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ARTICLE I.

Bibliotheca Symbolica Ecclesiae Universalis. The Creeds of Christendom, with a History and Critical Notes. By PHILIP SCHAFF, D. D., LL. D., Professor of Biblical Literature in the Union Theological Seminary, N. Y. In three Volumes. New York: Harper & Bros. 1877.

A short notice of this voluminous work appeared in our last number, together with a promise of a more extended examination. This promise we now propose to redeem, according to the measure of our ability.

Dr. Schaff's design is a grand one. He proposes to set before us, in these volumes, not the results of the thinking of individual minds, not what the most illustrious doctors of the Church have thought upon questions no less awful than the being of God and the eternal destiny of man; but the products of the mind of the Church itself, of that vast community which professes to be the witness of God and of his Christ in the midst of a world full of darkness, pollution, and shame.

These creeds are not the expressions of *opinion* upon problems which have engaged and confounded the inquiries of philosophers. They are confessions of *faith* in the solutions of those problems by him who is the source of all truth, as he is the source of all being; solutions contained in a book divinely inspired, divinely authenticated, and divinely interpreted. The Church, in these creeds, declares that faith for which her members are willing to die and for which hundreds of thousands of her members have

ARTICLE VIII.

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE EDINBURGH
COUNCIL.

We have recently received from Edinburgh a volume of near four hundred pages, in wide double column, entitled, "*Report of Proceedings of the First General Presbyterian Council, Convened at Edinburgh, July, 1877. With Relative Documents bearing on the Affairs of the Council, and the State of the Presbyterian Churches throughout the World. Edited by REV. J. THOMSON, A. M.*"

The volume is very beautifully printed on excellent paper; though the binding and the shape of the book is not to our taste. We learn, however, that this was rendered necessary in order to avoid subjecting the volume to duty when sent by mail to American subscribers. It can be obtained at about two dollars, including postage, when ordered by mail, from Rev. William Gillies, No. 13 South St. Andrew Street, Edinburgh, one of the Secretaries of the Council. It can be purchased of Thos. G. Royal, Bookseller, Jefferson street, Louisville, at some advance on the subscription price.

The delay in issuing this volume has probably arisen from waiting to ascertain how many subscribers would send in their names, in order, on the one hand, to run no risk in the publication, and on the other to ascertain how large an edition would be needed.

This volume must be admitted to be a very valuable addition to the literature of Presbyterianism. It opens with an interesting introductory article by Dr. Blakie, detailing the history of the movement for such a Council from its inception, including the proceedings of the Conference held in London in 1875, which framed the Constitution of the Alliance under which the Council met. An Appendix of near one hundred closely printed pages presents an encyclopædia of Presbyterianism in the world. If nothing else had been accomplished by the Council than this carefully prepared statement of the constitutions, relations, condition,

and statistics of the fifty bodies of Presbyterians scattered over the world, the time, labor, and expense of that body would not have been without recompence. This survey of Presbyterianism is presented under five general divisions of the field: the continent of Europe, the British Kingdom, the United States, the British Colonies, the heathen world. Under the first division is presented a survey of the Presbyterian bodies in ten countries of continental Europe—Germany, Switzerland, France, Holland, Belgium, Italy, Hungary, Bohemia, Russia, and Spain. Historical sketches of the rise and progress of these enslaved and oppressed churches are given, together with an account of their present organisation and statistics. Of these churches, Dr. Blaikie, who visited most of them preparatory to making this report to the Council, says:

“No old Church escaped persecution, and attempts were made in every case, on the part of the civil power, to restrict the liberty of the Churches; but in the case of the Scottish and other Churches these attempts were early resisted, and, to a large extent, overcome. The Anglo-Saxon Churches, though not wholly exempt from interference, conquered what was certainly comparative freedom; and the manner in which they have grown and prospered, and the influence which they have been able to exercise, attests the value of the struggles with which some of these Churches have been familiar. On the other hand, as a rule, the Continental Churches have been exposed, during all their history, to interference and repression. Many of them have been reduced to a very small remnant. But, in most cases, a faithful remnant has been continued, to keep alive the ancient spirit. Such churches as those of the Waldenses, Bohemia, and Hungary, appeal very strongly to the Christian sympathies, especially of the Churches of Great Britain and America.” P. 234.

The information contained in this survey of the continental Presbyterianism, we doubt not, will be almost wholly new to nine-tenths of the Presbyterian ministers in America, if not in Great Britain; and will be found to be exceedingly interesting. Nor can the survey of the British Presbyterian churches, both domestic and colonial, fail to be new and interesting to all intelligent office-bearers in the American churches. The elaborate view of the various bodies of American Presbyterians, prepared by Rev. G. D. Mathews, is very valuable. We have noticed some criticism of the closing sentence of the survey of the Southern Pres-

byterian Church, as presenting too desponding a view of the prospects of this body, in saying, "the lack of means, even to sustain the present ministry in their broken down churches, causes *discouragement and hopelessness* for the future." But this criticism overlooks the fact that these words are intended to refer, not to the condition of the Church generally, but to the great work which must be done for the negro. It had before been said of this Church that "in view of the calamities which have befallen this body, etc., *its success so far has been remarkable.*" The writer then proceeds to show that, "in view of the vast territory to be evangelised, which is covered by it, and the hundreds of thousands of poor ignorant negroes, ever tending backward to heathenism, who must depend very largely upon this Church for a form of the gospel that will enlighten and civilise them, *no other body of Presbyterians in the world has a greater work to do, or, in proportion to the work to be done, less financial ability to sustain it.* The men are on the ground, or soon could be put there, who, from their rearing with the negro, and their acquaintance with his peculiarities, are far better adapted to do a great work of real evangelisation among them, than strangers from abroad. And the school at Tuscaloosa would, in a short time, send forth to them hosts of intelligent men of their own color to preach the pure gospel to them. But the lack of means, even to sustain the present ministry in their broken down churches, causes discouragement and hopelessness," (*i. e.*, in regard to the work for the thousands of negroes.) The attention of the writer of the paper had been called to the fact that the omission of the words, "in regard to the negro," might lead to misunderstanding; but in the midst of the bustle at Edinburgh the matter was forgotten.

The facts presented under the fourth division, relating to the British colonial Churches, will surprise many who have paid little attention to the subject. They show the energetic and expansive nature of Presbyterianism when not restricted and repressed by unfavorable influences, as in the continental churches. The Presbyterian bodies of the several British Colonies alone report

some one thousand three hundred ministers and one thousand six hundred and forty congregations.

The fifth division, the Presbyterian missions of the world, exhibits a force of near seven hundred European and American ordained Presbyterian ministers, with their multitude of native preachers and other helpers. The number of Church members, as representing the results of their labors so far, is not given. It will surprise those not very familiar with missions, to learn that in South Africa, beside the fourteen stations of the Reformed Church of France, and the forty-two stations of the Free Church of Scotland, the Reformed Dutch, together with an Independent Presbyterian body there, report one hundred and fifty-four congregations, one hundred and thirteen ordained ministers with innumerable helpers, and one hundred and eleven thousand Church members.

Though a full account of the so-called Evangelical Church of the German Empire is presented in this Appendix, yet, not being represented in the Council because not wholly Presbyterian, they are not included in the statistical table of that body. Of the Evangelical Church of the German Empire, which claims to have sixteen thousand congregations and twelve thousand ministers, Prof. Ebrard claims that the Reformed—that is, the Presbyterian Churches—have near half a million of Church members. Under the strong pressure of the civil government, the attempt has been made to force together, under one form of ecclesiastical rule, the Lutheran and the Reformed Churches. The tendency of the process is to Presbyterianise Lutheranism somewhat, but in the nature of things, Presbyterianism cannot flourish under such Erastian notions as those of Kaiser Wilhelm and his Prime Minister Bismarck. Still, scattered throughout Germany, there are many noble witnesses for the doctrine of “Christ’s crown and covenant,” as against Rationalism and Erastianism. The signs of the times in the German Empire are not without hopefulness for genuine evangelical Presbyterianism. The power of Rationalism is evidently waning. The Erastianism of the politicians must ultimately give way under the combined influence of the Presbyterian Order of Church Government, which the govern

ment seems to prefer, and the rapidly growing public opinion, that the direction of religion is not one of the functions of the State. A general outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Protestantism of Germany, in answer to the prayers of the genuine Christians scattered in little bands throughout the Empire, would lead a powerful body of Presbyterians to wheel into rank with their British and American brethren. It is not among the impossible things, that within ten years the twenty thousand ministers now represented in the Council should be increased by an addition of ten thousand ministers and as many churches from the German Empire.

Turning now to the main subject of the volume—the proceedings and discussions of the Council—whatever any one may think of some of the details, there can be no question that, speaking generally, they are highly creditable to the intelligence, the churchly yet catholic spirit, the learning, and the orthodoxy of the Presbyterianism of the world. It was the purpose of many of the American delegates to urge the selection of the great missionary hero, Dr. Duff, as Moderator of the Council, with assessors to relieve him of most of the practical duties of his office. But Providence had ordered otherwise. The sickness of which he died seized him a short time before the meeting of the Council, and caused him to resign his place as a delegate to the body, with a view to visiting the continent in hope of relief. In this state of case, it was determined to have a different Moderator for each session; and the plan seems to have worked very satisfactorily. It was observable, however, that the American Moderators had notions somewhat different from those of their British brethren in regard to the forms of transacting business in deliberative bodies. They acted more promptly, and called for a formal vote on every proposition, while the British Moderators were more disposed to take propositions as agreed to without a formal vote. Under the British parliamentary method, there seems to be no limit to the offering of amendments. And when it comes to determine by vote, the last amendment is voted on as against the amendment next preceding, and that amendment which is carried is voted against the amendment preceding it,

until the original proposition is reached. This is obviously a very cumbersome method of proceeding; and in this, as in several other points of parliamentary proceedings, the American methods have at least the advantage of greater expedition and simplicity over the methods of the British bodies. The Council, however, adopted the following special rule to govern the process of voting, which to American ears will sound a little oddly :

"It shall be the aim of the Council to avoid voting ; but if a vote be necessary, when there are more than two motions, all the motions shall be voted on successively, and that one having the least number of votes then dropped. A vote shall next be taken on the remaining motions, and the same course followed until some one motion has a majority of all the votes given, and this shall then be considered to express the mind of the Council. The vote shall be taken by a show of hands, and the result declared by the President."

Fortunately there was little occasion for the use of this rule, and thus the difficulties that would naturally arise under it, should any excitement grow out of a great diversity of motions, were avoided. Indeed, the unanimity which characterised the proceedings of the body under the wise direction of its business Committee rendered any exciting divisions almost impossible. Some complaint was made of the restrictions laid upon full free discussion under the operation of a directing Committee. But obviously it was the want of time rather than any restrictions imposed through the business Committee that cramped discussion. The original purpose had been that the Council should meet in sections for the hearing and discussion of papers. But a short time before the meeting, this plan was changed, for some reason, by the Edinburgh Committee. The consequence was that a programme, projected on a wide scale, to be acted on simultaneously by several sections, was thrown upon a single meeting. Of course there must be great crowding, and restrictions became a vital necessity. But to say now, that such and such things could have been done otherwise, is but to say that our *backsight* is clearer than was the Committee's *foresight* in regard to the new and difficult experiment of a world's Presbyterian Council.

Of the subjects which came before the Council for consideration during the seven days of its sessions, Presbyterianism with

its Faith and Church Order naturally enough received the chief share of attention. We have, indeed, noticed a criticism of the Council, founded upon a sentence of Dr. Dykes's closing speech, intimating that its discussions were not distinctly enough denominational, but rather of a general nature, after the fashion of the Evangelical Alliance. Said Dr. Dykes, "If we gave one day to Presbyterian topics, we have given the rest to wider ones, such as the work of the ministry, the extension of the gospel, and the defence of the faith." Manifestly, by "Presbyterian" here, Dr. Dykes referred to topics relating solely to Presbyterian Church Order. Neither he nor any one else of ordinary intelligence would intimate that "the work of the ministry, the extension of the gospel, and the defence of the faith," are not "Presbyterian topics." And if, in this closing address, there be found anything that seems to be in the tone of the Evangelical Alliance rather than a Church Council, it should be borne in mind that Dr. Dykes represents English Presbyterianism which is in a woful minority, and, as he himself said, he spoke "as a delegate from England, where, if our branch is feeble, the other branches of evangelical Christianity are so strong." And if he exhibited less of the aggressive spirit of Presbyterianism, it was only natural. He did not claim to speak authoritatively for the Council. And a careful attention to this report of proceedings will show that even if Dr. Dykes had meant what his critic understands him to mean, he spoke very unadvisedly. For the topics of every day's discussion were Presbyterian topics; and the general tone of the Council was eminently *churchly* throughout.

It is to be regretted that the elaborate discourse, with which Prof. Flint opened the Council in St. Giles's Cathedral, is not published in this report of proceedings. It was, however, by special request of the Council, published very extensively in pamphlet form, as well as in the daily papers of Edinburgh. Prof. Flint complied with the Council's request, on condition of leave to omit in the published discourse some things from which Dr. McCosh and others with him expressed dissent. This statement is made in justice to Dr. McCosh and the dissenters, who

have been misunderstood as expressing dissent from important statements of his sermon as subsequently published.

This volume contains the papers presented in the Council, with a very fair summary report of the several speeches made on the topics introduced by these papers. Also, very good summaries of the speeches at the popular mass meetings held every evening. Of most of the papers presented—some of them only in outline, under the twenty minutes rule—it is not too much to say they were exceedingly valuable and well-timed. As presented in this volume, they make a stronger impression than when partially read before the Council, because, as published, we have their argument in its completeness. The first paper offered by Prof. Schaff, on the “Confessions of the Reformed Churches,” is just what might have been expected from his previous writings, his thorough acquaintance with the subject, and his profound and varied learning. Some apprehension had been expressed, that the subject discussed by Prof. Schaff would almost necessarily bring into the Council the question of attempting a reconstructed creed, presenting the spirit and substance of the creeds of the Reformation. But though in the closing section of the paper, Prof. Schaff suggested many advantages to arise from a “consensus of the old Reformed Confessions freely reproduced and adapted to the present state of the Church; in other words, the creed of the Reformation translated into the theology of the nineteenth century,” yet he suggested also, that “the expediency of such a work at the present time is, to say the least, very doubtful.”

A paper of Dr. W. Krafft of Bonn, translated and read to the Council by Rev. Alexander Cusin of Edinburgh, after classifying the several creeds of the Reformation, and down to the Westminster Confession, presents by way of illustration a Confession of thirty-one articles—citing under each article, after the fashion in which the Scripture proofs are cited in the Westminster Confession, the articles of the several Confessions which assert the propositions of the new article proposed by him. This able paper will be of great use to students, as showing not only that there is a real *consensus* of the Confessions of the Reformed Churches,

but that it can be expressed in one eclectic creed. And, except in two or three items, those who receive the Westminster Confession would not scruple to receive this eclectic Confession of Prof. Krafft.

The subject thus ably presented excited a lively interest in the Council, and led to the offering of a resolution by A. Taylor Innes, Esq., author of the "Law of Creeds in Scotland," appointing a committee to report to the next general Council, what are the present and former Creeds of the Churches composing this Alliance? What are the existing formulas of subscription? How far has individual adherence to these Creeds, by subscription or otherwise, been required from the ministers, elders, or other office-bearers, and also from private members of the Church? But the committee is instructed specially "not to accompany their report with any comparative estimate of these creeds, or with any critical remarks upon their respective value, expediency, or efficiency."

The appointment of such a committee, restricted by such instructions, met in the Council with unanimous approval, and will no doubt meet with the general approval of the Churches. If the work is faithfully performed, it will lead to the very desirable result of a more intimate acquaintance in each body with the inner life and forms of thought in every other.

Of the three papers on the "Principles of Presbyterianism," by Drs. Cairns, Hodge, and Robinson, it was gratifying to notice that they seemed to be received with favor in the Council just in proportion as they brought out Presbyterianism as a *jure divino* system in its government and worship—the view of it which obtains most generally in the Southern Presbyterian Church. It was regarded by many as a blemish in the able paper of Dr. A. A. Hodge, that he should reassert the un-American proposition that "the *revealed* will of the Divine King is in every department of civil and political life, the fundamental law to which magistrates and citizens are alike under obligation to conform;" and that he should represent those who assert that civil government rests not primarily upon the revealed word, but upon the revelation in nature, and is therefore equally obligatory

on nations that have not the revealed word, and who "demand an entire separation of religion from the sphere of civil government," as asserting that "the civil government lies beyond the realm of Christ's mediatorial kingdom, and is not included in the legislation recorded in the Scriptures." It is to be regretted that Dr. Hodge, under such circumstances, should reassert the fundamental error which has caused the division in the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and should throw the weight of his position at Princeton on the wrong side of the great issue which is hastening to the crisis in Scotland, and, indeed, in all the countries of Europe. It is precisely this assumption, that "the revealed will of the Divine King is the fundamental law of civil government," and that the civil government is to expound and apply that law as he understands it, that leads Kaiser Wilhelm to-day to tyrannise over the Protestant Churches of the German empire in undertaking to frame the order of their spiritual government for them. There may have been some apology for the mistake of the Scottish martyr fathers in admitting this fatal principle of the theocratic character of civil government three hundred years ago; but there is no apology now, especially for American Presbyterians, in clinging to a patent fallacy which has worked nothing but evil to the Scottish Churches for three hundred years past, while the principle of entire separation of revealed religion from the State has worked out such wonders of blessing to Christianity in America.

We cannot pass from this subject without noticing the admirable speech on the spirit of Presbyterianism, the same evening, by Lord Moncreiff, who spoke with great power, displaying his high intelligence as a Presbyterian. Indeed, nothing was more pleasing in the great meeting than to witness the unaffected Christian humility, the earnestness in Christ's service, and the modest, unassuming bearing of the several Lords who took part in the proceedings. The Earl of Kintore, Lord Polwarth, Lord Balfour of Burleigh, and Lord Moncreiff, as ruling elders in the Council, won fully as large a share of the warm Christian affection of their fellow-members as any others in it.

On the subject of preaching and the training of preachers, Dr.

Howard Crosby presented the paper which attracted most attention. The common sense, old-fashioned views of the functions of the preacher, he showed, are in entire antagonism to the New England theories of homiletics, and generally in remarkable accord with the views common among us in the Southern Presbyterian Church. "The aim of the Christian preacher," he said, "is not to civilise men, however naturally such a result may follow his faithful activity. . . . He is never to lose sight, or to let his hearers lose sight, of the divine revelation. Each effort of his mind and tongue is only to make God's truth more apparent in its relations and applications. If he turn to erect a philosophic scheme, the result of his own speculations, he is no longer a preacher of God's Word. . . . If he seek to amuse and delight his audience with elaborate rhetoric, he has abandoned his holy work. Whatever will turn the attention of his hearers from God's Word to man's word, is false preaching, however favorably it may be considered by the community."

The oral discussion of this topic was very animated. It was in this connexion that Dr. McCosh made the remark, for which he was subsequently so berated—and unjustly berated—by the American journals at the North. The only defect in his utterance was in leaving the application of it general to the United States, instead of confining it to his own region in the East. The offensive remark was the following :

"What, then, was the cause of the change in taste for the kind of preaching? The men who had gone over there from this country, (Britain,) had carried with them Biblical preaching, and that was the secret of their success; the desire of the people being to have preachers who would preach, not after the New England style, which gave forth the thoughts of the preacher, rather than the divine thoughts, but the Word of God in simplicity and power. Those, again, who were most popular, were not ashamed of using the old phrases of the Puritans, and they were not ashamed to divide their sermons into heads; for the people thereby remembered them all the more; and in New York, and all over America, that would soon be the style of preaching; and he thought it an auspicious circumstance that American brethren were learning to preach like this."

Now, in thus speaking, Dr. McCosh made no other mistake

than in supposing that the type of preaching in New York and the East, of which he knew something, might be taken as representative of other parts of the United States, of which he knew nothing. In this, as in some other things, he shows his want of acquaintance with the West and Southwest. But so far as relates to the section from which the berating has come, Dr. McCosh has no need to apologise or take back anything. If he can lay his hand on a *brochure* called "Charity and the Clergy," published in Philadelphia more than twenty years ago, in connexion with the discussion stirred up by Stephen Colwell's "New Themes for the Protestant Clergy," he will find a picture of New York and Eastern preaching painted not by any imported Briton, but by a "native to the manner born," which more than justifies all that he said in the Council. The writer, after commenting on the fashion of advertising the subjects of sermons on Sabbath in the Saturday newspapers, and presenting an illustrative list of subjects, embracing "Moral Beauty," "The Esthetics of Religion," "The Wreck of the Steamer," etc., etc., naively suggests, "it is remarkable that no enterprising Down East preacher has ever thought of startling the denizens of Gotham by announcing a discourse on 'Justification by Faith!' What a sensation he would make!" Our Eastern brethren are not apt to say, "Let the righteous smite me," etc. But they had as well keep quiet on the subject of their former style of preaching.

We are obliged to pass without special mention the papers on the eldership, at the sixth session, and the interesting discussion on the subject of missions, on the following day, in order to make room for a brief notice of the papers of Drs. Patton, McCosh, Watts, and Smith, on the "Unbelief of the Present Day." Dr. Patton's, on "The Underlying Principles of Infidelity," is a paper every way admirable. It is characterised by that power of analysis and clearness of statement which marked his argument in the Swing trial. It produced a profound impression in the Council, as very rich in suggestive thought. An American said to a venerable Scotch Doctor: "We regard Prof. Patton as the coming man of the Northern Presbyterian Church." "Sure

he maun be the *coming man*," was the reply, "for he is already come."

Dr. McCosh's paper on the view to be taken by Christian men of "Discoveries in Science and Speculations in Philosophy," was just what might have been expected from his large acquaintance with science and philosophy, and his skill as a reasoner. He is perhaps a little more inclined to make concessions to the scientists and philosophers than most of us, yet he deals none the less Titanic blows upon the heads of his adversaries.

The essay of Dr. Watts of Belfast, on the Personality of the Supreme Being, is among the very ablest papers in the volume. But such a theme is too subtle and abstract in its nature to discuss before such an assembly, under the restrictions of a twenty minutes rule.

The paper of Dr. Thomas Smith of Edinburgh, on Popular Infidelity, is in marked contrast with that of Dr. Watts, though also able, and well illustrates the widely different phases of the conflict between Christian truth and unbelief. Dr. Smith, after defining "*popular*" as not indicating *unintelligent* but *unintellectual*, proceeds to point out the numerous sources of the practical infidelity that prevails among the masses under the several heads of "Infidelity of Sentiment," "Infidelity of Science," and "Infidelity of Secularism." He suggests, touching the popular fictions of the day, that they are filled with dialogues and dissertations on religion, in which the theology is an unchristian theology; the god set up for worship not the God of the Scriptures, but a weak, silly, good-natured god, who would have his creatures to be good after a sentimental fashion, and happy in the gratification of their sensual and aesthetic tastes. If sometimes there is a recognition of the truths of the gospel, it is with a manifestation of bitter hostility to them. We entirely concur with the intimation of Dr. Smith, that no modern writer has done more to spread practical infidelity among the masses than Dickens, in his popular painting of character, in which all the good people are mere humanitarians, and all the scoundrels and fools are professors of evangelical truth. Dickens, while professing to hold up, not the real Christians, but only the hypocrites, to

scorn and ridicule, still takes care never to contrast with these some humble Christian, trying to adorn the doctrine of his God and Saviour by the good works that spring from faith and love, but always with some godless humanitarian who knows not Christ as a Saviour. This paper of Dr. Smith is, throughout, rich in practical truths bearing upon the popular unbelief.

On the whole subject of infidelity, the addresses which followed the reading of the papers were of great force and full of interest. Dr. E. de Pressensé of Paris presented the subject from the French point of view. Some of his points were: We must not exaggerate its triumphs. Infidelity itself is in a state of decomposition. Error, in its nature, is such as to bring about its own death in the act of showing the consequences which flow from it. The Idealism of Hegel has been put to flight and destroyed by Positivism, and this by the scientific idol of the day, Transmutation, which has come at length to produce its last and most frightful consequence, even that there is nothing real but *force*; and that right, justice, and goodness are mere chimeras. Modern humanity will recoil from this odious programme.

The more complete separation of politics from religion will relieve religion of the bitterness of feeling towards it, which it arouses when made a material force. To accept frankly the lay character of the State is the safety of the Church. We should recognise fully the independence of natural science in its sphere. The Church once was at the head of culture, and should be still. But above all, it is more important for us to manifest Christ *in us*, than to manifest him by reasoning; let him live in us, and speak through us.

Rev. Prof. Flint closed the discussion by some pointed suggestions, that the Church and Christians should take care how they cause unbelief by their spiritual deadness; their inadequate exhibition of gospel truth; their wrathful controversies. Rome has been the chief cause of the infidelity which prevails in some countries. The antidote to infidelity is the preaching of God's truth. As Dr. Crosby well said: "The Bible is God's attack on infidelity." Yet the Church should train up men for this speciality, and send them forth to meet the popular infidelity be-

fore the masses. The British and American Churches should train up a band of Christian scholars capable of repelling, on equal terms, the attacks of infidel scholars on the Holy Scriptures, and not continue in servile and dangerous dependence on German Biblical scholarship.

We have no space to glean from the papers on *Spiritual Life*, by Theodore Monod of Paris, and Dr. Andrew Thomson on the *Sabbath, a Help to Spiritual Life*; and of Dr. Sloane, on *Intemperance as a Hindrance to Spiritual Life*.

We cannot refrain, however, from making an extract from the paper of Dr. Wangemann, on the Ecclesiastical State of Eastern Prussia, which will agreeably surprise many of our readers. After setting forth the oppression inflicted upon the Lutherans in Germany, and the several ecclesiastical parties that have grown up there, Dr. Wangemann proceeds :

“The common, wide-spread idea, therefore, that in Prussia almost all the ministers have gone over to Rationalism is a ridiculously ignorant one. The old Rationalism was so completely laid prostrate by Neander and Tholuck, that at present nine-tenths of all the ministers in Prussia are Bible preachers, although certainly the important fragment of the transition party is not to be depended on; and only one-tenth are Rationalists, new and old. In our day, political party assuredly exerts an important influence on Church development. The Liberal party, which forms the majority in the Prussian Cabinet, consists, for the most part, of such as do not believe the divinity of Christ; yea, who do not understand or take any interest in the welfare of the Church; and as believing clergymen are at present, for the most part, Conservatives, these Liberals see, in believing theology, a dangerous element of opposition, and hence strive to keep it down.”

We confess to have been among “the ridiculously ignorant” on this subject, and have thought that the large part of the German ministers were Rationalistic. If once the true men of the German Church could unite in the Alliance with their British and American brethren, and bring to bear upon Germany the more enlightened ideas of the independence and spirituality of the Church, the next generation might see that Church disenthralled.

The speeches of Mons. Decoppet, Dr. Fisch, Van Scheltema, Charbonnier, and others, brought out an analogous state of things as existing in Holland, France, Italy, and other continental

churches. They excited an interest in the cause of continental Presbyterianism which the members of the Council will not soon forget.

The paper of Prof. Lorimer on the *Desiderata* of Presbyterian History, on the last day of the Council, set forth many important suggestions touching the importance of Presbyterian history as a means of spreading and maintaining our principles. As the editor of the "John Knox papers," Dr. Lorimer has won for himself a right to speak to Presbyterians on the subject of their history. That they need to be admonished on this subject is made painfully manifest by the fact that Dr. Mitchell, of St. Andrew's, the editor of the recently discovered "Minutes of the Westminster Assembly," has been obliged to suspend the publication of a second volume of the Minutes, embracing the discussions in that Assembly on the subject of church government, for want of patronage. It was in reference to this rather discreditable fact that a resolution was offered in the Council urging upon Presbyterians every where a generous patronage toward any scholars laboring, as Drs. Lorimer and Mitchell, to restore the history of the fathers, by purchasing and reading their publications.

Such are a few gleanings from this valuable and interesting volume. We advise our ministers and intelligent office-bearers to procure and read the report. We know of nothing published of late that is better adapted to inform and instruct our people touching the great principles of those great bodies who hold "the like precious faith with us" in regard to the doctrine and order of Christ's Church.

We judge that a thoughtful reading of this volume will go far towards answering the *cui bono*? which was so often raised when the General Council was yet only in prospect. It was deemed by the friends of the proposal for a Council then a sufficient answer, that, whether much good could come from it or not, the fact that such a gathering of the forty-nine other Presbyterian bodies of the world into a Council, and the Southern Presbyterian Church found not to be represented in it, must operate disastrously to our cause and the principles we represent. A

failure of this one body alone to be represented would but be playing into the hands of those Northern Presbyterians who have labored to convince the world that we are standing off from them on matters not involving any principle, but merely from pride and bad temper. That unless we would have "our good evil spoken of," and apparently justify the clamor at our sulkiness and unchristian spirit in the judgment of all the Presbyterian bodies of the world, we could not afford to remain out of that Council, even if it did not appear evident that great positive good should come from it. But now that the Council has been held and its official proceedings published, they suggest grounds for far more than a mere negative answer. Nor will it be out of place to close this brief and imperfect notice of this volume with a few suggestions, in outline merely, of some of the positive advantages accruing to Presbyterianism in general, and to the Southern Presbyterian Church in particular, from the General Council at Edinburgh.

In the first place, it was an advantage none the less important because of its intangible value. that one hundred and fifty Presbyterian ministers and ruling elders from this side of the Atlantic should have gone over the Ocean to meet with and to make the personal acquaintance of, and for two weeks commune with, each other of the great interests of the Presbyterian Church of Christ in the world. It is needless to enlarge upon the advantages of this personal acquaintance over all other methods of communication between Churches. Every one knows how much more force and distinctness it gives to the utterances of men when we get them by personal intercourse. And every one knows the advantage even of getting information touching men and churches in foreign countries from those who have personal knowledge of them. It is presumed that no one will deny the importance to the Church in one part of the world of a knowledge of the condition and prospects, the methods of work and the living spirit, of the churches in other parts. Without such information the tendency must ever be to narrow, inadequate views of the great body with which we are working, and the spirit and methods in which others work. The Apostle Paul

deemed this mutual knowledge of the affairs of each other by the churches a matter of importance, as his Epistles to the churches show.

In the next place, the bringing together for personal conference the representatives of the many feeble persecuted Presbyterian Churches and the feeble colonial Churches on the one hand, and the representatives of the great and powerful Churches on the other, is not only a great advantage to the feeble Churches by letting them see the strength of the great Presbyterian body—of which they form a part—and from this to take courage, but also to incite the stronger bodies to the exercise of that beautiful grace enjoined in the 26th Chapter of our Confession: "Saints by profession are bound to maintain an holy fellowship and communion in the worship, etc., as also in relieving each other in outward things according to their several abilities and necessities. Which communion, as God giveth opportunity, is to be extended unto all those who in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus." Any one may perceive at a glance the influence of such personal intercourse, between the representatives of the strong and of the weak churches in extending and giving life to this communion of saints. And in the present state of international intercourse, the communion of saints in different countries should be proportionally closer.

In the third place, it must, in the end, prove of great advantage to churches under the thralldom of Cæsar—some of them willingly submitting to it—to bring the principles of the free Churches of the United States stately under the notice of the enslaved Churches, and thereby awaken them to the great principles of our free system and the wonderful power and effectiveness of our system as compared with theirs. Shall we not avail ourselves of so favorable an opportunity to witness for our great principles against the Erastianism of other Churches, and demonstrate to them by our experiment of near a century the ability of the Church to support herself, relying simply upon the piety of her people?

In the fourth place, in an age when by reason of closer intercourse the public opinion of enlightened peoples has so much

power in restraining governments and influencing them in the direction of freedom, such alliance of the Presbyterians of the world tends to throw a protecting shield over their persecuted brethren and a restraint upon governments hostile to them, by letting their persecutors see that these small bodies are no fanatical, stubborn schismatics, out of sympathy with all other religions, but members of the strongest and most enlightened bodies of Protestants in the world.

In the fifth place, this alliance can be used as a powerful instrument against the influence of Romanism and infidelity by combining the moral influence of the whole Presbyterian body in the world in such formal and carefully prepared utterances as will carry with them a weight which no individual writer or any one local Presbyterian body could have in exposing soul-destroying errors and warning the people against them. The weight of this influence could be thrown with far greater effect upon those countries which more specially need the warning than the utterances of the feeble and scattered Churches of the continent overshadowed by the power of Romanism on the one hand and of infidel Rationalism on the other.

In the sixth place, such an alliance must enable the several Presbyterian churches of the world to carry on their great schemes of foreign missions far more effectively as a whole, by allowing each to become acquainted with the plans of the other, and thereby avoiding the difficulty of neglecting one part of the field and unnecessarily crowding laborers into other parts. Now that there are some 700 American and European ordained ministers in the field, with probably five times that many helpers—and the number constantly increasing—it is obvious that stated conferences of all the Presbyterian Churches are becoming more and more important with reference to the great missionary field. Let these reasons, out of many others that might be suggested, suffice for this view of the general advantages of such a Council.

In regard to the advantages of the Council to our own Church in particular, it is sufficient to say that through this Council, as "a great and effectual door," we have had the privilege of acquainting our brethren of the Presbyterian world with our

character as witness-bearers for the time-honored doctrines of the martyr fathers, and especially for the doctrine of "Christ's crown and covenant." It would be a mere affectation of modesty to forbear saying that the impression made by the delegation of the Southern Church upon the Council was favorable in a high degree; that very evidently our British brethren were surprised to find "this sect everywhere spoken against" no band of ecclesiastical malcontents, disposed to schismatic hair-splitting and of a malignant spirit, but Presbyterians fashioned in the old mould of the Scottish Reformers—catholic in spirit, but stern and uncompromising in the defence of the great principles of Presbyterian doctrine and church order. It was plain that the ideas of the British Presbyterians concerning us had been undergoing a revolution, and before the Council ended the revolution was complete. From the opening to the close, the delegation from the Southern Church was treated with marked kindness and consideration. And it was equally gratifying to find abundant evidence that the Southern Church delegation made an impression much to the advantage of the church they represented—and a very strong impression at that. Certainly, then, it is something to have succeeded, notwithstanding all the miserable misrepresentations of ecclesiastical adversaries, in getting out of an isolated provincial position and getting our testimony before the whole Presbyterian world. It was plain that many of the British Presbyterians regard the Southern as nearer in sentiment and spirit to them than the Northern Church.

It is a further prospective advantage likely to come as the result of this alliance that in time to come we may somewhat confidently look for aid from Britain in our efforts for the poor negroes. As the case was strongly put in the business committee of the Council, "our Southern churches, after all, must do nine-tenths of all that is done for the negro. Other churches may do much in establishing schools and missions here and there, and exhibit the work in tabular form. But we live among them, they are ever at our doors—we must, in the main, feed them and care for them. We, therefore, are the best agents through whom help from abroad can be administered to them." It was much

regretted by the Southern delegation that, owing to the great pressure upon the time of the Council, they failed to get before the body the paper of Dr. Stillman, which, not having been sent forward to the Edinburgh committee before the meeting, could come in only by some special arrangement. The paper, however, is published as one of the many papers that came before the Council without being read. Its circulation through this volume will effect good.

In conclusion, it may be added that none of the fears expressed in regard to certain evils that might arise from the Council have become actual. On the contrary, the venerable Dr. Begg, one of the few survivors of the band that fought under Chalmers in 1843, who, at the conference in London in 1875, and even up to the first and second days of the Council, was full of apprehension lest such a Council might in some way disturb the old landmarks, yet, seconding a vote of thanks, at the close of the Council, took occasion to say, in effect, that the Council had proved a great blessing, in that Scotland had needed an ecclesiastical tonic to brace them up to a firmer maintenance of their own scriptural principles, and he thought God had been pleased to send it in this Council. And to two or three ministers of the Southern Church he said, near the close of the Council, with tears in his eyes: "What a blessing that the Lord sent you all to us just at this time, when defections were beginning among us! Your unanimity was so remarkable that the Broad-churchmen were struck dumb in the Council, and but once or twice ventured to utter a word of dissent. How comforting to find men like you, from four thousand miles distance, coming up to add your testimony with one voice for the old doctrines and the old ways against Scotchmen themselves beginning to wander! Surely this Council is the most blessed providence for Scotland in thirty years past!"

We thoroughly concur with Dr. Begg as far as concerns Scotland; and more than that, our profound conviction is, that this Council was the great blessing of Providence to the Southern Church and to all the Presbyterian Churches of the whole world.