, and which were undoubtedly corrupting and revolutionizing the church of God. I have never said, because I have never felt, as some men have said and doubtless felt—I have never said that I regretted the part I took in that early conflict. Sir, were we to meet in the same circumstances, I would repeat, God helping me, the same conduct. I will rebuke heresy now, as I did then. I

would resist any attempt to revolutionize the Presbyterian Church and to make it Congregational. I will do it with as much vigor, if I have still left the mental and physical strength that I had thirty odd years ago ; at any rate I would do it with all the power that God would give me.

Sir, the circumstances are different. We are not called upon to watch the Home Missionary Society and the American Education Society. We have not got to watch the notoriously unsound Congregationalists, who were undoubtedly at that time spreading sentiments which were grossly offensive to Old School men. Sir, that day has passed away. These brethren have their Committees of Missions, their Education and Publication Committees. They are prepared to consolidate them with our Boards, and to act together with us on ecclesiastical principles. Well, Voluntaryism has ceased to have any influence, as have also the unsound Congregationalists. And I qualify my remark always when I speak of the Congregationalists, because there are two classes of them ; there is a class of Congregationalists who are orthodox, sound men, eminently pious men, whom I would welcome into the Presbyterian Church, for they are Presbyterians, as well as Calvinists in their views. Why, sir, such men I have no suspicion of. I will receive them with open arms to my heart. All I ask is for a man to be a good Calvinist, and a thorough Presbyterian, and a sound Christian, and I don't care from what quarter he comes, whether from the North, or the East, or the South, or the West. Somehow or other ; I have such an affection for all the families of real Calvinists and Presbyterians, that I can take in all New England that is sound, all the Canadas, and Great Britain, and Ireland, and the whole world. Some men like to repeat that remark of Whitefield, that there will be no Presbyterians and no Methodists, etc., in heaven. Well, sir, I don't know any more about heaven than Whitefield did, as I have never been there. I don't know exactly what form of worship they have, but I have an idea that it will be Presbyterian. And, brethren, I will give you my reason. I don't say I never have expressed an opinion without thinking I had a good reason for it ; but I think I have in this case, and the reason

why I think their worship will be like ours in heaven, is because I believe that our mode of worship is what God inspires; that we have the principles and the examples of the Apostles and Prophets; and as God inspires this simple form of worship here, I suppose he will approve of it there.

But certain I am of this, or more certain I should say, that we will all believe the doctrines of Paul, when we get to heaven. I believe what Augustine and John Calvin taught; but I would not like myself to say that we will all be Calvinists in heaven. But I will say this, that we will all believe in accordance with the revelation which God gave through the Apostle Paul, and by that I understand Calvinism; and therefore I think that we shall all have that system of doctrines in heaven. Why, sir, I have another reason for it, if this is not too much out of the way. No matter how much certain denominations may differ from us speculatively and when in controversy, if you just get them to pray—I don't mean in heaven, for you can't get there yet, but on earth—ask these good Methodist brethren to pray right after they have been talking about Calvinism, and if they don't pray Calvinism I will wonder. Well, get their hymns, and when they come to worship God in that part of the service, why some of the purest and best Calvinism that you will find anywhere you will find in some of their hymns. They don't know it by the name. Well, now, sir, I argue that the work of the Spirit must correspond with his teachings in his word. We have not the doctrines and the experiences of the saints in heaven; but we see the teachings and the work of God's Spirit on the minds and hearts of his people upon the earth.

NO VALID OBJECTIONS.

Well, sir, enough for that. I am satisfied that we can safely unite because we are orthodox, both of us, and I think too that we ought to do it, because we are agreed. Why, sir, a man ought to give some grave reason, and obviously good reason, why this union should not be effected, because it is so natural, it is so proper in itself; the parties are really at one—just as I hold that no man can reach forty-five

without being married, and be excusable, without a good reason ; for a man ought to give a good reason. If it is not his fault he is not to blame. Well, now my logie on that subject is this. I premise that no man shows more folly than when he undertakes to be wiser than God. That is an axiom. Now the Almighty has said—"It is not good for man to be alone"—and therefore a man ought to have a good reason—a good reason, and so have some others of God's people. Well now, sir, it is not for me to publicly tell what Paul's reason was, or the reason of anybody else ; but sir, there is the argument. Now I say that no man is justified in voting against this union, this marriage if you please, between these two parties, unless he has a good reason for forbidding the bans. Why, sir, if two were to come up here and want to be married, and somebody were to say, I object to it, wouldn't you, Mr. Moderator, ask him why ? Certainly you would, and if he couldn't give a good reason, you would proceed. So I would take it. No man can vote against his own creed. We have fixed it so, I won't call it a trap, that a man must have a prodigious amount of moral courage, I won't say impudence, to vote against himself, against his own creed. Now, sir, if we put any thing else to it, he might object to it ; but, sir, haven't you, before God and his church declared that you receive and adopt the Confession of Faith, for that is the creed.

THE ADVANTAGE AND THE DANGER.

The time has come when this thing ought to be settled, because it is proper and right in itself—and now I come to my last remark. I sometimes speak longer than I should. An old Scotchwoman was told that her new preacher read his sermons. She was told to go into the gallery and she would find it to be true. She did so, and sure enough she found that in the big Bible he had a little paper book, and when he came to the end she was fairly boiling over. When the minister remarked—"I will enlarge no further," she squealed out—"Ye canna ; the paper is oot !" Now, brethren, it has never been my habit to read, and of course not to write, and I could tell you

some funny things about these pressmen who wanted to get a copy of the sermon that I preached. Why, bless your souls, said I, not a line have I written. But the press went and pressed me until, with the aid of an amanuensis, I filled up the heads. I am not in that predicament now, and therefore may talk too long. I will try to be short for the remainder of the time. I do not want this union simply because I think it is the will of God, and because I think it is safe, and proper, and natural; but I want it for the great work that we have before us. Now, in my official position, perhaps I have been able to appreciate this more sensibly than many of my brethren; for I have cries for help, pleas for men and means, in all quarters of this great land. Well, sir, it has been my duty to study the map of our country, and to keep myself acquainted with its moral destitutions, and oh, the weight that these things have upon our spirits! So much to do, so weak and so little power to do it with! In behalf of millions of souls, I implore you to combine your forces for the conquest of this land and the evangelization of the world! Oh, what a power there will be in this combination, not simply by real multiplication, according to our numerical strength. Why that is not the half of it. It is not that you are to have in one church so many more men and so many more dollars; but, sir, you are to have a spirit there, you are to have a faith there, you are to have an enterprise there, and energy, and courage, which are so much needed in this great work before us. It is not always the large army that is the most effective. It may be disorganized; it may be discouraged. Sometimes a much smaller host, united with mutual confidence, will attack and overcome the far larger force, by dint of discipline and spirit. Now, sir, I think that if this union is consummated, you will infuse a spirit of hope, of faith, of zeal, of renewed courage. All our ministers, all our elders, all our people, will have a heart; and that is what we want. They will have a heart to work, and there is no telling what good may be accomplished. Why, sir, there is not an infidel, there is not a Jesuit, in this land that would not rejoice at the failure of this attempt at reunion! They delight in our divisions; they lament our unions; yes, I have thought that I could trace the hand of a

Jesuit in many an article that I have read in the Protestant papers within the last thirty-eight years. Sir, you know what a Jesuit is, and therefore I need not describe him. But, sir, they dread the Presbyterian Church more than all others combined. One of their priests once said to me—"We *hate* the Methodists, but we *fear* you." Fear you! Now, sir, in order that you may give a blow to infidelity and Sabbath desecration, that you may give a check to Romanism, in God's name reunite these hosts, that you may do better in the name of King Jesus. Only let us guard, brethren, against one temptation. Just as sure as you live, if it promotes vanity, and ambition, and self-sufficiency, God will frown upon it. That is now about the greatest danger I apprehend. It is that if we consummate this union, we will feel proud and self-sufficient. Oh, that God would keep us from that spirit; that he would make us humble and help us to realize our absolute dependence upon him; and that he would give us the spirit of prayer after the union, as well as before it; that he would make it a blessing to the church and to the world! May God speed this happy work, and this year not close until this union is declared effected.

ART. VIII.—*The New Basis of Union.*

THE Senior Editor of this Review avails himself of the privilege, common to all his brethren, of stating, in a few words, his view of the present aspect of the re-union question.

1. The terms of union now proposed are greatly preferable to those heretofore submitted to the Presbyteries. So far as the basis of doctrine and polity is concerned, all we require of those belonging to our own church, is the adoption of our acknowledged standards. This is all we have the right to demand of others, whether individuals, Presbyteries, Synods, or larger bodies, proposing to unite with us.

2. The adoption of the standards without note or comment leaves the church perfectly untrammelled. It stands pre-