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## ARTICLE I.

### HOME MISSIONS—HOW SHALL THEY BE CONDUCTED?

It is generally agreed among our Christian people that the work of Foreign Missions ought to be conducted under the direction and superintendence of the General Assembly. Presbyteries and Synods are fully competent to carry on the work, if they had the means and facilities, and could do it as effectually and economically in their separate character as in combination with other Presbyteries. But as Presbyteries, with few exceptions, perhaps, have not the means of themselves, and as separate action would involve a great increase of machinery as well as of expense, the work, by common consent, is committed to the General Assembly, the proper representative of the whole body. Presbyteries, in accordance with our Book of Order, in ordaining men to the work of foreign evangelisation, have agreed to transfer them to the control of the Assembly, so far as their general work is concerned, but without abdicating their right of control, so far as the moral and ministerial character of these brethren is concerned. In this view of the matter, our Church, so far as is known, is very nearly a unit.

In relation to the Home work, however, as also of Education, there is some diversity of views as to the mode in which it should be carried on. The great mass of our people hold that so far as

deavoring to conform our standards to the spirit and requirements of God's word, and in this respect, perhaps, we have been more successful than almost any other branch of the Christian Church. But the question may be raised, whether in giving such exclusive attention to what may be called the scaffolding of the superstructure, we have not neglected the proper work of the Church itself. Other denominations that may be behind us, so far as Church order and discipline are concerned, are far ahead of us, so far as the great work of evangelising the world is concerned. We ought not to forget that the Church has a life as well as an organisation, a spirit as well as a body, that she needs true piety as well as sound orthodoxy, that she has a work to perform as well as a faith to illustrate, a gospel to proclaim as well as a creed to defend, a world to save as well as a Church to maintain.

J. LEIGHTON WILSON.

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ARTICLE II.

A MEMORIAL OF THE LIFE AND LABORS OF THE  
REV. STUART ROBINSON.

STUART ROBINSON was born Nov. 14th, 1814, in Strabane, Tyrone County, Ireland. He was the fourth son of James and Martha Porter Robinson. His mother was the daughter of a ruling elder and granddaughter of a Presbyterian minister. His father was a prosperous linen merchant. In the year 1815, he became involved in debt by becoming security for a friend; and determined to come to America in the hope of retrieving his fortune. He landed in New York in 1816, where, in the course of eighteen months, his family joined him. The elder children were sent to school, and Stuart soon attracted the attention of his teachers by his great intelligence. One of them wrote in his book: "This is a remarkable child, and will one day make his mark in the world"—a prediction which has been fulfilled in the life and labors of the man.

During his infancy in Ireland, Stuart was injured by a fall from the arms of his nurse. His right shoulder was dislocated and his arm and thumb crushed. The blow upon his head at the

same time was so serious that his physicians feared he would be idiotic, indeed gave little hope of his surviving the shock.

After several years' residence in New York, Mr. Robinson, in consequence of failing health, removed to Berkeley County, Virginia. It was here that Mrs. Robinson proved her Christian fortitude, exhibited those virtues for which her early training and education had prepared her, and laid the foundation in her son of his future usefulness and greatness. The Sabbath was a holy day in their home. Mrs. Robinson took her children to church—often walking six miles to "Falling Waters" to hear the gospel from the mouth of the Rev. Mr. Hoge.

She assisted in organising a Sabbath-school, which, at that time, was something new in that part of the country. She instructed her children in the Bible and in the Catechisms of our Church. In about four years this "sainted mother," as she was called by all who knew her, died, leaving a family of six sons.

Mr. Robinson could only look to kind friends for their assistance in the care of his motherless children. Their home was desolate, and they were scattered. Stuart went to live with a German farmer, Mr. Troutman, who soon became attached to the child. He saw, however, that the boy's crippled condition would prevent his laboring with his hands, while his intelligence and brightness fitted him for an education, and accordingly gave him up, though with great reluctance, to become the inmate of the family of the young pastor, the Rev. Jas. M. Brown, then in charge of Tuscarora, Falling Water, and Gerrardstown churches.

In this truly Christian home, the motherless boy, at the age of thirteen, was received and shielded and protected, in answer to his parents' prayers; was treated as a beloved child, encouraged to study, and obtained aid in educating himself. He ever cherished the greatest admiration for the loved friends of his childhood. Gratitude was one of the most beautiful traits of his character. To Mrs. Brown, who yet lives to mourn his departure, he gave the affection of a son. To these friends belong the honor of giving to our Church one whose young life was entirely consecrated to the Master's service, and whose subsequent career attested the sincerity of his devotion.

In his new home he began the work of his life—studying with other boys under the care of Mr. and Mrs. Brown. He was a good student and became a fine scholar. He was beloved for his many noble traits of character. Being always “full of fun and mischief,” and having a keen sensibility to the ludicrous in everything,<sup>1</sup> he was a very attractive companion. At an early age, he gave his heart to the Saviour, and dedicated himself to the work of the ministry. The missionary work seemed his first choice; but he waited for the leadings of Providence to decide for him.

After some time spent in preparation for College under the Rev. Dr. W. H. Foote, of Virginia, who took great interest in his subsequent labors and expressed the warmest affection for him, he went to Amherst College to pursue his studies. An extract from a letter dated “May, 1832,” when he was not yet eighteen years old, and written a few months before he went to Amherst, will serve to show the state of his mind in regard to the great concern. After giving an account of a great revival of religion at Romney, Va., he adds: “For about the last three weeks I have felt my heart at times much more drawn out than usual in love to God and the souls of my dying fellow-creatures. I seemed to be able to get near Him in prayer, and loved to pray more than formerly. I could not help thinking that God was about to be merciful to us in this part of his vineyard; and when he really did come to bless us and I was permitted to have still nearer communion with him, I then enjoyed more true happiness in one hour, than I enjoyed in six months while in a cold and lukewarm state.”

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<sup>1</sup>In this feature also, the child was the father of the man. Mr. Robinson's overflowing humor made him one of the most fascinating speakers in the country before a promiscuous crowd assembled on an occasion which would justify him in giving free course to it. Every body, cultivated or uncultivated, male or female, went away delighted. He would have made one of the greatest “stump-speakers” in the world. Yet he always abstained from everything which could offend even a woman's delicacy and modesty. As pathos and humor often flow from the same source, so, in his case, the audience often alternated between laughter and tears. We never heard a man whom we thought his equal in this respect, except the late Dr. Plumer.

• He was matriculated in Amherst in October, 1832; and finished the whole course there without returning to Virginia. He spent his vacations in teaching, in order to assist in defraying the expenses of his education. He was graduated with honor in 1836. In his class were men of great ability, and not a few of them have held posts of honor and usefulness in Church and State—among them, Rev. Dr. B. M. Palmer; Dr. Hitchcock, of Union Seminary, New York; Dr. Daman, of the Sandwich Islands' Mission; Gov. Bullock, and Dr. Nathan Allen, of Massachusetts.

The letters written by Mr. Robinson during his sojourn for four years in New England, exhibit powers of keen and discriminating observation of men and things very uncommon in men of his age. His mind was evidently revolving over these questions of sociology and ecclesiology with which, in his maturer years, he grappled with as much success as has been allotted to many other great men. He recognised the good features in New England society without reluctance, and censured without bitterness, or even severity, what he regarded as defective or erroneous. He was confirmed in his convictions as to the superiority of the Presbyterian polity over that of Congregationalism; and his zeal for orthodox doctrine was on all proper occasions fearlessly manifested. These letters, written in all the unrestrained freedom of a friendly private correspondence, also reveal his sense of the grave responsibility of a candidate for the ministry, and his earnest desire for that spiritual preparation for his work without which he could not hope to be a workman that needed not to be ashamed. It is pleasant and instructive to get these glimpses of the method by which God was fashioning for himself an instrument which he designed to make so effective in advancing the interests of his kingdom on earth.

From Amherst Mr. Robinson went to Union Theological Seminary, Virginia, in 1837. After spending a year in that institution, he went to Charleston, West Virginia, where Mr. Brown, the friend of his childhood, had become pastor; again became an inmate of his family; and engaged in teaching in order to obtain means to finish his course of professional study. In 1840 he

went to Princeton Seminary, and returned to Charleston in 1841, and was soon after licensed to preach the gospel by the Presbytery of Greenbrier.

In the little church of Malden, in this Presbytery, he began the labors of his useful life, preaching and doing missionary work among the mountains, wherever he could gather a congregation to hear the good news of salvation. As his salary was too small for the support of his family, he taught for six years in the Academy, during the period of his ministry at Malden.<sup>1</sup>

In 1846, he was invited to supply the church of which Dr. E. P. Humphrey was pastor in Louisville, Kentucky, and spent nine months preaching to that congregation. On his return home, he received several calls to other churches, and finally accepted that of the church in Frankfort, Ky. During his residence there, he became thoroughly identified with the Kentucky Church, and labored for its advancement in truth, and the principles of a sound Presbyterianism.<sup>2</sup>

A writer in the Louisville "Courier-Journal," who professes to write from personal knowledge of Mr. Robinson's labors in Frankfort, says:

"At that time he made the impression of a man of tremendous physical vigor, thirty years of age; and even the crippled arm served to make the sledge-hammer logic of his discourses seem more powerful. Thrown into this pleasant, delightful, yet at that time no-progressive town, his keen eye descried at once what was needed, viz., a new church and a female school. He soon had both; and everything was moving forward with all the force of a steam engine. Selecting a location in South Frankfort for

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<sup>1</sup>He was united in marriage, Sept. 5th, 1841, with Miss Mary E. Brigham, the daughter of pious parents. Those who had the happiness of knowing Mrs. Brigham will remember her as a most lovely Christian woman.

<sup>2</sup>The narrative thus far has followed, almost to the very words, documents furnished by the family of Dr. Robinson. This fact is stated, because the accounts in the papers are full of mistakes. *This* account may be relied on. The facts that follow have been derived either from the memory of the writer or from authentic documents.

his school, he gathered many young ladies from the Blue-Grass region under his instruction and influence, and doubtless there are many who can recollect those happy days with pleasure. The vast energy of Stuart Robinson at this period of his life made him restless; so he waked up the sleepy denizens of South Frankfort, and represented the importance of their becoming a part of the corporation of North Frankfort. When this was accomplished, they demanded of him to allow them to select him as their councilman. He could not refuse, and so he infused a life into South Frankfort it has never lost unto this day."

"About this time a new bank was established, and prompted by public spirit to advance the city in its new life, he accepted the nominal appointment of Director. It is a mistake about his being the President of a cotton mill and a turnpike company. His duties as Councilman and Bank Director absorbed very little of his time. It is certain that he did not neglect the church. Beside the Friday night lecture, he conducted a Bible class, composed of young men, and would frequently write out leading questions the previous week. Such interest did statesmen and lawyers and officials take in his able ingenious way of putting things, that he formed them into a Bible class at one time. Among the attendants was the Secretary of State. Governors Owsley and Crittenden were attendants upon his preaching; so also Judge Simpson and others of the Supreme Court. Early in his pastorate, Mr. Robinson began his celebrated series of lectures on the Old Testament, on Sabbath nights. The congregation, from dislike at first, soon began to take equal interest in the lectures with the morning service. It will always be a matter of regret that a short-hand reporter was not present to take down these admirable lectures. They ran through the whole six years of his stay in Frankfort. The suggestiveness of Scripture and applicability to all states of society were most powerfully developed. We need just such lectures to put to shame the blasphemous scurrility of the Ingersolls." . . . "About this time he delivered at the University of Virginia his lecture on the 'Difficulties of Infidelity.' In the summer of 1849, a powerful revival of religion signalised his ministry, putting the seal of the Spirit upon his labors. Until

the close of his labors the church and congregation increased in numbers."

In May, 1852, he was called to the Associate Reformed Church in Fayette Street, Baltimore, of which Dr. John Leyburn is now the minister. This church, originally Presbyterian, had declared itself Independent about twenty-five years before, under the ministry of Dr. John Mason Duncan, a nephew and pupil of the celebrated Dr. John M. Mason of New York. The success of Mr. Robinson as a preacher in this congregation was what might have been expected from his ability, zeal, and popular gifts. His sermons and his lectures on the Old Testament History were delivered to overflowing and delighted houses; and hundreds of souls will bless him forever as the means of their salvation or of the revival of their faith and love. His burning missionary zeal, however, could not be satisfied with his success in Fayette Street. A mission chapel was opened in South Baltimore; and questions soon arose in connexion with the continued prosecution of the work in that quarter of the city, which revealed the wide and irreconcilable difference of views between the minister and his congregation as to church polity and organisation; and Mr. Robinson resigned his place.<sup>1</sup> A large portion of the congregation, however, determined not to part with him, and persuaded him to remain and organise another church. It was determined to build a house at the corner of Saratoga and Liberty Streets, a few squares distant from the old building in Fayette Street. While the house was building, the congregation worshipped in the "New Assembly Rooms." When the church was organised, it was called the "Central Presbyterian church."<sup>2</sup>

While Mr. Robinson was in Baltimore, he began the publica-

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<sup>1</sup> He began his ministry in this church September, 1852; resigned 19th March, 1853; the Central church was organised immediately with eighty-five members, and Mr. Robinson was installed as pastor by the Presbytery of Baltimore at the ensuing meeting, in April. The congregation removed to their new edifice (Saratoga and Liberty Streets) in April, 1855, having grown to 205 communicants.

<sup>2</sup> The building was burned some eight or ten years ago. The congregation now worship on or near "Eutaw Place."

tion of the *Presbyterial Critic*, a journal devoted to the discussion of ecclesiastical questions mainly, and specially to questions mooted in the Presbyterian Church. "We propose a journal," says Mr. Robinson, in the opening article, "which, whilst it shall aim to occupy, in common with others, the general field of doctrinal truth and religious literature, shall be more distinctively for the discussion and elucidation of the principles of Presbyterianism, as they bear upon the efforts and measures of the Church for her own expansion." It was called the *Presbyterial* (not Presbyterian) *Critic*, because it was designed for the discussion of questions which the members of our Church courts are called officially to act upon, often without either the means or the opportunity for that mature consideration so necessary to wise and efficient action. It was called "*Critic*," in the true and proper sense of the word—a "discerner," a "discriminator," and therefore a "judge." The journal was conducted for "An Association of Gentlemen," who contributed to its pages. Among these gentlemen were Rev. Drs. R. J. Breckinridge, R. L. Dabney, B. M. Smith, John H. Boccock, C. R. Vaughan, and Wm. H. Ruffner. Their contributions were all gratuitous—not paid for. The *Critic* was short-lived, however; it was published only two years—the last year as a bi-monthly.<sup>1</sup> It never paid for itself. The subscription price was one dollar per annum—a ridiculously low price for more matter than is usually given in our quarterlies. Mr. Robinson assumed the whole pecuniary responsibility, and bore all the loss. The obituary notices of the dead journal, even from the brethren of the other side, were respectful. The *Philadelphia Presbyterian* said: "However much we may have disapproved of the spirit sometimes manifested, we respect them for the open and manly manner in which they carried on their warfare. No one can accuse them of disingenuousness." A friend of the *Critic* said in the *Southern Presbyterian*: "I regret the suspension of

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<sup>1</sup> Before the second year of the *Critic* had expired, Mr. Robinson was transferred to the Professorship of Church Government and Pastoral Theology in the Danville Theological Seminary, to which he had been elected by the General Assembly of 1856; and the associate editor being unwilling to attempt to carry it on alone, it ceased to be published.

this journal, because it has been what its name imports, a Presbyterian Critic. Its discussions have related to matters of moment to the Presbyterian Church. No one can say that the work failed to answer to its title. Its columns were filled, not with vague generalities, not with useful and good things equally acceptable to all denominations of Christian people, but what it had to say concerned us especially. Again, I regret its suspension, because its discussion of these Presbyterian matters was always earnest and hearty. Never having written one line for it, I can say with the more freedom, that I always looked eagerly for its coming, and never read one number of it without having my mind waked up and stimulated. The establishment of this journal supplied a want that was real; its suspension leaves unsupplied a want not only real, but a want which I think will be felt." We quote these notices to confirm the opinion expressed by Mr. Robinson himself in his "Valedictory Note," that "these two years of editorial labor were perhaps the most efficient two years service he had yet been able to render to the Church."

Mr. Robinson, as has been said, was transferred to the Professorship in Danville Seminary, in the autumn of 1856. It was the opinion of many that he was too brilliant a man to make a good Professor; at least, that a man far his inferior in those popular gifts which give a preacher power in the pulpit, might do the work of a teacher in a Seminary equally as well as he. To this it may be replied, that he did not cease to preach; that he preached almost every Sunday. And as to his success as a teacher, his book on "The Church of God as an Essential Element of the Gospel," published in 1858, shows a thorough acquaintance with the subject; and the originality and freshness of the treatment must have awakened a lively interest and inspired an enthusiasm in those whose privilege it was to have the outpourings of his brilliant, full, and vigorous mind on a subject which had engaged its attention for many years. We feel assured that Mr. Robinson would have done great things in this department of theology if it had been the pleasure of the Head of the Church to retain him in the Seminary. But in fact he was at Danville not more than two years.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The Directors of the institution say, in their report to the Assembly

There were two capital aims in his teaching concerning the Church of God: 1. To state clearly the idea of the Church, and then to show the relations of this idea to the eternal purpose of redemption; to the manifestation of this purpose as revealed in the Scriptures; to the principles of Church Government, as set forth in Scripture; to the ordinances of worship set forth in Scripture. 2. To define with precision the spheres of Church and State, and the relations of the powers, civil and ecclesiastical. In reference to both of these, he professed to have no other guide than the Scriptures. The conclusion to which all his painful researches brought him, as expressed in the end of his book, is, that "the true organon of the service of the Church is the word of God."

The first aim only was realised in the work on the "Church of God," where he shows that the Church is "an essential element of the gospel." How admirably this was done, the reader may see by consulting the review of his book in the SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW for October, 1858.

The other point mentioned—the precise definition of the relations of the powers, civil and ecclesiastical—was a favorite one with Mr. Robinson. Many discourses were delivered upon it in the large cities, and always, we are certain, to crowded houses. The substance of his teaching upon this important subject may be given by quoting some paragraphs from the Appendix to the "Discourses of Redemption," note to Discourse IV.: "Touching the distinction between the power ecclesiastical and the civil power—which latter is also ordained of God—the points of contrast are so numerous and so fundamental that nothing but the confusion of mind arising from the oppression of Cæsar and Antichrist, backed by the power of Cæsar, could ever have caused the obscurity and inconsistency of the Church's testimony in modern times. For they have nothing in common, except that both powers are of divine authority, both concern the race of mankind, and both were

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of 1858: "The Board have to report, with extreme regret, the resignation of Rev. Stuart Robinson. He has felt himself constrained to take this step by peculiar circumstances in his private relations which are not within his control." (See Assembly's printed Minutes.)

instituted for the glory of God as a final end. In respect to all else—their origin, nature, and immediate end, and their mode of exercising the power—they differ fundamentally.” “Thus they differ :

“(1.) In that the civil power derives its authority from God as the author of nature, whilst the ecclesiastical comes alone from Jesus as Mediator.”

“(2.) In that the rule for the guidance of the civil power in its existence is the light of nature and reason, the law which the author of nature reveals through reason to man ; but the rule for the guidance of ecclesiastical power in its exercise is that light which, as Prophet of the Church, Jesus Christ has revealed in his word. It is a government under statute laws already enacted by the King.

“(3.) They differ in that the scope and aim of the civil power are limited properly to things seen and temporal ; the scope and aim of ecclesiastical power are things unseen and spiritual. *Religious* is a term not predicable of the acts of the State ; *political* is a term not predicable of the acts of the Church. The things pertaining to the kingdom of Christ are things concerning which Cæsar can have rightfully no cognisance, except indirectly and incidentally, as these things palpably affect the temporal and civil concerns of men ; and even then Cæsar cannot be too jealously watched by the Church. The things pertaining to the kingdom of Cæsar are matters of which the Church of Christ, as an organic government, can have no cognisance, except incidentally and remotely, as affecting the spiritual interests of men ; and even then the Church cannot watch herself too jealously.”

“(4.) They differ in that the significant symbol of the civil power is the sword ; its government is one of force, a terror to evil doers ; but the significant symbol of Church power is the keys, its government only ministerial, the functions of its officers to open and close and have a care of a house already complete as to its structure externally, and internally organised and provided.”

“(5.) They differ in that civil power may be exercised as a *several* power by one judge, magistrate, or governor ; but all ecclesiastical power pertaining to government is a joint power

only, and to be exercised by tribunals. The Head of the government has not seen fit to confer spiritual power of jurisdiction in any power upon a single man, nor authorised the exercise of the functions of rule in the spiritual commonwealth as a several power."

During the sessions of the Kentucky Convention of 1849, while Mr. Robinson was pastor in Frankfort, he had an opportunity of showing how thoroughly he understood the great principles which he afterwards expounded so clearly and defended so ably. In the Report of the Debates and Proceedings of that body (p. 630) is a memorial presented by him and the Rev. Mr. Brush against the proposition to make ministers of the gospel ineligible to the General Assembly (Legislature). It is an exceedingly well-written, compact, and conclusive argument against the competency of the civil government to define the character and functions of the gospel ministry, and to disfranchise the ministers of the gospel as such. Though the memorial was not successful, we feel assured, that such an argument could not have failed to make a profound impression upon a body so intelligent as that Convention.<sup>1</sup>

To resume our narrative. Mr. Robinson was called, in 1858, to the pastoral charge of the Second Presbyterian Church in Louisville, which had become vacant by the resignation of Dr. E. P. Humphrey. Here he labored with the same indefatigable diligence which had distinguished him everywhere else; with this difference, however, that he was in a wider field, which made larger demands upon his time, his energies, and his public spirit. It is remarkable that in all his pastoral charges, in Malden, in Frankfort, in Baltimore, and in Louisville, a new church edifice was built for him. But the last was the greatest; and we doubt

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<sup>1</sup>It is hardly necessary to say that Mr. R. did not advocate the propriety of ministers of the gospel meddling with politics. He strongly affirmed the inconsistency of such a course with their ordination engagements; but urged that of this inconsistency the Church and not the State must be the judge. He also protested against the confounding the Christian ministry of the word with a priesthood, and above all, the priesthood of the Papacy, which has always meddled, and, by its principles, is obliged to meddle with politics. *Aut Cæsar, aut nihil.*

whether any corner in any of our large cities presents a more imposing appearance than the corner of Broadway and Second Street in the city of Louisville, where the Second Presbyterian church stands. It was a great undertaking; an undertaking which very few men could have carried through under the circumstances. But Mr. Robinson seemed equal to any work which could be done by man.

Three years after he became pastor in Louisville, the war between the States began. He had become conspicuous before July, 1862, for his protests and arguments against the commingling of the affairs of God and Cæsar. Shortly after his removal to Louisville, he purchased the *Presbyterian Herald* which was published in that city by Dr. W. W. Hill, and changed its title to the *True Presbyterian*. It was in this journal that he bore his most public testimony against the sin and madness of bringing political issues into the Church,—standing upon the same ground which was taken by Dr. Hodge and the protestants in the General Assembly of 1861, in Philadelphia, and by Dr. Breckinridge and Dr. Humphrey in the Synod of Kentucky in the autumn of the same year. He was, of course, too outspoken for the military authorities; and his paper was suppressed in 1862. In July of this year he went to Canada. He had left the city for the purpose of visiting an invalid brother; and while absent was urged by his friends not to return, if he would avoid arrest. Accordingly, he remained in Canada until the close of the war.

It would, of course, be impossible for such a man to be idle in his exile. He spent the time in study; in writing for his paper; in comforting and aiding the many Southern refugees; in preaching to large congregations, composed, in great part, of students attending the different schools and the University of Toronto. While he was here, he exhibited his characteristic fearlessness and faithfulness as a witness for the truth, by delivering, in the course of his Sabbath evening discourses on the laws of Moses, one on the subject of "Slavery as recognised in the Mosaic civil law, and as recognised also, and allowed in the Abrahamic, Mosaic and Christian Church." This discourse was afterwards expanded, its positions sustained by abundant citations from or-

thodox British and Continental biblical critics and commentators, and published in a pamphlet of ninety pages by Rollo & Adam, of Toronto, in 1865. The spirit of the man comes out in the exordium of this lecture. "You will remember that while expounding the Abrahamic covenant, I took occasion to define my position as a preacher of the word, in regard to this vexed question of slavery; that, except as the subject comes in my way in the exposition of the Scriptures, I feel that I have little to do with it, here in a country where no such institution exists; for having little confidence in, I do not wish to give countenance by my example to that sort of religion which exercises itself about the sins of other people rather than its own; and whose repentance, like the Pharisee's, having no sins of its own to mourn over, wastes its sighs over those of the Publican standing afar off. But on the other hand, having undertaken to expound this Great Book, I dare not allow the fear of having sectional prejudices imputed to me, or the consideration that I must here run counter to the almost universal popular prejudices of the country, so to restrain me that I should 'shun to declare the whole counsel of God.'" Admirably, boldly, and wisely spoken! We know of no moment in the life of our departed friend in which the nobleness, the manliness and the purity of his character, stand out more conspicuously than in this discourse delivered to an anti-slavery audience, in a British Province, and amidst the expiring throes of the Confederate States.<sup>2</sup>

It was during his exile also that he prepared for the press his "Discourses of Redemption." In reference to this work, we need only repeat some things which were said in an article upon it in the SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW for December, 1866. "Mr. Robinson informs us, in the preface to this work, that it is 'the result of an attempt to give permanent form, so far as oral instruction can be transferred to the printed page, to such outline specimens of the author's Biblical Expositions in the several sections of the inspired word as might be most suggestive to younger preachers in their attempts to develop the various parts of Scripture to the comprehension of the people; and at the same time, be

<sup>2</sup>The discourse was delivered in February, 1865.

instructive to Christians and inquirers and other earnest persons troubled with doubts touching inspiration or the doctrines of the Bible.' His idea of preaching is not that of theological disquisition, ethical essay, rhetorical, persuasive, or emotional appeal, founded upon a shred of the sacred text chosen as a motto, or at best as suggesting simply the theological topic of the occasion; but that of giving the sense of Scripture, of showing the people how to read the word of God, and leading them to feel that 'this day is the Scripture fulfilled in their ears,' and that these are the words of a Jesus who not only *spoke* by holy men of old, but *is now speaking* with living utterance to the men of this generation.'

"If any man is qualified to pronounce upon the best method of reaching the popular ear, that man is certainly the author of these 'Discourses of Redemption.' He has been preaching for twenty years, to congregations variously composed, in four different cities,—to professional and public men in the capital of Kentucky, to business men in Louisville and Baltimore, to students and professors of law, medicine, and the arts in Toronto, and everywhere with large crowds hanging upon his lips. Now what has been the secret of his popularity? He is not a 'star preacher,'—to use the miserable slang of the day,—a pulpit harlequin or buffoon, amusing his audience with jests upon things sacred and profane, making the Church and the ordinances of Christ the instruments of gain to himself, or prostituting the awful office of a preacher for the mere display of his own gifts and for the admiration and applause of the crowd. Nor is he a 'political' preacher, trimming his sails to the breeze of popular passion and partisan excitement, accepting his doctrines from the caucus or the convention of the party to which he belongs, and preaching the preaching which *it* bids him, the poor slave of the majority of the hour. No! He is a preacher who stands before the people with the conviction that he is the anointed ambassador of the King of kings, commissioned to deal with his rebellious subjects upon questions no less awful than the majesty of his throne and their own eternal destiny; authoritatively setting forth the divine terms of reconciliation, and praying men, *in Christ's stead*, to be reconciled to God. Wonderfully gifted indeed, and capable of interesting men in anything, yet, as

a preacher and ambassador, confining himself to his written instructions, he has demonstrated that the people need no other attraction to draw them to the house of God than a simple, rational, and practical exposition and illustration of the Bible. He has never needed advertisements in the Saturday newspapers of sermons on this or that sensational subject, or any other theatrical clap-trap, to get an audience. The secret of his popularity is his aiming to make the Bible a living message from God to men, by translating it into the current forms of thought and speech. And we doubt not that men of far inferior natural gifts, if they would *study* to approve themselves unto God as workmen needing not to be ashamed, in the orthotomy of the truth, while they might not have such unbounded popularity as Mr. Robinson, would yet have a larger number of sinners to hear the glad tidings from their lips than they now have."

"The theme of these Discourses is Redemption in the broad sense of that term, including not only the sacrifice of Christ, which is the centre and foundation of the whole scheme, but the whole work of Christ and the doctrine of the Church. These great topics are discussed with a perspicuity and an unction worthy of all praise. We had the pleasure of hearing many of these discussions from the pulpit; and now, after years of darkness and blood, we return our hearty thanks to the author for the high privilege of possessing them in a permanent form, and of refreshing ourselves in the reading of them. It is a matter of wonder to many that a man of war like Mr. Robinson, incessantly battling for the truth against overwhelming odds; an exile from his country and the object of a venomous and unrelenting persecution from men who, having no conscience themselves, cannot conceive of a life governed by a higher conviction of duty, should be able to write a book like this. To us there is no wonder in the case, any more than there is in Bunyan's writing the Pilgrim's Progress in Bedford jail, or in Luther's translating the Bible in the Wartburg, or in Rutherford's dictating his Letters in prison-bounds at Aberdeen. 'Out of the eater comes forth meat,' and the fragrance of the 'Saints' Rest' and 'O mother dear, Jerusalem,' is due to the bruising of Baxter and David Dickson. Per-

secution and exile have been 'Christ's Palace' to our friend. While we could not but be burdened with his afflictions, we now thank his Master and ours for this precious fruit. We hail this work as the first-fruits of a religious literature which will make our Southern Church a blessing to the world."

"It is a book of principles, of *semina rerum*, which, if lodged in the mind, will germinate and bring forth fruit; a book which shows the author to be one of the leading thinkers, as well as one of the most popular preachers, of the age; a book which none of our young men who are in training for the ministry of the gospel can afford to be without; which every plain Christian, who would have the word of God to dwell in him richly, can study with profit and delight."

But to return to our narrative. Mr. Robinson returned to Louisville in April, 1866, in opposition to the earnest solicitations of the numerous friends he had made in Canada, who, it is said, offered to build a church for him there if he would consent to remain with them. From the time of his return to a few months before his death, he continued the active pastor of the Second Presbyterian church. In addition to his pastoral work, he took a prominent, generally a leading, part in all the great questions which were agitated in the Presbyterian Church in the United States, or in the Synod of Kentucky, and in the measures adopted by the people of Louisville for the relief of distress, or for the promotion of the temporal interests of that fine city. Scarcely anything was undertaken for these purposes, in regard to which he might not have said truly and with pardonable self-congratulation, *quorum magna pars fui*.

The publication of his paper was resumed under the title of the *Free Christian Commonwealth*; and, as this title implies, he continued to devote himself to the defence of the independence of the Church and of the royal prerogatives of Jesus Christ as her only Head and King. He was a commissioner to the General Assembly (Northern) of 1866 at St. Louis, and had the honor of being stigmatised by that revolutionary body, and of being cast out, as a signer of "the Declaration and Testimony." It was

mainly through his efforts that the Synod of Kentucky was induced to unite with the General Assembly of the Southern Church in 1869; and his hand, we think, may be recognised in the clear, sound, and forcible statement of principles presented in the Letter of that Synod to our General Assembly in 1867.<sup>1</sup> He was elected, by acclamation, Moderator of the General Assembly at Mobile, Ala., in 1869. He was a power in every Assembly of which he was a member, and a valued counsellor in this and other courts of the Church where he did not appear as a member. No man ever doubted, howsoever much he might differ with him in opinion, Mr. Robinson's true and ardent devotion to the Presbyterian Church.

We will mention only two other measures of general interest in which he took a leading part. One was the coöperation of the Assembly of the Southern Church with the "Presbyterian Alliance," and the other was the adoption of the Revised Book of Government and Discipline. Mr. Robinson was successful in his advocacy of both. The opposition to the first was of a much more formidable character than the opposition to the second; it was of a kind which it is seldom wise or safe to encounter. It embraced great names—the names of men to whom the Church is always ready to listen; but the opposition was vain. The friends of the Alliance, with Mr. Robinson in the front, carried it. His essays and speeches in favor of the Book of Government and Discipline powerfully contributed to its adoption. "He was a man," says a writer who cannot be regarded as particularly friendly to Mr. Robinson, "he was a man of indomitable energy and resolution. He underwent physical and mental labor from which other men would shrink. At the Assembly of 1869, after moderating the court through the day, he sat with the Committee on the Revised Book of Church Order far into the small hours of the night, and until the other members of the Committee had retired to rest or had fallen asleep over the work."

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<sup>1</sup> See *The Distinctive Principles of the Presbyterian Church in the United States*, pp. 78, ff. (2nd edition, Committee of Publication, Richmond.)

But great men cannot live forever here: great as they are, they are but men—frail children of the dust. It was evident to Mr. Robinson's friends, two or three years before his death, that he had begun to decline in health and vigor. His decline, however, was very gradual. The stroke that robbed the Church and his family of their treasure did not fall until the morning of the 5th October, 1881. On that day he fell asleep in the arms of the Saviour in whom he had trusted and whose truths he had for so many years fearlessly defended. "He passed away," says one who was with him in the solemn hour, "he passed away quietly, unable to articulate plainly, but conscious to the last. No fear disturbed him—he had never spoken of recovery during his illness—but prepared everything for leaving his beloved church and stricken family, trusting and giving all he loved into the care of the Father for whom he had labored so faithfully and whose blessing had rested so abundantly upon his works."

Mr. Robinson was the father of eight children, two only of whom survive him, both daughters. One of his sons died in early life; the other lived to be married.

Very few ministers of the gospel have been so widely known beyond the limits of the Church to which they belonged as the subject of this imperfect sketch; and many pages might be filled with descriptions of the man and the preacher, written while he lived, and with eulogies upon the dead. We have to be content with appending the estimate of Dr. B. M. Palmer, of New Orleans, who was his classmate at Amherst College, and his steady and life-long friend. It is contained in the address delivered at the funeral service in the Second Presbyterian church, Louisville.

"What shall I say of my dead friend? He had a great heart, whose affections gushed forth, fertilising life wherever they touched, and making the earth to bloom with richness and beauty. It was a heart that throbbed in generous response to every cry of distress from whatever quarter it should come; not wasting itself in the common-places of speech, but with profuse liberality supplying the needs by which others were oppressed. His broad sympathy took hold of human life at every point, and identified

him with all the great movements for the amelioration of society at large. It overflowed into thousand tender fellowships, which knit him to the hearts of his fellow-men; but especially in the sanctuary of home the deep affectionateness of his nature softened the asperities of life to those who were the nearest to him, and made that home as much a paradise as can be found in this sinful world. With instincts so pure and so broad, he moved upon a plane far too elevated to indulge a mean thought, and spent a life of toil and sacrifice for the benefit of mankind.

“God also gave to him a massive intellect. Beneath that ample brow lay a capacious brain which did much and mighty thinking through an active and laborious life. His was a mind comprehensive in its grasp of ultimate principles which he could co-ordinate and arrange into great systems of science, philosophy, and religion. It swept freely through the whole gamut of human knowledge, touching every note from the highest to the lowest, and harmonising them all in one complete system of knowledge and of faith. He was a man preëminent for his loyalty to the truth, and was one of those who had the courage of his convictions. What he believed was wrought into the very texture of his being, and became part of the blood and bone and muscle and sinew of his entire intellectual and moral nature. The most sacred thing on earth, next to God himself, is the truth which springs from the infinite mind, and bequeathed to man as the furniture of the soul for time and eternity; and the grandest spirit that lives is the spirit that can feel the truth through every fibre of its own being and stand to its defence against all adversaries, whether they be many or few. Hence it was, this man, with a heart as tender and gentle as a woman's, was ever found in the thickest of the fight, brave and sturdy as a lion, contending for the faith once delivered to the saints. Yet this mind, comprehensive and grand in its sweep, was not absorbed in the abstract and secluded speculations of the student; it was as practical as it was profound, and could descend into all the details of the economy of life. This intense practicalness which enabled him to apply abstract principles to the regulation of human conduct ren-

dered him a wise counsellor in all the business relations of men, and constituted him the strong pillar upon which the interests leaned in every community in which he lived. Added to all this was an indomitable will. It is easy to point to men in whom the power of will stands even for intellect itself; but when united with rare benevolence and the highest grade of practical wisdom, it makes a man a safe and mighty leader. The men who make history are always the men who do the things that can't be done. By the power of a strong faith they project themselves into the future while it is yet distant; or rather draw that future up to themselves until they are fairly abreast of it, and plant their fame with the generations that are to come. Such a will was his, forcible and persistent, which drove itself like a wedge through all complications and achieved the impossible. With this was united a marvellous power of physical endurance which rendered labors which would be oppressive to other men like a feather's weight upon his herculean arm. Often through days full of distraction and care which would have dissipated the energies of feebler men, that poor crippled arm would, through the weary hours of night, trace those rich contributions which he made to the press and literature of the time. Labors, alas! which too severely reacted upon his physical strength, and laid, perhaps, the foundation of what we mournfully regard this day as a premature old age."

"Passing around the circle of his intellectual and moral powers, there was not one in which he was not singly great, but his glory lay chiefly in the wonderful combination of them all; his peculiar strength lay in the harmony and proportion of his powers, which enabled him to range over the breadth of a zone."

In conclusion: let all the ministers of the glorious gospel of the blessed God, whatever may be their gifts, however inferior in strength, brilliancy, or variety to our departed brother's, resolve while they gaze upon "the bright track of his fiery car," to imitate him in what is imitable, his diligence, his fidelity, his courage in doing the work of the Lord, his Lord and theirs.

THOS. E. PECK.