

MEMORIAL ADDRESSES

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF 1886,

ON OCCASION OF THE

QUARTER-CENTENNIAL OF THE ORGANIZATION
OF THE SOUTHERN ASSEMBLY, IN 1861.

Published by order of the General Assembly.

RICHMOND, VA. :
PRESBYTERIAN COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION.
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byterian University, which, with all due modesty, claims to occupy the position of pioneer in this enterprise), are putting this very scheme of Biblical text-book instruction into active operation. The College of Arkansas, at Batesville, has long held it up as a leading subject of instruction. Noble Davidson is rapidly prosecuting the enterprise of endowing a chair of Bible instruction; and we have seen with delight that the friends of Central University, Ky., have recently contributed the endowment of a chair of Bible instruction, and we rejoice to add to this statement that Westminster College of Missouri, has already incorporated in its regular curriculum this identical system of Bible teaching. While this is true of our own literary institutions, it is also a gratifying fact that many others (not Presbyterian) are turning their attention to this new departure in collegiate work. Some surprise, too, may be excited by the statement recently made that intimations have come from *one* of the many State institutions that an effort will be inaugurated to introduce the study of the Bible into the course of instruction.

We cannot more appropriately close our discussion of this important and interesting topic than by repeating the beautiful words of the venerable Dr. Nott, who for half a century presided over the fortunes of Union College: "Let us therefore hereafter connect Jerusalem with Athens; intertwine the ivy of Parnassus around the cedar of Lebanon; weave into the wreath of flowerets plucked from the vale of Tempe, the rose of Sharon, and remember at our festivals that, among the hills of Palestine there is a hill of tenderer interest and higher hope than either Ida or Olympus. Let us plant the banner of the cross upon the Temple of Science."

THE CHURCH A SPIRITUAL KINGDOM:

A MEMORIAL ADDRESS.

BY

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couraging, and is in these words: "Nobody in the broad world on any large scale, has shown how to teach morality apart from religion;" and further, that "apart from what is taught in the Bible, there is no such thing as a science of ethics." Hence it is insisted as a legitimate inference from these declarations that "the great primordial truths of Scripture can never safely be left out of those moral teachings and moral influences which alone can make our public schools a permanent blessing.

Now, what this writer holds in regard to the common school system of the country, we maintain with equal earnestness as essential to the ideal college or university of a Christian people, that the Bible—the Word of God—should be made the authoritative source and fountain of all true ethical science. Furthermore, whatsoever claims the honored name of *science*, and yet, on investigation, shall fail to correspond with the teachings of the Bible, or shall plainly antagonize those teachings, should be condemned and excluded from the regular curriculum of its instruction.

My last thought in connection with this discussion is that I see no method which shall so successfully accomplish these important results as that of adopting the English Bible as a textbook in such an institution as I have faintly delineated in outline. Let me suggest some positive reasons for its introduction, in addition to those already suggested. And—

1. As an intellectual and faultless classic, the Bible has no equal. It is the original source of history, the model of literary excellence, and the fountain whence have been drawn the highest illustrations of painting, poetry, and eloquence. It is admitted that *the literature* of the ancients constitutes one among the most effective implements of mere intellectual culture and mental discipline, and these grand old classics are filled with descriptions arrayed in mythological drapery, for which pictures the facts of the Bible stand as originals. *Governmental science* in its present systematized form is indebted for its basis to the code of Moses, as interpreted by our Saviour. The painter, the poet, the sculptor, the orator, have derived the inspiration of their most exquisite specimens of excellence from

the beautifully described, and glowing scenes, and noble characters of Bible history.

2. What shall we say of morals, as a true system, in addition to that already said? Undoubtedly, that the Bible alone can supply the deficiency in all ancient systems of morals—I mean the utter inadequacy of the motives to virtue which they present. Accordingly, the Bible furnishes what no other volume ever taught, that the highest incentive to virtuous action is the love of a Supreme Being in his relations to man.

Then, as powerful collateral motives, we are taught the absolute certainty of a future state of retribution, the resurrection of the body, and the doctrine of a general judgment. Surely nothing can be conceived so fitted to impart a quickening energy and a powerful impulse to all man's moral faculties. These thoughts find their abundant confirmation in the wonderful moral revolutions which history records as the direct result of the circulation of the Bible among nations once barbarous, now civilized.

3. We find again in the Bible what we need more than all other light, viz., the light of spiritual life. I need not labor this point, but I carry with me your ready admission that the Bible is the only source of this light. Its information as to the unity of God, the immortality of the soul, the lost and ruined state of man, the divine scheme of redemption, and the plan of its application to man, comes not from the speculations of philosophy. They are the verities of an established and undeniable faith, held forth in inviting and attractive style, and with impressive solemnity in this blessed volume. So, then, this triple crown of glory placed upon the Bible stamps it as worthy to be cherished and studied as the book of books by all who seek after higher wisdom. In our Christian institutions let sacred and general learning go hand in hand. "We see no reason," says a fine modern writer, "why, as models of beauty, or as exercises of mental culture, the language and literature of Rome and Athens should be preferred to that of Jerusalem." Under this sentiment we rejoice to observe that many of our colleges (among them the South Western Pres-

anew upon a startled world. It comes to the surface anew upon a startled world. It comes to the surface freighted with the wealth of meaning that lay at the heart of the old theocracy. Under this unique system, Jehovah was revealed to the Hebrews not only as the object of religious worship, but of civil obedience. The tie by which the people were brought together in the unity of a nation, was their relation to Jehovah as their temporal sovereign—a relation instituted with them in the loins of their common ancestor, Abraham, with whom the national covenant was first made, which was subsequently adopted and ratified by themselves in the day when the unseen God was acknowledged as their lawful and only king. The fabric of government under which the people lived was not devised by them, but enjoined by divine authority. The laws they should obey, the officers by whom these should be administered, everything relating to the civil life, was as minutely prescribed as the ritual of worship itself. Those who exercised the function of rule, whether the priest with the Urim and Thummim, or the occasional judge, or the succession of kings upon David's throne, all were but representatives of the hidden power which reigned supreme in the heavens above.

Two ends were to be accomplished under this arrangement. The *first* was to root the conviction in the minds of men that Jehovah is the God of nations, not less than of individuals. The destinies of both are alike in his hand; and he is to be honored through the collective obedience of the one, as well as in the single obedience of the other. They may construct what systems of government they please; but in them all he is to be recognized and adored as the supreme ruler, "doing according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of earth." God's method of teaching, however, is not so much through didactic exposition as by the working out of great principles in the creature's own history. Thus he selects one people from all that were on the earth to sustain for a long period a peculiar civil relation to himself. Through fifteen centuries the prophet stands side by side with the historian, to interpret the judgments which are visited upon national

transgressions; establishing for all time the fact of the divine premacy, which would be as conspicuous in modern as in ancient history, were the same inspired exposition enjoyed now then. The *second* and more important design of the theocracy was to present the Church of God through all ages as a reconstituted society, in possession of a corporate life, and under the pressure of corporate obligations. Israel was not only a nation, but a Church furnished with a political constitution, but a Church furnished with a complex ritual of worship. Not singly and alone, nor even as distributed into families, but the whole people must assemble at their religious festivals; whilst on the day of atonement the high priest must offer public sacrifice, and pronounce public absolution upon all Israel. Thus were they proclaimed by Jehovah himself "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation," which expression the Apostle Peter transfers to New Testament times, when he styles believers in Christ "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar or a purchased people." The embodiment of the Church was rendered conspicuous through her identification with the State; the Church was the nation, and the nation was the Church. During fifteen hundred years the two were thus bound together, that, through remaining time, the spirit of true religion might not wander "a beckoning ghost along the moonlight shade," but might have a home in which to dwell, a chariot in which to ride. When the fact became fixed that the Church was to spiritual religion what the body is to the soul, the time arrived to break her organic connexion with the State. The truth, which had been swelling for ages in the types and symbols of the old economy, "in the fulness of time" burst the envelope of Judaism, and flowered into the Christianity of the New Dispensation. Messiah appears as king upon his "holy hill of Zion" to take charge of his own kingdom. Casting aside the provisional and typical incorporation with the Jewish commonwealth, the Church assumes the separate and independent organization better suited to the more spiritual offices she is now called to discharge. With a commission that sends her into all the world, she must be set free from

entanglement with other polities, a free, spiritual body capable of interpenetrating all nations, and of working under various forms of society and law. Hence, the twelve apostles were inspired to announce the order, not less than the doctrine, of God's house. They disclose the constitution under which the New Testament Church is to live, ordaining elders to the double function of rule and the ministry of the word, and establishing her freedom in the exercise of joint power through government of courts. But, while thus removing the outer integument of the State, special care is taken to lend emphasis to the corporeity of the Church in her self-subsisting organization. She is styled "the body of Christ, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." From him, the head, "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." No further references need be given, since the whole doctrine of the corporate unity of the Church, and the distribution of gifts from her Divine head, is so fully given in the twelfth chapter of First Corinthians. We grasp now the import of this pregnant phrase with which the New Testament record opens—"the gospel of the kingdom"—a phrase which links together the two dispensations, and reveals the unity of the Church under both. This Church, disenthralled from the restraints of the Jewish State, appears in her independent form as the kingdom of the Messiah. She is the true theocracy, of which the old was but the type, continued upon earth as the Church militant, into whose communion the redeemed must be gathered from the ends of the world; and consummated, when transfigured into the Church triumphant in glory.

This kingdom is defined as spiritual. It is called "the kingdom of heaven," because its constitution and charter were framed in heaven, because its precious gospel of salvation comes down from heaven, because it will be gathered back with the whole body of the redeemed into heaven. It is styled "the kingdom of God" because it is a pure theocracy, acknowledging

other than a Divine head. It is "the kingdom of the Son of man," over which he rules as mediator, his "law going forth out of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." It is distinguished from all other kingdoms of the earth by the Master himself, who said to Pilate, "my kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence." He further designates it "the kingdom of the truth, set up in the minds and hearts of men, bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." Its ends and its methods are alike spiritual—its "weapons not carnal," and only "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." But aside from these special testimonies to the non-secular and purely spiritual character of the Christian Church, stands the monumental fact that the previous incorporation with the Hebrew State is formally annulled; and that she is sent forth upon her independent career, with the inscription upon her brow—a "kingdom not of this world." Thus she stood, a free spiritual commonwealth, through three centuries, not only without support from the State, but enduring severe and almost continuous persecution from Jewish and heathen authority alike. Such, however, was the vigor of her spiritual life that, with no other armor than the truth, under the guidance of her anointed King, she forced her way over this intense opposition into all lands and planted the cross in every province of the then known world. It is impossible now to conjecture what her career would have been, had she remained true to herself and to the constitution which had been ordained for her government. We only know that her triumphant march to universal conquest was arrested on that fatal day, when she ascended the throne of the Cæsars through the conversion of Constantine. Then was imposed upon her neck the yoke of political bondage, which she has borne, with only partial resistance, to the present time. Through this unhappy complication again with the State, the history of the Church has been one of ceaseless agitation and strife. Political intrigues were imported into her councils; and she has been

tossed between the caresses and the rebuffs of statesmen through all the centuries. The frightful corruption reached its climax when the Church, in reversed position with her ally, seized herself the reins of power; and with the keys of heaven at her girdle and a drawn sword in her hand, dominated the earth through a thousand years of darkness, superstition and crime.

In tracing the blotted record of this disgraceful apostasy, it is hard to see how the Church, having so long "lien among the pots," should ever again be "as the wings of a dove covered with silver and her feathers with yellow gold." The deliverance is partial even yet; for at the period of the Reformation in the sixteenth century, supreme attention was drawn to the errors which obscured the system of grace, and the more remote principles of Church order and government were withdrawn from sight. The Gospel of Grace had first to be rescued, and "the Gospel of the Kingdom" was overlooked. The unquestioned assertion of a dogma through many generations secures to it finally the authority of an axiom. It may illustrate how firmly the Church and the State are united in the minds of men, as by indissoluble marriage, to report an incident which occurred under the speaker's personal observation, and at his own table. When, some forty years ago, the sympathy and aid of the American people were invoked in behalf of the Free Church of Scotland, after the memorable exodus of that body from the bosom of the national establishment, the distinguished representative of that cause was asked whether the Free Church was to be understood as having renounced the principle of establishment by the State. After a brief hesitation, the shrewd Scotch reply was, "We have adjourned that question until the millennium." The evasion was patent; while the benefits of State patronage were voluntarily surrendered in order to preserve the liberties of the Church, the right to claim support from the State was far from being abandoned.

The most golden opportunity for the emancipation of the Church from secularization, was offered upon this continent in the American Revolution. The sharp necessity which cut loose the statesmanship of that period from monarchical tradi-

tions, severed also the bond which lashed the State and the Church together in solid unity. It was clearly impossible to establish royalty, where no order of nobility existed to break the abrupt ascent from the commonalty to the throne; and so a Confederated Republic arose instead thereof, before the fascinated gaze of mankind. It was equally evident that thirteen independent States could never be united in the recognition of a national Church; and so, under the compulsion of a supreme directing Providence, the Church of Christ was once more proclaimed a "kingdom not of this world."

It would simply be impertinent to recite before the Presbyters of this Assembly the changes made in the revision of the Westminster Standards in 1787. In that memorable year, when the States were assembled in convention to effect a "more perfect union" between themselves, the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, expanding into a General Assembly of four Synods, framed the constitution under which the Presbyterian Church has lived and prospered ever since. Every expression was eliminated from the Westminster Standards that seemed to blend the two jurisdictions, which henceforward were to be kept scrupulously apart. You will find upon a single page in any Digest the alterations by which this grand reform was effected.

Can it be credited that, after an interval of seventy-five years, in which two generations were trained under the influence of these spiritual principles, a fearful schism would rend the Presbyterian Church as the oak is riven by the lightning? The seeds of evil, no less than of good, once planted in the minds of men, like the wheat clasped in the hand of an Egyptian mummy, will sprout into a harvest after centuries of suppression. In a moment of bewildering excitement, when the storm of passion had stirred society to its depths, the Presbyterian Church failed to read the inscription, the "kingdom not of this world," which she had worn as a "frontlet between her eyes." Perhaps she fell the more easily into the snare, from the fact that it was now the Church taking care of the State, rather than the State protecting the Church; the re-

versal of the temptation possibly blinding the mind as to the dereliction of principle. Under the influence of what was doubtless felt to be the purest patriotism, the General Assembly, in 1861, passed what, from its authorship, is known as the "Spring Resolutions."* Never was there a clearer usurpation

*The *Spring Resolutions*, presented in the Assembly of 1861, at Philadelphia—so called from their author, Dr. Gardner Spring, of the Brick Church, New York—were amended by the addition of the last clause, and, as adopted, are as follows:

Gratefully acknowledging the distinguishing bounty and care of Almighty God towards this favored land, and also recognizing our obligations to submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, this General Assembly adopts the following resolutions:

Resolved, 1. That in view of the present agitated and unhappy condition of the country, the first day of July be set apart as a day of prayer throughout our bounds; and that on this day ministers and people are called on humbly to confess and bewail our national sins; to offer our thanks to the Father of light for his undeserved goodness to us as a nation; to seek his guidance and blessing upon our rulers and their counsels, as well as on the Congress of the United States, about to assemble; and to implore him, in the name of Jesus Christ, the great High Priest of the Christian profession, to turn away his anger from us, and speedily restore to us the blessings of an honorable peace.

Resolved, 2. That the General Assembly, in the spirit of that Christian patriotism which the Scriptures enjoin, and which has always characterized *this Church*, do hereby acknowledge and declare our obligation to promote and perpetuate, so far as in us lies, the integrity of these United States, and to strengthen, uphold and encourage the Federal Government in the exercise of all its functions under our noble Constitution; and to this Constitution, in all its provisions, requirements and principles, we profess our unabated loyalty.

And to avoid all misconception, the Assembly declare that by the term "Federal Government," as here used, is not meant any particular administration, or the peculiar opinions of any particular party; but that central administration which, being at any time appointed and inaugurated according to the forms prescribed in the Constitution of the United States, is the visible representation of our national existence.

To these resolutions a protest was offered by Dr. Charles Hodge and others, based on five distinct grounds. The first is as follows:

We make this protest, not because we do not acknowledge loyalty to our country to be a moral and religious duty, according to the Word of God, which requires us to be subject to the powers that be; nor because we deny the Assembly the right to enjoin that, and all other like duties, on the ministers and churches under its care; but because *we deny the right of the General Assembly to decide the political question, to what government the allegiance of Presbyterians, as citizens, is due*; and its right to make that decision a condition of membership in our Church.

by the Church of the prerogative and function of the State. The Supreme Court at Washington could not have pronounced a more judicial interpretation of the Constitution. It undertook to settle the question which had divided the statesmen of this country from the beginning, as to where sovereignty resided, and to whom the allegiance of the citizen was primarily due. This was a question which the Church, from her very nature, was incompetent to discuss; and which, by her express law, she was inhibited from entertaining. This point, purposely left undetermined by the framers of the Constitution in 1787, because it could not be authoritatively decided, was not only determined by a church court, but that decision was bound upon the conscience of her entire constituency throughout the land. It could not be construed by those against whom it was directed, in any other light than as a writ of ejection; and as soon as time would allow for their orderly meeting, forty-seven Presbyteries, scattered through eleven Synods, with entire unanimity, withdrew from the jurisdiction of the exscommunicating court and proceeded to re-integrate into the General Assembly of which this is the lineal successor.

The years which have passed since then, have cooled every feeling of resentment in our bosoms; and we can look with the eye of charity upon the error of those whom we have never ceased to regard as our brethren in the Lord. We do not undertake even to say that, with our positions reversed and acting under their convictions, we might not have been guilty of the same fault. Are we not all led by a Divine hand into positions which give us wider and clearer views of truth? However this may be, the simple fact remains that we were separated from the Church of our fathers upon a strictly political issue, which a spiritual court had no authority, either human or divine, to adjudicate. Whether we ourselves fully comprehended or not the significance of our withdrawal, the logic of the case constituted us the assertors and guardians of this vital truth, the non-secular and non-political character of the Church of Jesus Christ; and, whether we will or no, we must preach to the world this "gospel of the kingdom." I desire to em-

phasize the statement that, up to the passage of the "Spring Resolutions," in May 1861, a division of the Church had not been suggested, perhaps had not entered the thought of any, except as a possible and painful necessity. Some of us cherished fondly the hope that the bands of ecclesiastical fellowship might be able to bear the strain even of a great civil war. It would have been a sublime spectacle, if the Church could have preserved her visible unity amidst the convulsions which shook a continent—a spiritual kingdom rising unconsumed out of the flames of a gigantic war, like the bush burning with fire at Mount Horeb, to proclaim the power of divine grace over the passions of men. It was not to be. The testimony must be borne for a while longer, as in ages past, under the form of protest against the invasion of that liberty wherein Christ hath made his people free. The historic basis, therefore, upon which stands this dear Church of ours, the special feature by which she is distinguished from others, is this testimony for Christ's kingdom, as a free, spiritual commonwealth, separate from civil government, under whatever form administered upon earth. There may be prudential considerations aside from this why our ecclesiastical organization should be preserved intact, without absorption into any larger bodies around us; but the differentiating principle, in the surrender of which we yield the very reason of our existence, is the claim of our King to reign supreme and alone in his Church.

But if the entire American Church affirms this principle, and if in the other portions of the Presbyterian body it be affirmed in identical terms with our own, wherein is our testimony peculiar? With reference to the latter, simply in this: that whilst the spirituality of Christ's kingdom is admitted in theory, it has been contravened in practice, and that solely upon this issue we were driven from their communion. If it be alleged that this deviation from the Constitution was but a temporary departure, under stress of circumstances and during a period of intense excitement, it is competent to inquire whether, during the period of twenty-five years which have elapsed, any official action has been taken to repair the breach

So far from it, those political deliverances are to this day treasured as most precious testimonies, which must not be impaired by any whispered suspicion of their impropriety. Even in the treaty of amity between themselves and us, the tenderest solicitude was shown to protect them from being supposed to be withdrawn. The political issue then is precisely the same to-day, as it was a quarter of a century ago. If in the past the letter of the Constitution was too frail a barrier to protect the Church against the swelling tide of political enthusiasm, how much less will it restrain in the future, when undermined by this fatal precedent.

Fathers and brethren, all this is said in your presence with profoundest sorrow. Were there no covenant of forgiveness between the two Churches formerly existing as one, this matter is too solemn to be looked upon in any other light than the honor of our great King. There is a loyalty to be cherished, which is higher than allegiance to any potentate on earth; and there is a patriotism, which should call for more passionate expression than can be evoked by any country upon the globe. God is our witness that nothing could yield us such joy as to be henceforth discharged from the necessity of bearing special testimony to the non-secular character of the Christian Church. If this principle could be enshrined in the hearts of men with the sacred confidence of former years, louder hallelujahs would not be heard than in this Southern Church—ordained, through her mere existence, to bear silent and constant testimony for the crown rights of our Lord and Redeemer.

A single principle, however important, may seem to many a narrow platform on which to stand; but, for this very reason, the testimony, because single, may be the more pointed. In the folds of this one question, many truths of vital import are implicated: the nature of the Church, and the functions she is called to fulfil; the rightful supremacy of her Head, and the binding authority of the laws he has enacted; the temptations and perils to which she is exposed, and the notable connexion between corruption in doctrine and the perversion of her government. These, without minuter specification, enter into the

matter of this controversy, augmenting the value of the testimony we have been compelled, amidst much reproach, to deliver to the world.

Let us see if there are not features in this case requiring the attention of the Church to be concentrated upon a single issue, unixed with others of equal or more commanding importance. First of all is the obtrusive fact, that the error which we combat clings to the Christian Church in every land except our own. It is an error so venerable with age, that an assault upon it is regarded with the horror of sacrilege. The sensitiveaess with which the brethren from whom we differ receive the slightest criticism upon their political deliverances, is typical of the reverence with which an established Church everywhere views the union which binds it to the State. Through immemorial usage, it has become so dependent upon civil patronage that a divorce between the two is thought to threaten her with instant destruction. The shackles which are put upon her limbs come to be viewed as ornaments of grace, rendering "the King's daughter more glorious within, and more fit to enter the King's palace." How shall the spell of this strange delusion be broken, except by fastening the gaze of Christendom upon this as an exclusive and absorbing issue?

In connexion with this, observe secondly, that the groundswell of revolution which is shaking the continent of Europe, and threatening all existing institutions, must disturb the relations of the Church to the State. Present signs point to Church-disestablishment throughout England, to be followed, in due course of time, through Protestant Europe; whilst even the Church of Rome has been taught a salutary lesson, in Italy itself, to restrain her ambition within the limits of her own Episcopacy. Is it not a little significant that, in the bosom of these events, yet wholly disconnected from them, a beacon-light should be kindled upon this continent, throwing its gleam across the waters—that a voice of protest should awake the echoes slumbering in the cathedrals of the Old World?

Consider, thirdly, that the error against which we have entered a compulsory protest, presented itself in its most danger-

ous form. In the past, it was generally the Church which was strangled in the embrace of the State; and the struggle has been to preserve her spiritual life and her chartered liberties from being smothered in the unnatural union. Here it was the Church undertaking the function of the state, and usurping its prerogative. It was the first step towards converting the Presbyterian Church into the Papacy, constituting the "kingdom not of this world" the most imperial and oppressive despotism upon the globe.

It is no unimportant mission to which we have been assigned in the adorable providence of God—not lightly entered upon in 1861, not lightly to be abandoned in the future. May grace be given us to "preach this Gospel of the kingdom" until the captive bride of Christ shall exchange her "fetters of brass" for "clothing of wrought gold"; when "the light of the moon shall be upon her as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of the people, and healeth the stroke of their wound."

II. Exception may be taken to the application of such expressions as "the kingdom of heaven," and "the kingdom of God," to the visible, rather than to the invisible, Church. When our Lord said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," and when the apostle wrote, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost," unquestionably the reference is to the work of saving grace in the soul of the sinner when he is "turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." Beneath the two significations there is an underlying unity, so that the one is not invalidated by the other. The Lord Jesus first establishes his kingdom in the individual soul, and sits enthroned upon the affections through the renewing and sanctifying power of the indwelling Spirit; but all such are required to confess him before men, not in such forms as shall seem pleasing to themselves, but by baptism in his name and participation in the ordinance of the Supper. Through these seals of the covenant, not only is their personal

engrafting into Christ signified, but they are brought into a Church-estate, and profess public allegiance to Christ Jesus, their King. Thus he who reigns in the believer rules over him, and the inward kingdom of grace in the soul becomes the outward kingdom of power in the Church; the Gospel of grace becomes "the Gospel of the kingdom," both in the hidden experience and in the external relations of the Christian.

If this be so, there is a doctrine of the Church, as well as a doctrine of grace; and we have no more right to obliterate or to obscure the one, than the other. They may not be of equal importance, since it is more to be a Christian than to be a churchman; but they alike test the spirit of obedience and submission to divine authority. The same legal and Pharisaic spirit must be cast out, and the same faith in the testimony of God must be cherished, in the one sphere as in the other. The sinner must lay aside his righteousness and accept the righteousness of Christ for justification; the believer must postpone his wisdom to the authority which has ordained and equipped the Church. He who honestly accepts Christ as his Redeemer, must as honestly accept him as his Ruler and King. Surely this requires no argument beyond the statement of the case. If the Church be the visible kingdom of Christ upon earth, which he administers from heaven as a pure theocracy, then is he absolute and supreme within her domain. His covenant is her only charter, his Word her only constitution, his will her only law. She has no officers whom he does not ordain, no function which he does not assign, no work which he does not appoint, no success which he does not decree. No authority is possessed by her except that which is delegated from him who, in granting to the Church the commission upon which she acts, claims "all power as given to him in heaven and in earth."

These principles are acknowledged by us without a murmur of dissent from any quarter; and it is not denied that, by this unchallenged and supreme authority, the preaching of the Word has been committed to a class chosen and ordained to that specific function. Paul testifies that "the glorious Gospel of the blessed God was committed to his trust," and that, "being

counted faithful, he was put into the ministry." "This charge" he, in turn, "commits to his son, Timothy," instructing him how he "should behave in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." This "gift that was in Timothy" was not self-assumed, but was "laid upon him by the hand of the Presbytery." And "the things which Timothy had heard of Paul among many witnesses, he must commit also to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also." Here is an official handing down of the word of the Gospel to men whose fitness to receive the trust has been approved, and a commission formally given, by a Church court. The whole proceeding is orderly, and is designed to recognize in the Church the supremacy of him who "gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

Whilst, therefore, it is alike the privilege and the duty of every believer to spread the knowledge of the gospel and to win souls to Christ, no man has the right to enter upon the role of a public teacher of religion who is not responsible to some ecclesiastical authority, by which he has been duly commissioned. The difference between the two cases is evident. The private Christian, in his personal appeals to men, moves and acts within the sphere of the Church. If he succeeds in leading a sinner to the cross, he leads him also into the Church of the living God; there is not the shadow of antagonism in his testimony to the testimony of the Church. But if the same man, without ecclesiastical authority of any sort, enters upon the public preaching of the Word, going from city to city and subordinating pastors as lay-workmen under him, he is so far from representing the Church that his position is one of public repudiation. His appeal to the masses is that he comes to them simply as a Christian, and thus stands upon broader ground than the Church; and to make this apparent, he ostentatiously refuses

church-orders, expressly to emphasize his individual and irresponsible attitude. Is not this to antagonize the Church? Nay, more: is it not a manifest indictment of the Church as incompetent to the task of converting the world? Is it not equivalent to saying that, however useful the Church may be as a fold in which to protect the flock, or as a school in which to train the converts for heaven, as an instrument of evangelism, she is disabled simply because she is a church.

Let it be understood, this criticism does not descend into any particulars, such as the piety or motives of these lay evangelists, or the methods they employ, or the results they achieve. The question submitted is one of naked principle. Has the Lord Jesus organized his Church upon earth? Did he institute an ordained ministry for the preaching of the Gospel? Are we bound to respect his authority in the premises, or may we supersede his arrangements by devices more pleasing to ourselves? Does not fidelity to our Lord require that we shall discountenance irregularities which are breaking down the defences of the Church, and bringing her authority and institutions into contempt? How can we expect the children of to-day to honor and revere the Church of God, when they see that Church publicly disparaged, and that with applause, in the very matter for which she was organized by her Divine head? Let this evil proceed unchecked for two generations, and where will any church organization be? What if the insurrection should extend into our colleges and seminaries, and our young men say, what is the use of consuming time and money, and afflicting our souls with wearisome studies, and undergoing vexatious examinations, in which we may be dishonored at last, when all that we have to do is to step to the front and gain in an instant all the advantages of a free lance? And why should they not say all this? If one may be irresponsible upon the claim of a supernatural call from heaven, why should any encounter the hazard of that injunction of the Master, "lay hands suddenly upon no man?" In a word, can those measures be commended, which from their nature, tend to the disintegration of the Church, so that nothing shall be

left of her precious form but the atoms of which it was composed?

If in these utterances I jar against the opinions of any of my brethren, I crave their indulgence. I am this day enforcing the claims of the Church as the kingdom of the Redeemer. We have entered a complaint against those who cast us out twenty-five years ago, that the principles imbedded in their Constitution they annulled in their practice. Will it not be a similar fault if we announce in our creed the supremacy of our King, and then proceed to explode the very Church in which and over which he reigns? The desire for the conversion of sinners is a grand and holy passion, but it was just as strong in the bosom of Jesus as in any of us; yet he contravened no law of the Jewish Church, which was soon to pass away, declaring his purpose "to fulfil all righteousness." Even of him it is written, "So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son: to-day have I begotten thee." There is really no stopping-place between the recognition of an organized Church and an ordained ministry, and the Plymouth platform, which openly repudiates both.

III. Only one topic remains to be signalized—the relation which the Church sustains to the written word. In a theocratic kingdom, such as this, the King, being divine, must be supreme, the powers delegated from him being simply declarative and executive. This will must be conveyed in successive disclosures through accredited messengers, or be entirely comprehended in an attested revelation. Such a complete code is furnished the Church in the Holy Scriptures, which, from their nature, must be accepted as a sacred trust. It was an advantage to the ancient Church that "unto it were committed the oracles of God," "to whom," says the apostle, "pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises." How much larger is the deposit with the Christian Church of the completed canon, embracing both the Testaments! How much clearer "the adoption," carried into effect through union with

Christ and birth of the Holy Ghost! How much brighter "the glory," when shared with our exalted Lord in his Father's presence! How much firmer "the covenants," when fulfilled by him in our behalf! How much lighter the yoke of "the law," in the obedience of faith and of love! How much purer "the worship," in the communion of the Spirit! And how much sweeter "the promises," as pledges of grace from him in whom they are all "yea and amen"! These Scriptures are given, an enlarged trust, to the Christian Church, to be accepted and embraced, to be preserved in their original integrity, to be interpreted and expounded, to be faithfully translated into all languages and dialects, and to be preached to every soul of man upon earth. They are a necessity to the human race, and as much intended for universal diffusion as the sunlight or the air. The mere possession of these records constitutes the Church an evangelist, even though the command had never been formally issued, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." The affections of the renewed heart, like the separate strings of a harp, blend their notes in the melody of praise to him who has redeemed us with his own blood. Shall not all these hearts in the collective Church throb with the single purpose of conveying this Gospel to the corners of the earth, until the echoing voices shall swell the grand diapason, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever"?

It is scarcely necessary to add that the inspired word must be of final authority in all that it discloses. Human speculations, however ingenious, and human reasonings, however specious, must yield to its testimony, whether contained in the "Thus saith the Lord" of the Old Testament, or in the "Verily, verily, I say unto you" of the New. It follows of necessity that its authority is as independent as it is final. It speaks always with its own voice, and utters its own meaning: "Bind up the testimony," saith Jehovah of old to the prophet, "seal the law among my disciples;" "To the law and the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is

no light in them." The principle is fundamental, and cannot be waived; the meaning of the word is to be found within the word, and no meaning is to be imported into it from abroad. Let the investigations of men be as free as the human mind can desire, in all directions, in earth, air or sea; their conclusions cannot be injected into the Scriptures, to assign a meaning which cannot be legitimately deduced from their own language. The Bible must stand upon its own base, interpreting itself by itself, and uttering only the truth its Divine author has given it to deliver. Without this principle, the world can never have that assurance of truth which comes from the concurrence of separate witnesses in the same testimony; and from this principle the Church cannot depart without cutting away the very foundation upon which she stands, tossed into the air to drift like an empty balloon with all the cross-currents of human speculation and fancy.

Fathers and brethren, it has not been easy for me to utter all this in your hearing to-day. When first informed of my appointment by the last Assembly to this service, my spirit was oppressed. I could not be certain how far, in presenting my own views, I should be able to reflect those of the Church at large. In this age of almost licentious liberalism, when every conceivable truth is brought into question, no speaker can tell whether he may not be treading upon torpedoes which will explode beneath his feet. There was but one resource to me, to utter with unhesitating frankness the convictions of my own mind, and to ask you to accept them as the confession of one who painfully recognizes that he belongs to the generation which is past. It is at least a testimony to principles which he has labored through a lifetime to establish, and to which, in his judgment, the Church must ever return for her own protection and repose. If, however, there be no escape from the clash of steel in forensic debate, there is comfort in the hope that the disputants will sit down together at last upon the mount of God, and heal their wounds with the leaves from the tree of life.