

ENCYCLOPÆDIA
OF THE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
IN THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

INCLUDING THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN ASSEMBLIES.

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AND OTHER EMINENT MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH.

Including a Description of the Historic Decorations of the Pan Presbyterian Council of 1880,

By REV. HENRY C. McCOOK, D. D., LL. D.

Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following—PSALM XLVIII, 12, 13.

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in 1770, and for the two following years he preached at Easton, Pa. In 1772 he was appointed by the Synod of New York and Philadelphia to visit Virginia and North Carolina. He spent seven months in this missionary work, and in 1774 was ordained and settled as pastor of Fishing Creek Church, South Carolina. In 1790 Mr. Simpson became pastor of Roberts and Good Hope congregations in Pendleton county, S. C. In 1802 his churches were visited with a most remarkable revival. Here he continued his labors until his death, in 1808.

Sin, is defined in our *Shorter Catechism* (Q. 14), to be "any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God." In the original language of the New Testament the word for sin (*hamartia*) is derived from a word whose primitive signification is *to miss the mark*. This suggests as perfect and extensive an idea of sin as, perhaps, can be given. The law of God holds up to us a *mark* at which we are to aim, or a *rule or line* to which we are to conform. Everything which misses or falls short of this mark, or which deviates from this rule or line, is *sin* (Ps. iv, 4; 1 Thess. v, 22; 2 Cor. vi, 17; Ps. xcvii, 10; Prov. xiv, 9; Ps. cxix, 11).

By "want of conformity unto the law of God" is meant both an unsuitableness and disagreeableness to the law, and a non-observation and non-obedience to it. This want of conformity includes: (1) Original sin, and that natural enmity which exists in the heart against the law of God (Rom. viii, 7). (2) All sins of omission. The former is a want of conformity of heart, the latter a want of conformity of life, to God's law (Dent. vi, 5; John xvii, 3). As a sin of *omission* is a neglecting or forgetting to do that which the law commands (James iv, 17; Matt. xxv, 30), so a sin of "transgression," or *commission*, is doing what the law forbids, a *going beyond* the bounds of duty within which the law of God is to keep us (Eccl. x, 8; Gal. iii, 10; Ps. li, 4).

All sins are not equal in intensity. Some are more heinous than others. (1) From the person offending or offended. (2) From the means against which they are committed. (3) From the quality of the offence. (4) From the place in which they are committed. (5) From the time when they are committed. (6) From the manner in which they are committed.

The most heinous of all the sins in the world is the sin against the Holy Ghost (see Matt. xii, 31; Mark iii, 29; 1 John v, 16; Heb. vi, 4-8; x, 26, 29; Tit. iii, 10, 11). "This sin," says Ursinus, "is a denial of the acknowledged truth of God, and a willful opposition to it in connection with his will and works, concerning which the mind has been fully enlightened and convinced by the testimony of the Holy Ghost, all of which proceeds, not from fear or infirmity, but from a determined hatred to the truth and from a heart filled with bitter malice." "This sin shall not be forgiven—not because the blood

of Christ is not sufficient to wash it away, for his blood 'cleanseth from all sin,' but because those who are guilty of it willfully, maliciously and perseveringly reject the testimony of Christ speaking by the Holy Ghost in His Word."

Skinner, Rev. Thomas H., D.D., LL.D., was born in North Carolina, in 1791. He graduated at Princeton College, and was licensed to preach in 1812. He became co-pastor with Dr. Janeway in the Second Church, Philadelphia. This connection lasted till 1816, when Dr. Skinner, having espoused the views of the New School, and Dr. Janeway being decidedly in favor of the Old, Dr. Skinner quietly withdrew, with fifty of the parishioners, and organized the Arch Street Church, which, under his eloquent and efficient ministrations, speedily attained a high degree of prosperity. From this charge he was called to the Professorship of Sacred Rhetoric, in Andover. In 1835 he became pastor of Mercer Street Church, New York. After thirteen years of service there, he accepted the Professorship of Sacred Rhetoric, Pastoral Theology and Church Government in Union Theological Seminary, New York, which position he retained and adorned to the close of his life. He died, February 1st, 1871, in the eightieth year of his age.

Dr. Skinner, whilst highly esteemed as a man of literary culture and mental power, commanded in a peculiar degree the love of those with whom he came in contact. His artless simplicity, his courtesy, his piety and unworldliness, distinguished him even among good men, and strongly attracted the affections of those with whom he came in contact. He was a prominent leader of the New School party in the Church, but rejoiced in the reunion. As a preacher his style bore marks of culture and polish, not elaborate or artificial, but natural and easy. The sword of the Spirit was not so wrapt up in the flowers of rhetoric as to hide its point. On the contrary, his ministry was accompanied by numerous and powerful revivals. He was regarded as one of the best sermonizers in America. As a professor he was as much at home in the teacher's chair as he was in the pulpit. His students both respected and loved him.

Dr. Skinner's published works were "Preaching and Hearing," "Hints to Christians," "Translation of Vinet's Pastoral Theology," "Discussions in Theology," and numerous discourses.

Skinner, Thomas Harvey, D.D., was born in Philadelphia, Pa., October 6th, 1820; graduated at the University of New York, in 1840; was licensed to preach the gospel, in 1843, and ordained and installed pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church, Paterson, N. J., in 1843. In 1846 he accepted a call to the West Presbyterian Church, New York city, and in 1856 was transferred to the Church at Honesdale, Pa. In 1859 he took charge of the Reformed Dutch Church in Stapleton, Long Island, in which

he continued till 1868, when he accepted the pastoral care of the First Presbyterian Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana. In 1871 he was settled as pastor in Cincinnati, O. He is now connected with the Theological Seminary of the Northwest, as Cyrus H. McCormick Professor of Didactic and Polemic Theology. Among Dr. Skinner's published writings are the following articles in the *Princeton Review*: (1860) "The Bible its own Witness and Interpreter;" (1866) "The Trinity in Redemption;" (1867) "Sanctification."

Slack, Elijah, LL. D., the son of J. and M. (Torbert) Slack, was born November 24th, 1784, in Lower Wakefield Township, Bucks county, Pa. He graduated in Princeton College in 1808; was three years Principal of Trenton Academy, and was licensed by New Brunswick Presbytery in 1811. In 1812 he was elected Vice-president of New Jersey College, and Professor of Natural Philosophy and Chemistry. In 1817 he was elected Superintendent of the Literary and Scientific Institute, Cincinnati, Ohio, and in 1819, when the Cincinnati College was established, he was appointed its President, and continued so until 1828. In 1837 he established a high school at Brownsville, Tenn., which was very successful. He died May 29th, 1866. Dr. Slack, in all his labors, never failed to preach as opportunity offered. He was consistent and conscientious in the discharge of duties, either secular or religious. He was highly esteemed as a Christian and man, and as a teacher and lecturer was very successful.

Slemmons, Rev. John, a graduate of Princeton College in 1760, was licensed by the Presbytery of Donegal in 1763, and ordained by the Presbytery of Carlisle in 1766, and installed as pastor of the Presbyterian churches of Slate Ridge and Chanceford, Pa. He resigned his charge previous to 1798, and died in 1814.

Sloan, Rev. William B., born near Lamington, N. J., 1772. His father was Samuel Sloan, and his mother was Elizabeth Kirkpatrick, sister of Chief Justice Kirkpatrick, of New Jersey. Both were of Scotch-Irish descent. He graduated at Princeton in 1792, and studied theology with Dr. Woodhull, of Freehold, N. J. He was licensed by the Presbytery of New Brunswick, May 31st, 1797, and was ordained and installed pastor of the churches of Greenwich and Mansfield (now Washington Church), February 13th, 1798. He served both congregations for seventeen years, when their growth required a separation; he became pastor of Greenwich only, where he remained until declining health induced him to resign, October, 1834. He was taken with his last sickness while on a visit to his brother, in the old homestead, where he died, July 3d, 1839, aged sixty-eight. Mr. Sloan was a very fine-looking man, tall, erect, with a clear blue eye, and of a manly bearing. His presence was impressive. He had a very kind, tender heart, and was easily moved to tears. He was an earnest, affectionate and practical preacher, greatly beloved by his congregation.

Sloss, Rev. James Long, was a native of Ireland, but came to this country at an early age. Under the care of the Rev. Dr. Waddel he completed his theological course, and was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of South Carolina, in November, 1817. The next day after his licensure he was commissioned by the Presbytery to labor as a missionary through portions of Georgia and the newly-formed settlements of what was then called the Alabama Territory. In less than a year he was ordained an itinerant on the Southwestern frontier, and soon after accepted a call from St. Stephen's, Clark county, Ala., where he remained for three years, preaching successfully, and at the same time taking charge of an academy. In 1821 he removed to Selma, in Dallas county, and took charge of the three churches of Selma, Pleasant Valley and Cahawba. He subsequently labored at Somerville and New Providence, and finally at Florence, in Lauderdale county, where the closing years of his life were spent. Nearly his whole career was passed in Alabama. It was characterized by great activity and devotedness, and much of it by great self-denial.

For intellectual ability and consistent and enlightened piety, Mr. Sloss stood eminent among his brethren, and his whole manner as a minister, by its fervor and boldness as well as propriety, was fitted to make a deep impression. He labored in connection with quite a number of churches during the period of his ministry, and in the camp-meetings, which were annually held not many miles from his residence, he took an active part. From these occasions, when, as was usually the case, thousands were assembled—some coming a distance of more than thirty miles—hundreds dated their first religious impressions, and often their conversion.

Sloss, Robert, D. D., was born in the city of New York, November 23d, 1838. He graduated at New Jersey College in 1865, having received during the course the honor of Junior Orator, and delivered the second Belles Lettres oration at Commencement. He was Tutor in that Institution, 1867-68. He was ordained by the Presbytery of Indianapolis, September 13th, 1868; pastor of the Third Church of Indianapolis, Ind., 1868-72; pastor of the Fourteenth Street Church, New York city, 1872-75; pastor at Titusville, Pa., 1875-77; pastor of the Third Church, Indianapolis, Indiana, 1877-79, and is now stated supply at Greensburgh, Ind. As a writer, Dr. Sloss is clear, concise, vigorous. As a preacher, his elocution is characterized by great distinctness of enunciation and marked adaptedness of expression to the sentiments uttered. He preaches the gospel in its purity, and proclaims the great doctrines of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ as the radical cure of all evil and the grand incentive to all good. His ministry, from the beginning, has been characterized by earnestness, fidelity and success.