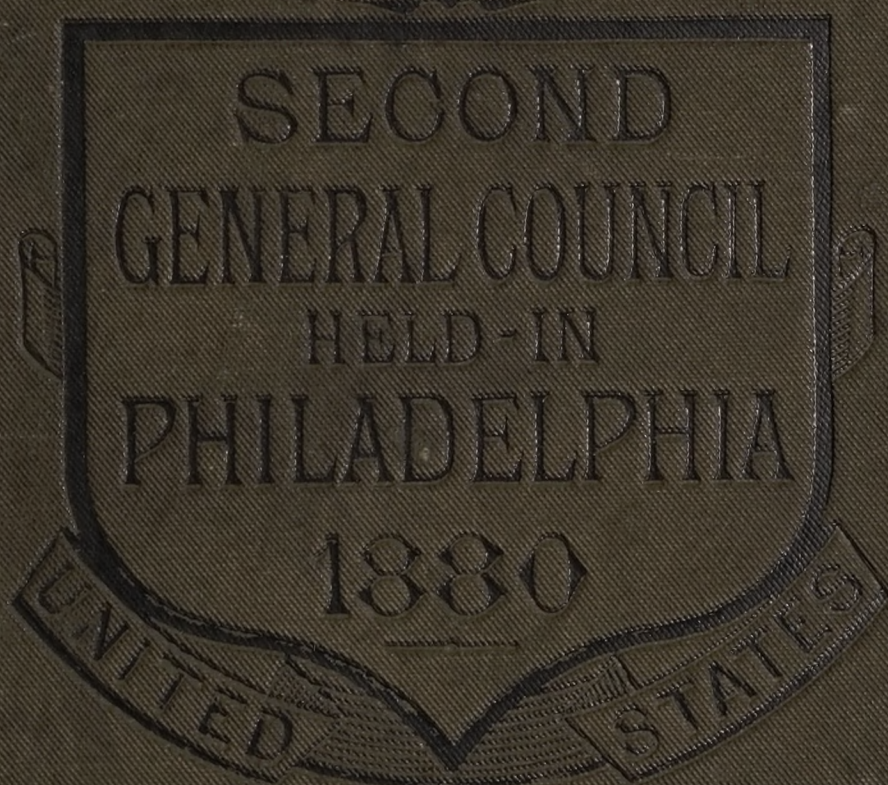




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# REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

## SECOND GENERAL COUNCIL

OF THE

# PRESBYTERIAN ALLIANCE,

CONVENED AT PHILADELPHIA, SEPTEMBER, 1880.

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theological institutions; but the one to which I have the honor to belong will allow and invite the teachers appointed by the Church to lecture in the building. Properly speaking, there is not one theological college in the whole colony; our body is the only one that demands a university education on the part of her ministers, and even this law has been suspended. In these circumstances we require three years at the university, and two at theology under the teachers or tutors appointed by the Church from year to year.

The attention of the teachers of religion has been so much engrossed with practical work—the work of planting churches in destitute localities—that little time has been left for the discussion of subjects that do not obviously bear upon the supply of present wants. It is not to be expected in churches newly formed and struggling with the difficulties incident to such a stage, that many will trouble themselves with the profound questions of speculative theology, or with the recondite topics of the higher criticism. But infidelity is increasing in the country, and there is more than one infidel lecturer attacking Christianity in the theatres of Sydney every Sunday evening. So far as I am aware, there is not one man, in any denomination, who can devote his whole time to the study of theology, still less is there one who could devote it all to one of its branches. This demands the serious consideration of our Church, and I trust that soon a satisfactory solution will be reached.

The REV. SYLVESTER F. SCOVEL, D. D. Pittsburgh, read the following paper on

#### PRESBYTERIANISM IN RELATION TO CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

A just pride is a good thing; and Presbyterians have much to be proud of; but of nothing are they prouder than of their *identification* with civil and religious liberty. Next to our loyalty to Christ is our loyalty to liberty—and the second is born of the first. It is the soul of our history, as it is the product of our principles. The blazonries about us at Horticultural Hall are magic mirrors in which we may see cabalistic lines and symbols into which we may read the sufferings and triumphs of Presbyterians for the noblest idea that ever kindled human enthusiasm—*liberty for men for sake of loyalty to Christ*.

Definitions are almost unnecessary. Civil liberty means freedom to do whatever is right to be done between man and man; and religious liberty means freedom to do whatever is right to be done between man and God. Civil liberty is the right to property, life and the pursuit of happiness in any way which does not injure others. Religious liberty is freedom to have, enjoy and obey any or no religion, with the right to utter our religious convictions, and propagate our religious sentiments, and to abstain from everything which our religion forbids, of course subject to like limitation by the freedom



and well-being of our neighbor. The two are essentially one. Real civil liberty is always religious liberty, and religious liberty must always create civil liberty. They are two chestnuts in one burr—rough to the man who handles them roughly, but smooth-cheeked and close-lying to each other.

In order of fact, religious liberty has come first, and brought civil liberty after it—which is incidentally a good reason for studying, at such a time as this, the relation between Presbyterianism and liberty.

I. Presbyterianism makes for liberty, by the necessity of its own nature. The *principles* of the one have an affinity for the other. Their combination is not mechanical but chemical. 1. In these principles we begin with God, including here the headship of Christ, which is but a form of God's ruling in the world—the flag reaches the mast-head in the simple declaration of the confession, "*God alone is Lord of the conscience and hath left it free.*" He who believes this must demand room for his religion—and that means religious liberty. "God alone" means that slavish and blind obedience is not to be rendered to man. God is the soul of Calvinism, and at a "glance" of God, kingdoms and men vanish. Presbyterianism makes much of God, and thus makes heroes of men, for no man will always bear injustice who consciously has God at his back. An absolute God makes laws that *must* be obeyed. His will dwarfs human opinions and enactments too. To the believer in God there can be but one King who can "do no wrong;" and that King never delegates to man a power which can contravene or eclipse his own. John Stuart Mill counts Calvinism a foe to freedom, because it commands obedience as a supreme virtue. How can he forget that "obedience to God" and "resistance to tyrants" are inseparable, both in fact and principle? Seneca might teach him, who said, "Obey God: that is liberty;" or Count Agenor de Gasparin, who exclaims, "God is the basis of liberty;" or Voltaire, who, blessing Franklin's grandson, pronounced the two words, "God and liberty." The sense of God, his presence, immediate personal relation to him and final accountability to him alone!—why; from Moses, who "feared not the face of the king," because he saw "Him who was invisible," to John Knox, who feared neither king, queen nor devil, that has made heroes. A whole people rose into it once. Froude says of the Scotch commons: "The fear of God in them left no room for the fear of any other thing. The poor clay which, a generation earlier, the haughty baron would have trodden into slime, had been heated red-hot in the furnace of a new faith."

Liberty of "conscience" springs out of God, and flows into the liberty of "private judgment" in religion, and thence into liberty of opinion in all things; thence into liberty of the press; thence into liberty of action. This Eden-fountain becomes "four heads," and the "gold of that land" which it encloses is good. God, as an origin, is apt to give us even a freedom free from the nonsense of tinsels and titles, and a government acting directly on the people.



"The spirit of the Lord," says Warburton, "will overturn the usurpation of our unjust, despotic power, and bring into the state as well as into the Church a free and reasonable service." Lamartine says: "The republic of the men without God has quickly been stranded. An atheistic republic cannot be heroic." Only theism *can* give liberty of conscience, for only theism has a conscience. Take away God, and you take away liberty, because there remains nothing to make liberty *sacred*. It is thenceforth, it can only be matter of opinion, and opinions are spider-webs in times of trial. Liberty coming from God is therefore certain to come and certain to stay.

There are countless revolutions shut up in the apostolic exclamation: "We ought to obey God rather than man." And that which is true of God, emphasized by Calvinism, is true of the whole series of doctrines which cluster in harmony and beauty about him as their centre. Calvinism presents an absolute providence, inflexible laws and rigid morality. It makes men of moral fibre. It can be "ground to powder like flint rather than bend before violence, or melt under enervating temptation." It attracted and attracts men who hate a lie. It is furthest removed from the pernicious poison of nature-worship. I was shown in a critical time of the country's history our Congress, by one who knew it well. He pointed out here and there the Presbyterian elders, with the remark, "The fact is, sir, in such times as these they look out for the men *who can believe the old blue book*." Henry Clay, coming late to conduct a trial for murder in the interior of Kentucky, and having sent instructions to be careful to challenge the jury, expressed surprise that a certain gentleman, whose firm face disquieted him, had been admitted. Learning that he was a Scotch-Irish Presbyterian elder, he said, "Our case is lost!" and it was so. There is a sort of natural selection as well as an election by grace in this matter. A sincere belief of the system we hold is incompatible with submission to oppression, and productive of the moral metal which is able to hold the fire of liberty.

2. As much might be said of the second grace of the modern triplet. If liberty comes from the theology of Presbyterianism, *equality* comes from its anthropology. That man, men, each man, and all men, are created alike by God, and in God's image, dowered with immortality, weighted with accountability, given individual history by a divine scheme of redemption, and by inhabitation of the Holy Spirit, offered an approximation in holy character to God, and a final glory of unspeakable brilliancy—all this makes men essentially equal. And these evangelical doctrines are tipped with flame by the doctrine of divine love, in an election which is utterly regardless of external circumstances, and yet imparts a distinction which even the heavenly intelligences must admire. Dumoulin blamed the Presbyterian pastors of his time for wishing to make yeomanry equal to the nobles, as being all children of Adam, and equal by divine and natural right. And by the wonderful coincidences which prove a providence in history, a grandson of one of those pastors (a pastor himself) pre-



sided over the "Constitutional Assembly" of the Revolution, and first signed his name to the celebrated "Declaration of the rights of man." How can it be otherwise? If God dwarfs men, God dignifies the man. The royal priesthood and the kingship of believers mean equality. The essential in man rises above the accidental. Man learns from God's large dealings with him to deal largely with his fellow-man. Presbyterianism emphasizes the soul, and all *souls* are equal. In the great struggle in Scotland, nothing was plainer than that Presbytery was the child of the people, and Episcopacy the creature of the State. Presbyterianism is the popular religion. Its only aristocracy is that of service. "He that will be great among you, let him be your servant."

3. As much should be said for the last of the three graces—*Fraternity*. This is the product of our Church polity. In the struggle for liberty this has been the most effective of the things peculiar to Presbyterianism. Our unit of authority is the Elder. But I shall not waste my time on the office of the Eldership. It has been magnified enough already. The first thing in the Acts of the Apostles, and the first thing in forming a Presbyterian Church, is *an election*. That is the pulse-beat in our system, which has lived out in its fruits into constitutional monarchies and republics. Franklin was not altogether orthodox, but he was sagacious, and especially so in saying, "He who shall introduce into public affairs the principles of primitive Christianity"—we know him to have meant Presbyterian principles—"will revolutionize the face of the world." Presbyterianism is necessarily a popular religion. It springs from the people (in its *administration* of power), it legislates *for* the people, and appeals *to* the people. It instructs the people, elects the people, claims co-operation from the people, leans upon the people, will suffer neither learning nor worship to obscure Christ from the people, and holds its officers to be servants of the people. It has been sustained by the people wherever sustained at all, and it trusts the people—without whom it cannot live—for the future. Such a religion *must* be a friend to fraternity. And it completes its relation to this side of freedom by its catholicity. Its Waldenses taught in 1508, that any congregation, be it great or small, is not the holy, universal Church, but only a part and member thereof; and its modern confessions say, "Communion is to be extended, as God offereth opportunity, to all, who, in every place, call upon the name of the Lord Jesus." I believe the only known instance of Scotchmen receding from anything is that Assembly's of 1842, which rescinds the "Schismatical act of 1799," and recognizes the Church as one body. That is proof positive that a Church so fraternal as the Presbyterian must be a friend to the "fraternity" of liberty. The interest that extends over chasms of dividing opinion, and clasps hands for common interests, while non-essentials wait, is an essential to popular liberty. The want of such a unifying bond has been fatal to many a well-meant struggle for freedom.

4. Add, now, Presbyterianism's emphasis upon the Bible—the whole



word, only the word, and nothing but the word. This makes it the friend of freedom. The Bible, the source of England's greatness, the "cannon to liberate Italy," the palladium of American liberties; the truth—the truth about God, the world, and man, and the world to come—must make men free. Whether the initial L of liberty, or the big P of Presbyterianism, as in the monogram of this Council, it matters not. Both may lie on an open Bible because both spring from it. The bounds of the Bible and freedom are co-terminous. Nay, the very *shades* of liberty are determined by the relative biblicism of the populations.

5. In our determined adherence to creed, there may be discerned the conservative force so necessary to liberty. A building cannot take in all out-of-doors—a body must have a spinal column. And yet we hold creed and liberty so well together as to secure unity in essentials and liberty in details. The positiveness of Presbyterianism is the model of *constitutional* liberty.

6. It is the modern commonplace that free institutions are impossible without education. So is Presbyterianism; and caring therefore for its own things it has cared nobly, from Geneva to Scotland, and from Prussia to the United States, for the interests of learning.

7. Out of the Bible and through its uniform testimony, by confessions and conduct, Presbyterianism teaches the doctrine of loyalty, patriotism, and obedience to magistrates. Behold the statics of liberty, as the dynamics are provided for in liberty of conscience.

8. Liberty must have its checks and balances, and Presbyterianism has its gradation of courts and rights of appeal. But Presbyterianism is not absolutely republican in form, having no two houses in legislation. It is liberty we want, not necessarily republican liberty. Our early tendency was well poised here. Both Knox and the Continental Divines could separate the "essential principles" of liberty from all accidentals. The magic tent of our Moderator's sermon will cover any form of government, except a despotism.

9. Just in the same way Presbyterianism makes for a condition of the Church unshackled by any connection with the State. It demands such a relation, at least, as leaves the Church free to follow her sole Head in all her interior life and discipline. Its ideal is not Rome—Pagan—with State over Church, nor Rome—Papal—with Church overtopping the State; nor Arnold's dream of a Church—penetrated and consecrated State, blending the two; but two separate institutions (though possibly with edges contiguous), each essentially independent of the other, and both under law to God. Ah! how that feature of Presbyterianism has wrought for liberty! All the way down the centuries the heavy hand of State power, now moved by ecclesiastical hate, and now by its own rapacity, has been laid upon the saints of the Most High through the blending of the two kingdoms which Presbytery has done so much to rend apart. From our standpoint it is the feather of our Presbyterian American cap, that having no wrestle here with papal minions, we, before some other denominations and



against some, made the dissolution of Church and State in this land total and perpetual. The error clung to Puritan New England, and was an ugly burr in Episcopalian Virginia, but Presbyterian Philadelphia and New York, together with the constraint of providential circumstances, were too much for them. And God has added the seal of his favor. There are no such marvellous statistics in modern Christendom, as those of voluntarism's first century in America.

So much for Presbyterian principles. In our exalted God there is "liberty" of conscience; in our common gospel crowned with the electing grace of God, there is "equality;" in our polity and catholicity there is "fraternity;" in our Bible there is the *spiritual* force of freedom; in our creed there is the free *conservativism* of freedom; in our educational fervor there is the *intellectual* prerequisite to freedom; in our obedience to magistrates there is the *statical* balance of freedom; in our affinity for republicanism there is room for any *form* of free institutions; in our jealousy of the Holy of Holies for the visits of the Shechinah (ready to die rather than to admit the statue of Caligula to the precincts of Jehovah) there is the *repellant* force against exterior interference, which is the final condition of permanent freedom. There is, therefore, a normal and necessary connection between Presbyterianism and liberty. *A priori*, Presbyterians must be free! Such a religion, as large as it is strong, as deep as it is broad; like the cedars clinging to the rocky sides of Lebanon, will find the elements of liberty in the atmosphere of the sternest despotism, and bring them into life. Here are the constituents of liberty, and there is only needed the mortar and pestle of circumstances, and the never-failing alchemy of God to finish the compounding.

II. And this brings us, in the second place, to history. *A posteriori*, Presbyterians have been free. As we have seen, they *had* to be. But what shall I do with that marvellous history? Only characterize it; not trace it, much less exhibit it. As a development of the principles now mentioned, it was not always in absolutely right lines (the fences of progress are always zig-zag). It was not always unassisted by other concurrent influences, nor ever was its fruitage flawlessly complete and perfect. But it was always in the same general direction, coming irregularly as June comes, but never missing the way. It came with continuity enough to be traced, as the western boundary-lines are marked in blazed trees; and it came with ever fresh impulses, bounding out from the interior truth, and fed by the God of the truth; bounding over obstacle after obstacle; swinging its great tides over lands and seas alike, until it buried the old world of despotism out of sight; nay, until we have reached the deposit stage, and historical geologists are studying the megatheria of oppression as amazing curiosities. Never for a moment in all this advance has the force of Presbyterianism failed to be an active agent somewhere. The two liberties were sought together because the state of things in Europe on the morning of the Reformation made that inevitable. The two despotisms were so united that one could not be smitten without the



other. The party of absolutism in the state gave its mailed hand to the feline paw of the priest in solemn compact to prevent liberty of conscience in the Church, for fear of liberty of thought in the empire. Theoretically, the duty of passive obedience in the state (on everybody but the pope) was as fully developed as the duty of blind obedience in the Church. Ah! it was of God, that in one day both of them might be slain. "The Reformation frightened the rulers," says Bigot, "because they said that those who dared to dispute with Rome would soon reach the point of disputing with their despotic and vicious rulers." To be sure they would, and did. And Minister Ferry was right when he said, "Protestantism has been, in modern history, the first form of liberty." Look at Period I. (1517-1556, according to Heeren and Fisher), with its rivalry between Francis I. and Charles V., which gave Protestantism liberty to be; at Period II. (1556-1603), which gave the world the heroic struggle of the Netherlands, the English help against Philip II., and the rise of the Protestant Republic of Holland; at Period III. (1603-1648), which sees English influence wane on account of the Stuart tyranny, and gives room to Sweden—a new example of Protestant liberty and heroism; at Period IV. (1648-1702), which terminates the struggle in England, leaving political and religious liberty triumphant and secure under William III., and brings Prussia into power—out of which period, as a slide out of the telescope, is drawn the American experience, which carries the progress to its highest single point. And it seems to me that, roughly outlining, two more periods may now, in view of our special theme, be added to Heeren's programme. Period V. (1702-1815) will then embrace the first full and final triumph of Protestantism (almost unembarrassed with traditions of old governments) in the establishment of a Christian Republic, and the definitive settlement of its relations to the old world by the war of 1812, contrasted with the failure to establish liberty in the French Revolution, for want of the Huguenots so cruelly smothered and expelled; and Period VI. (1815-1878), from the Treaty of Paris to that of Berlin, which interval has witnessed the most astonishing development of constitutional government, and of liberal ideas in governments already constitutional, with the definitive establishment of religious liberty in France, and the first instance of the combined Christian civilization of Europe exerting its moral power to establish religious liberty and confirm civil liberty in the unchristian East.

It is a glorious record, and within it there runs a thread of blue which it is delightful to recognize. The way was prepared for us; and the office of Presbyterianism was that proper to the section of Protestantism which the stress of providence made most hardy and adventurous—the role of applying the truth in difficult circumstances. Presbyterianism was always great on applications. So Carlyle says, "Protestantism was a revolt against spiritual sovereignties, popes, and much else. *Presbyterianism carried out the revolt against earthly sovereignties and despotisms.*" Archdeacon Blackburn says, "The



truth is, these very controversies (about the Genevan discipline) first struck out, and in due time perfected, those noble and generous principles of civil and religious liberty which too probably, without these struggles, would hardly have been well understood to this very hour." As Presbyterianism clasped hands with the primitive Church, whose order was republican and free, it was foreordained that Presbyterianism must oppose the hierarchical (to wit, the oppressive) spirit and organization which had been interjected. And as that spirit and its accompanying organization had advanced to claim and wield the sword of temporal power, it was equally written down that Presbyterianism must contend with the same power for liberty in civil things. And as civil rulers followed the bad example of the religious, and leaned back upon the hierarchical principles as the *point d'appui* of their claims of rule as they liked and yet "do no wrong," it was just as certain again, as that alkali will effervesce under an acid, that Presbyterian right arms would follow Presbyterian convictions of right into a conflict with the civil rulers for civil liberty. Moreover, as the taste of liberty is sweeter to the freeman than that of blood to the tyrant, it was morally certain that Presbyterianism, which cast off popery, would cast off everything else which let or hindered its liberty. And yet, again, it is but a certainty of development that Presbyterianism, having fought so long and hard, would not only have scars and be proud of them, but would also preserve unconsciously a somewhat pugilistic attitude, and would have its position of ready self-defence mistaken sometimes for the challenging chip on the boy's shoulder, or the quills on the fretful porcupine. But those who come nearer are sure to discover that this attitude is *only* a mark of development. We are soldiers' children, and must stand straight up. But, you remember, that it is General Sherman who dislikes and dreads war.

In all this history behind us we have our place in universal history, and no man can read the records of the world and fail to find Presbyterianism. Popery and prelacy are sure to find it, at any rate, for they bear our scars. Historians of liberty are sure to find the grafts which Presbyterian swords have stuck into the liberty tree. Historians of heroism will never be able to leave out the names which star our records. Historians of the noble in womanhood will linger over the modest fragrance which the simple courage of some, and the cultivated devotion of others, and the maiden-martyrdom of more, have left between the pages of our records. Historians of the literature of liberty will always be busy with the line of Presbyterian authors, from John Calvin to John Milton, who were captains of thousands in the conflicts of thought. Historians of the great constructive forces will follow the shining thread from Piedmont to the valleys of the Vaudois, with their unquenchable endurance; thence to Geneva, with its model political arrangements; its realized public morality; thence to Germany, with the noble and nobly rewarded stand of its nobles; thence to the Netherlands, to read and mark the moving story of its indomitable perseverance; thence through sunny



France to the war of culture against ignorance, of industry against stupidity, of unflinching truth against the most damnable treachery which stains the record of Christendom; thence to England, to the great struggle that built the commonwealth which has never ceased to exist in the common weal; thence to bonnie Scotland, to the "Great Heart" of the Presbyterian pilgrimage, and its Mecca—Edinburgh and Grayfriars; thence to the wilds of America, where the free-hearted came, finding what here they sought—"freedom to worship God." Here they must rest, finding a freedom for religion so free, that to limit it is our only concern; finding the heritage of good of all ages so richly expanding in these vast vistas that hence back again to the old world and far away to the East, by way of the West, the light now shines, and men say, "*The development of liberty is complete; now for its direction and conservation!*" No names, or epochs, or particulars are needed in this review. The mind stitches together almost the whole civilized and Christian world to make the map for the area of Presbyterianism's influence. You marvel to see how mutually helpful it has been at every point, how reactive in its own course; as, *e. g.*, on the continent between Switzerland and France, between Germany and the Netherlands, even between Piedmont and Bohemia; how across the channel influences passed which wove together and endeared the whole body then and forever since; how Scotland blessed England, and both laid joint hands in Puritan and Presbyterian (differing only as two hands may) upon America. The history only needs to be known. Eyes moisten and lips quiver under the touching recitals of martyrdoms innumerable; the blood tingles at injustices so mean and oppressions so cruel; the soul exults in heroisms so lofty; the heart learns to trust from faith so implicit; and the courage rises to any possible demand at the sight of the quiet sufferers or the crested warriors. These were the thoughts of God that ennobled our fathers. The growth of civilization and intelligence will never carry us beyond, but only nearer to the height of their conception of the good and the true. And amid the evidences of abounding spiritual life which are found inside of these rough integuments, we shall be always learning how the struggle for liberty may not weaken but strengthen our grasp on the great central truths of salvation by a crucified Redeemer. Away with the sickly aversion to controversy for the faith once delivered to the saints when we stand in presence of the passionate earnestness with which a Henderson preached upon the moors of Scotland, or the tenderness of a Clement Marot, as he put the heart of Christ's truth into sweetest song (uniting forever art and worship), or the deep experience of a Calvin while fighting the Libertines in Geneva and the whole Catholic world without. No, no, no! Blood earnestness is good anywhere and always for the things of God. We need never fear what shall come in the conflict for the crown-rights of King Jesus. If we fight *for* him, we shall always rest in him.

Fair deductions all made, honor to whom honor is due, and sorrow



felt for whatever is to be lamented, still the history of the Presbyterian struggle for liberty is an imperishable record of all that honors God and benefits man. In that history every principle which God has entrusted to us has been brodered in red lines into the records of the choicest life of the race. It shall remain our heritage and our pride! Shall it be also our inspiration?

III. To this we turn. What Presbyterianism ought to do, *a priori*, we saw; what Presbyterianism has done we have hinted at. What *shall* Presbyterianism do? What is its present duty and future mission?—Shall it be put in a museum like John Knox's pulpit in Stirling Castle?—or encased in a mummy-literature? or forgotten in the lispings of an effeminate worship, or dandled away in a hammock swung between pulpit and pew? Ah! what! how! in this time of the world; when to be living is sublime! No! a thousand times! The time for a living, breathing, energetic, liberty-loving, liberty-keeping, stalwart Presbyterianism is *now*, just now! I am sorry I had not given your whole thirty minutes to this end of the theme. See what work there yet is for Presbyterianism in relation to civil and religious liberty!

(I.) Liberty has come only in a part of the world. It must be made to come everywhere.

1. Liberty for missionary propaganda of all descriptions. 2. Fulfilment of treaties in the interest of religious liberty. 3. Liberty of dissent from established churches, and of changing religions. 4. Liberty from every vestige of the Church and State combinations which oppress, or hamper, or dampen the life of the Church of Christ. 5. Liberty from cruel race-prejudice toward Jew, Indian, African and Chinaman. A *blazing pulpit*, and platform, and press for our despised races. 6. Liberty for Romanists against all Church spoliation, and all interference with their interior economy, and all expulsions. 7. Such liberty, even for atheists, as that they may not either sneer at the fear, or complain of the unfairness of Christian governments.

(II.) This liberty is to be maintained—

1. Against all the encroachments of the modern State, which may yet prove the true antichrist in its extravagant claims and oppressive measures.

2. Liberty is to be maintained against its first, oldest, and yet most active foe—the Church of Rome. There is no need to prove Rome the same—persecuting principles and all. *Semper Idem* is her boast. There is no need to emphasize the much that is Christian and philanthropic in her doctrine, her worship, or her career. But just to say that with love for all within her pale who love Jesus, with heart throbbing before the Christ of her crucifix, and hearts ascending in her *Te Deums*, and minds quickened by the logic of her Augustines and Anselms, with reverence for her antiquity, and sympathy for all that is noble in her art and architecture, with admiration for all that is touching in her consecration to the poor and helpless; STILL, with firm finger on St. Bartholomew, and face o'ercast as we hear the wail of the Lowlands, and heart quivering to the song of the martyred



Latimers, and Ridleys, and suspicions a little roused by the Syllabus and the Vatican Council, and the sweeping victory of Ultramontaniam, we will watch with keen eye the internal struggle through which she must pass, ready to clasp hands with the broken fragments which we hope will form about the cross after the crisis; and not less ready—though sorrowfully—to meet her shrewd diplomacy (should it continue) with the astute simplicity of a clear purpose to serve Christ and conserve liberty, or even to stand in serried rank, and strike hard and fast, at her first motion toward the usurpation of temporal dominion, or her first gesture to seize the thumb-screw and the torch. Nay! it is our office to apply her blistering past to every sensitive spot we can discover on her wide extended surface, until the tortures of memory are transmuted into the throes of repentance, and the red currents of martyr-blood are reflected in the sense of heavy shame crimsoning her cheeks. Until Rome can say, “We were wrong”—as the Protestant world long ago said in view of its comparatively insignificant record of violent persecution—the whole world (secular and religious) must maintain a posture of armed suspicion, and Presbyterianism must be its sleepless sentinel.

(III.) And then, most difficult of all, liberty is to be DEFINED, and thus guarded against the whole class of internal foes that are now more dangerous than all others combined. Defined, I say:

1. As against liberty misinterpreted into a false individualism.
2. As against liberty perverted into the crushing despotism of communism.
3. As against *laissez-faire* and indifference to morals, prostituting liberty into license, and eating the heart out of the State as surely as stealthily.
4. As against the secularism that disarms the State morally by cutting the nerves that bind it to God and religion—a subtler danger than almost any other because it is Satan disguised as an “angel of light.”

The great issue now before our united forces is, whether Presbyterianism, having helped signally to give birth to freedom, will as signally help to make effective the *limitations* which must obtain, unless liberty is to play the blind Samson, and pull down alike upon itself and its enemies the crushing weight of the political structures under which all might happily live.

The Christian social philosophers of our day agree that Romanism has shown its incapacity to be the regulator, and balance, and ballast, which freedom needs for free peoples. Will Protestantism succeed? It will, I answer, in proportion as the things essential to Presbyterianism remain uppermost in Protestantism, viz.: 1. Firmness to principle. 2. Flexibility and freedom in methods. 3. Fidelity to the past record of civil and religious liberty, which have never been stable except as they have been Christian. 4. Inseparable identification with the rights, the wants, the needs, and the sympathies of the people; and, 5, an earnest and watchful care for an education which



shall not be obligatory, secular, and free, but obligatory, Christian, and free.

To close. There was never greater need for heroism in regard to our principles, our history, and our mission, than to-day. To die in reformation struggles was no more indispensable, and no more difficult, than to live properly for the reformation peoples, some of whom are well-nigh drunk with reformation liberties. The "enthusiasm of humanity," founded on God, and fed at the cross, must now be displayed in preventing liberty from becoming self-destructive. There are not many "hurrah" elements in such work, and few thanks to be won in opposing men's doing what they like to do. It is the physician and malaria, rather than the trumpet and the tournament. It is a work easily forgotten even by those who cry "Thy kingdom come."

But certain it is, that liberty must be based upon the Bible, or washed away from the shifting sands of human opinion. Its forces must be held and driven, or they will wreck the chariot. Liberty must acknowledge God and the Decalogue. It must recognize its highest claims as satisfied in the principles of that matchless Declaration of Independence, which is shot through and through with the blue thread of Mecklenburg, itself spun out of Scotch tissue, and is at once Christian and free.

The REV. PROF. LYMAN H. ATWATER, D. D., LL. D., of Princeton, N. J., read a paper as follows, on

#### RELIGION AND POLITICS.

Religion includes all forms in which man evinces allegiance and devotion to the Being or Beings whom he recognizes as supreme, whether Christian, Jewish, or Pagan. Politics refers to organized states, either with respect to the scientific unfolding of the theoretical and practical principles of civil government, or the means and methods of uplifting particular persons, parties, and policies to the ascendancy in any given state. These two departments, though quite distinct, nevertheless overlap and largely interpenetrate. The question is, how far has religion a place in politics in each of these senses?

Between the Vatican claim that the Church, through its supreme pontiff, is the infallible and authoritative guide of the civil magistrate in all matters affecting faith and morals, as also the supreme judge of what matters come under this category; and the counter-maxim of Hobbes that the statutes of the state are the ultimate source, standard and rule of moral obligation—a sentiment which agrees with much utilitarian and materialistic speculation in undermining intrinsic and scriptural morality—all varieties of doctrine on this subject may be found, down to that formula of demagogic diabolism, "all is fair in politics." Omitting all attempts to specify all of these, I may premise that the composition and constitution of this body, as I suppose,