PRESBYTERIAN REUNION:

A MEMORIAL VOLUME.

1837—1871.

Ὅτι εἷς ἄρτος, ἓν σῶμα οἱ πολλοί ἐσμεν· οἱ γὰρ πάντες ἐκ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἄρτου μετέχομεν.—1 CORINTHIANS x. 17.

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CHAPTER SECOND.

HISTORICAL REVIEW OF THE CHURCH (NEW SCHOOL BRANCH).

BY THE REV. JONATHAN F. STEARNS, D.D.

Sources of Presbyterian History. — The Separation not Anticipated. PERIOD OF DEPRESSION. — Policy of Absorption. — Hope of Reunion. — Unsectarian Spirit. — Missionary Churches. — Changes in the Form of Government. — Preparation for Growth. — Contributions. — Gradual Consolidation. PERIOD OF REVIVAL. — Assembly at Cincinnati in 1847. — Plan of Church Extension. — Assembly at Washington in 1852. — New arrangement for Home Missions, Education, and Publication. — Work required of Presbyteries and Synods. — Presbyterian Quarterly Review. — Relations with the Congregationalists. — Conflict with the Home Missionary Society. PERMANENT COMMITTEE ON CHURCH EXTENSION. — The "Declaration of Principles." — Assembly at Wilmington. — Assembly at Pittsburg in 1860. — Separation from the Home Missionary Society. — Agreement with the A. B. C. F. M. in 1859. THE QUESTION OF SLAVERY. — Testimony against the system, with care not to do injustice to those involved in it. — The Detroit Resolution. — Action at Cleveland. — Withdrawal of the Southern Synods. PERIOD OF PROSPERITY AND PROGRESS. — Unity and Unanimity. — Loyalty in the War. — Home Missions. — Church Erection. — Education. — Publication. — Presbyterian House. — Foreign Missions. — Periodical Literature. — Colleges. — Theological Seminaries. — Position towards Reunion. — Doctrinal Position. — The Future.

IT is provided by the "concurrent Declarations" that "the official records of the two branches of the church for the period of the separation should be preserved and held as making up the one history of the church." Those documents are now the property of the united body, and will, no doubt, be made the subject of careful investigation by its future historians. They contain a portion of Presbyterian history of equal value to both the classes of which the united body is composed. We are henceforth to have but one interest; and whatever good has been accomplished by one class will be a

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matter of satisfaction, and whatever evil incurred, of regret, to the other. Both results must be accepted and acknowledged as the achievements or failures of American Presbyterians.

In preparing this sketch, the guiding principle must be that of truth impartially stated. Yet, if separate sketches are to be given, the writer of either will stand somewhat in the position of an advocate, and must not be held as violating the wholesome rule, "to study the things that make for peace, and to guard against all needless and offensive references to the causes that have divided us," if, on some critical points he states the case of his clients from their own point of view, though, to the other party, it may have a different aspect. It is to be hoped, however, there will be very little even of the appearance of partisanship.

It will be readily granted by those who have studied the history, that the New School party in the old Presbyterian church did not desire the separation. Their feelings were against it; their interest was manifestly against it; they had no points to carry which, in their estimation, were likely to be subserved by it; their action, up to the last moment, was directed with a view to its prevention. When it took place, it found them totally unprepared for the exigency. They had no plans concocted for separate action, no policy adapted to the new condition in which they found themselves.

If such was the case with the act itself, still more was it with the manner of doing it. The cutting off of the four synods, on the principles which were held to justify it, seemed to them so arbitrary and undiscriminating a measure, that they had not supposed it would

be contemplated. Why not dissolve the Assembly as well, since it contained the same elements? Why not rather take measures to eject the unsound and alien elements, carefully preserving such as were sound and constitutional? Why break up these large organizations, the conservators of large and widely extended interests, simply for having followed rules of action adopted for them by the General Assembly? So they reasoned. We say this, not to vindicate their position, but only to state it. The other side took a different view, and their arguments are on record. But these were theirs, and must be considered, if we would understand their action. They held the act of exclusion to be unconstitutional, and felt bound, not only in justice to their brethren, deprived, as they thought, of rights sacredly secured to them, but in justice also to the church itself, and to their own constitutional pledges, to make common cause with those brethren, and organize the General Assembly on what they deemed the only true principles. This they did; and by the subsequent course of events, particularly by the final decision of the court in Bank, found themselves, against their wishes and expectations, a separate body.

It has been a matter of surprise to many, that the New School party, immediately upon the disruption, should have exhibited so little strength and so great a lack of decision. Up to that time they had been a strong, compact, and steadily advancing party. They claimed to be the majority, and no doubt included in their ranks a large share of the aggressive activity of the church and a large proportion of the young men. In numbers, the two parties were nearly balanced, and

every year there was a sharp struggle for the ascendency in the General Assembly. But during seven years, from 1831 to 1837, inclusive, the New School held the majority in that body *five* times, and their rivals of the Old School only *twice*. It might naturally have been expected, that in case of a division, the advantage in respect to efficiency, organic life, and growth would have been on their side. Why the result was otherwise will be seen when we consider the obstacles.

Unquestionably the blow which severed them from the legally recognized Presbyterian church was to them a stunning blow. Its decisive character, partly because of its unexpected occurrence, they failed at first to understand; to use a modern military phrase, it quite demoralized them. It loosened all the bonds of their organic union. Their membership began at once to fly apart. Many who adhered to the body lost their interest in it. For many years they scarcely knew whom they could rely upon as permanently of their number. It crippled their resources. It separated them from their strongest institutions. It threw suspicion, not only on the soundness of their faith, — the alleged defects of which had been assigned as one of the chief motives of the acts of excision, — but the genuineness of their denominational standing. It even raised the question of their right to exist as an organized body. Indeed, scarcely had the disruption occurred, when the standard of another denomination was openly raised within their own camp, among those who had professed to be of them; and from the highest watch-tower of the New School citadel, as it then regarded itself, rang out the cry of revolt, "To your tents, O Israel."

The disadvantage was increased by the policy which the other party, awakened to new life and organic energy by the separation, saw fit to adopt in regard to them; the policy of "*absorption*," so called. In their view, the separation was final. Considered as an organized body, they did not know the New School; they did not suppose it could live. But its elements, of which a large part were still held in esteem by them, they desired to recover. Hence, immediately on the withdrawal of the New School, they adopted a resolution which operated, during the whole period which followed, as a standing invitation to churches, ministers, presbyteries, and minorities of presbyteries, to disconnect themselves from the New School and become united with the Old School Assembly. Taken from their own point of view, this was an affectionate invitation to all sound Presbyterians, unhappily separated from the true Presbyterian fold, to return, with an assurance of welcome. Taken from that of the New School, it was an invitation and encouragement to unfaithfulness, disturbing and disintegrating their ranks, and so a source of irritation and distrust.

In the light of recent events over which we all rejoice and thank God, it will be held as an honor to the Christian spirit of the New School, though it delayed the consolidation of the body and the settlement of their denominational plans, that, for several years, amidst those troubled scenes, they did not give up the hope or effort to bring about a reunion of the church. In a convention held just before the disruption, they resolved, and sent the resolution to a convention of their brethren, "that we are ready to co-operate in any ef-

forts for pacification that are constitutional, and which shall recognize the regular standing and secure the rights of the entire church." The day after the separation took place, their General Assembly resolved as follows: "That this body is willing to agree to any reasonable measures for an amicable adjustment of the difficulties existing in the Presbyterian Church; and will receive and respectfully consider any propositions that may be made for that purpose." In 1839, they proposed a "plan of peaceable division," "designed only," as they say, "to secure our constitutional privileges as Presbyterians," while it relinquished to the other body "all the chartered rights, institutions, and funds of the Presbyterian Church." It was not till the year 1840, as the Assembly say, that they relinquished the idea of reunion, and, "coming reluctantly to the conclusion that union was impracticable, corrected their roll, and dropped from it the names of those brethren in deference to their feelings." One more proposition, though only for a mutual recognition of each other as bodies of Christian brethren, by communing together at the Lord's table, was made during the session of the two Assemblies, in the same city of Philadelphia, in 1846. None of these proposals were successful. No doubt they were all made, as the Assembly declare, "in good faith, and with the earnest desire and hope that they might be met in the spirit that prompted them." No doubt the one last named raised, in the Old School Assembly, an embarrassing question. Most of them would gladly have accepted the invitation, had they regarded it as expedient to do so. And they rejected it, although decisively, yet kindly. The result served to convince

the New School, of what perhaps it would have been better for them to have understood earlier, that, however desirable union might be on general grounds, the time had not come for them to be pressing proposals to that effect on the consideration of their brethren; and that the best thing they could do in existing circumstances, was to go about their separate work, and build up as best they might, their own particular section of the fortifications of Zion.

This independent action, necessary to their growth and vigor as a denomination, was still further checked, and that growth and vigor hindered, by the very *unsectarian* — we might say *undenominational* — spirit that pervaded the body. Many of them were New England men, born and educated in another denomination; and though, by conviction, they had heartily adopted the Presbyterian system, they did not regard their own section of the church as the only true church, and shrunk sensitively from even the appearance of proselytism. This was manifest to a considerable degree in their relations to the Old School, bitterly as they remembered the acts of excision; and still more as respected the Congregationalists, among whom were the near relatives and fellow-students of many of them, for the sake of whose fellowship and co-operation they had incurred in their own denomination the evils of suspicion and disruption. Some may ask here, Why, with these views, did they insist on keeping up their distinct organization? Why not rather abandon it, and allow its elements to fall off, on the one side and the other, to their natural affinities,— the strong Presbyterians to the Old School, and those who had little objections to Con-

gregationalism, to the Congregationalists. But the reply is obvious. Here was a large body of churches, say fifteen hundred, more or less, that were neither of the one extreme nor of the other. They were Presbyterians, and they were not Presbyterians on the basis of 1837 and 1838. These churches were to be cared for; the great religious interests involved in them were to be preserved. Their resources and working powers were to be called forth and made available. None but a New School Presbyterian church, at that juncture, could have performed this service. And to perform it, that church must not only maintain its existence, and resist disintegration, but increase, by all fair and Christian means, its organic strength and efficiency. A sectarian spirit is, no doubt, to be reprobated. Denominationalism may not be, on the whole, the best principle for the distribution of the church. But while denominations exist, each is made responsible for its own. And a certain degree of the denominational *esprit du corps* is therefore indispensable to the common interest. The Congregationalists, looking to the interests of Evangelical Protestantism in our land, and of the Redeemer's Kingdom, have occasion to rejoice; and the Old School, looking to the fair proportions, happy fellowship, and augmented strength of the reunited Presbyterian Church does rejoice to-day, that the New School body, at that critical period of its history, did not wholly forget its divine mission as a distinct body of Evangelical Christians. Had it sooner and more vigorously roused itself to this duty, it would, no doubt, have done more for the common advancement.

One more hinderance in its way, may be found in

the peculiar condition and stage of growth at which the disruption found a large part of its churches. Most of them had been missionary churches and were recently established; many of them were still beneficiaries of the American Home Missionary Society. They were, it is true, a noble band of true-hearted, zealous-minded Christian people, deeply imbued with the spirit of the great revivals which had just before rejoiced the country and astonished the Christian world, and full of evangelical fervor. But they lacked resources. Most of the old wealthy churches went with the other division. So did all the old and well-endowed institutions. Those which remained were in their infancy, weak, unendowed, and struggling for existence. Lane Seminary received its first student in 1829. Union, in New York, was organized in 1836. Auburn was a few years older, but was not strong. The same may be said of the colleges. Most of the ministers were young men, not much versed in matters of ecclesiastical policy. A few, such as Dr. Richards of Auburn, were men of ripe experience and comprehensive and far-seeing judgment. But the number of such men was not large, and most of their contemporaries were in the other body. The mass of those that remained were rather men of zeal and ability, than experience and reputation. Their best power and weightiest influence was in the future.

In such circumstances, it is not strange that some mistakes should have been made increasing the embarrassment. One of these, the impolicy of which the church afterwards saw and retrieved, was the alteration of the constitutional rules. The Confession of Faith

was never altered, even in a penstroke; but the FORM of GOVERNMENT was, in a few particulars. Partly owing to a weariness with past struggles, the General Assembly had come to be regarded with less favor, and its importance to the Presbyterian system less highly estimated than formerly. The impression had begun to gain ground before the division, and had the sanction of some eminent names in both parties, that if appeals could be stopped with synods, annual Assemblies might well be dispensed with. Accordingly, in the year 1839, the next year after the separation, overtures were sent down to the presbyteries, which, being approved, took effect in the year 1840, altering the basis of representation, making the synods courts of ultimate appeal, and providing for triennial instead of annual Assemblies. A *committee ad interim* was also erected, invested with large but not well-defined powers. The effect especially at so critical a period, may be easily supposed. It left the body with at best a very weak and inadequate bond of union, and at a time when the most constant vigilance, concert, and co-operation were essential to safety, with no provision, during repeated intervals of three years, for the slightest common consultation upon its interests and dangers. That the church did not make complete shipwreck during the nine years of the continuance of this policy, is indeed far more to be wondered at, than that it should be found to have lacked much in organic strength and successful progress.

But while, from these and other causes hereafter to be noticed, the progress and efficiency of the body, during the first half of its existence, was not as great

as might otherwise have been expected, justice to its history requires us to add that, during all that period of discouragement, an important work was going on, in it and by it, both for immediate results and in preparation for the future. The "co-operative" or undenominational method to which the New School strongly adhered in their work of evangelization, so merged their contributions with those of a sister denomination, that it is not easy to determine, except approximately, what portion of the common results was due to their agency. But there is reason to believe it was in full proportion, both in men and money, to their comparative ability. With generous aid afforded them from New England, they sustained and strengthened their numerous feeble and infant churches, and made provisions for the support and endowment of their theological and literary institutions. Some of these suffered severely from the financial embarrassments which well-nigh overwhelmed the country just at the occurrence of the separation, and it was only with the greatest difficulty, and at the cost of great self-denials and exertions on the part of their guardians and Faculties, that they were kept alive, to be the blessings which they now are to the church. The records of the General Assembly give tokens likewise of a high degree of devotion to the work of the gospel, in the frequent, very extensive, and deeply moving revivals of religion, which obtain notice in its Pastoral letters and official "Narratives of the state of Religion." Large numbers were, from year to year, added to the church; bold and judicious testimony was uttered for the sanctity of the Sabbath, the purity and integrity of the Christian doc-

trines, the promotion of temperance, and against the worldly spirit threatening in various ways to corrupt the piety of the church. In that most critical and formative period in the history of our Western country, there went forth steadily, it is believed, from this devoted band of hard-working, self-denying ministers and churches, an influence of vast though silent efficacy, to make that great and now powerful section of our country what it is, — eminently Christian. Meanwhile, a process was going on within the body itself, whose beneficial results some, no doubt, were then unable to foresee. That process of depletion which began, as we have seen, at the beginning of its troubles, — the dropping off, on this side and on that, of men and churches, that had been considered in some cases leaders of the body, and that certainly did contribute to swell its numbers and apparent strength, — was gradually disentangling it from hurtful complications, removing the embarrassment and peril of alien counsels, and promoting unity and homogeneousness among its members. Some of those trusted leaders, who, in the days of adversity, went away, and walked no more with them, were among the rowers who rowed them into the deep waters, and whose unwise measures, or vulnerable expressions, had made their views and actions to be misinterpreted by those who were really of the same principles. At the same time, questions vital to their future peace and prosperity were getting discussed and settled. Such was the question of slavery, to the discussion of which they gave the utmost latitude, as will be shown hereafter, and with respect to which they reached conclusions which, during all the fierce struggles which afterwards

agitated the country, they saw no reason to alter. Night seems to most men, especially if it be overcast with clouds, a season of gloom; but it adds mightily, with its refreshing moisture and its sparkling dew-drops, to the beauty and freshness of the morning. Winter seems a cheerless and barren interval; but spring owes not a little of its bursting life, and summer and autumn of their growth and wealth of products, to its silent processes. So, often, does the church of God look back with gratitude to her seasons of discouragement, as she looks forward, and takes up the words of hope, —

> "The winter season has been sharp,
> But spring shall all its wastes repair."

It has been necessary to dwell thus long upon this period of depression, that we might the better understand that of the new life and activity which followed. The stirrings of this new life began to discover themselves during the meeting of the triennial Assembly in 1846. Most of the time in that meeting, to the great disparagement of the Assembly in the eyes of some, was occupied with the discussion of slavery. In consequence of this, as appears from the minutes, "business of vast importance to the prosperity of our church, especially at the West, was left unfinished and unattempted; business which, in the opinion of many entitled to belief, must be done soon, or it would be wholly beyond our power ever to do it." In this view, the evil of triennial, instead of annual Assemblies, began to be apparent to many. "It was not surprising," they said, "that during the long interval, the churches at the West, in all stages of existence, among a heterogen-

eous and rapidly increasing population, should feel the want of the presence and wisdom of the General Assembly, both to attract around a common centre these diverse elements, and to devise plans for the extension and consolidation of our branch of the church. That the exigency might not fail to be met, an adjourned meeting of the Assembly was agreed upon, to be held in the spring of the next year; and as the measure was then without precedent, and some doubted its legality, the opinion of Chancellor Kent was procured, who gave it the sanction of his weighty authority.

In the spring of 1847, the Assembly came together in the city of Cincinnati, full of the spirit of their important mission. A memorial was presented from Rev. Thornton A. Mills, not a member of the Assembly, which, though not to be found upon the minutes, deserves to be carefully preserved, both as a memorial of the man, and an important monument of progress in the history of the church. The opening paragraph is characteristic: "That, being a native of the great West, and expecting to live and die in the service of Christ, endeavoring to spread the influence of the Presbyterian Church throughout its wide limits, he feels peculiar pleasure in welcoming the Assembly, at this, its first session in the great city of the West, and in learning that one object of the adjournment, was to consider the condition of our western churches, and devise means for their enlargement. Having been all his life an observer of the state of things, and having for several years past possessed peculiar advantages of acquiring knowledge from his connection with the Home Missionary Society through a large portion of this region, he trusts it will

not be deemed presumptuous if, in the form of a memorial, he ventures to offer a few suggestions as to the best means of extending the influence of the kingdom of Christ, as it is connected with our church." In this memorial, four points are very clearly presented and forcibly urged. 1. The great want of places of public worship. "The power of Presbyterianism" lies "in the continuity of its efforts; and this cannot be secured without permanent church accommodations." 2. The expediency of a temporary system of itineracy under the direction of presbyteries and synods. Presbyterianism cannot be made aggressive without this. 3. The need of some new measures to supply suitable ministers, "men apt to teach, who will persevere in laying the foundations of many generations." 4. The need of some special provision for the wants of our foreign population, especially the Germans.

This memorial, carefully considered in a committee, and freely discussed in interlocutory meetings of the Assembly, resulted in the adoption of a plan which required only to be matured and carried out, to place the church on a new platform in respect to its prosperity and usefulness. "Every pastor, session, and church," were exhorted to "regard themselves as a *missionary body*, established in the midst of the most important missionary field in the world, and the object of their vocation to lead all around them to Christ." To this end, the congregations were to be "thoroughly instructed," "thoroughly grounded in the doctrines of *grace*," and particularly "in the doctrines of the Bible as contained in the *standards of our church*." All the points contained in the memorial were urged as of

great importance, and it was recommended "to all our presbyteries carefully to survey their whole territory, and apply to the Home Missionary Society, for one or more missionaries who shall be employed in itinerating among the destitute."

This short adjourned meeting of the Assembly, in 1847, proved to be one of the most important in the annals of the New School Church, not so much for what it accomplished, as what it put in process of accomplishment, as indicative of the new spirit which was beginning to arise in the body and prophetic of its future advancement. In its action are to be found the germs of the whole subsequent policy. Nor did the Assembly dissolve itself till it had taken measures to reinvigorate the impaired system by a return to the old rule of annual Assemblies, and the restoration of the constitution to its original state; of which the former was effected in 1849, and the latter one year later. On this last point, an able report, drawn up by Dr. Hatfield and containing the history of this whole subject, in the light of which the Assembly and the Presbyteries finally acted, is to be found in the appendix to the minutes for 1849.

Various causes contributed to retard, for several years, the full execution or completion of the plan. But it was not dropped or overlooked. The question was freely discussed, information sought, committees raised to consider it during the intervals of the Assemblies, and, from year to year, progress was made. In 1851, Dr. Mills preached, by previous appointment, an able and stirring sermon on Home Missions, from Isaiah liv. 2, 3: "Enlarge the place of thy tent," &c.,

and the whole subject, having been again fully discussed, was referred to a special committee of nine, among whom were some of the ablest ministers of the church, and of which Dr. Mills was the chairman, with directions to report to the next General Assembly.

Such was the posture of affairs when the Assembly met at Washington, in 1852. It was an earnest, resolute, hard-working Assembly. The church was represented by some of its ablest men. They came together from all parts of the field, North and South, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific, not to see the sights of Washington, in which recreation they indulged but sparingly, but to devise and fix upon measures to make their beloved church what they all felt she ought to be, — a power in the land. An excursion to Mount Vernon, and a visit in a body to the Presidential mansion, where, being introduced in a felicitous speech, by their Moderator, Dr. Wm. Adams, they were received with great courtesy by President Filmore, who complimented them in his happiest manner, as an "Ecclesiastical Congress of the United States," occupied the hours of Saturday, and gave opportunity for free conference on the work before them; and their unfeigned love of country, and devotion to its interests, always characteristic of the Presbyterian Church in all its history, found expression in the presentation of a block of marble, to be inserted in the monument to the memory of Washington, bearing that most fitting emblem, an open Bible, with the inscription: The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, in session in Washington City, May, 1852. These were pleasant incidents, occupying little time

and serving, as did the very genius of the place, to stimulate their zeal, and give them enlarged conceptions of the sublime mission of the church in this great and growing country, at once to "walk through the land in the length of it and the breadth of it," and take possession of it in the name of the Master.

It was well understood from before the appointment of the commissioners, that the grand subject of interest in this Assembly would be the report of the special committee and the work of CHURCH EXTENSION, which that committee had in charge. Dr. Mills and his associates had prepared a detailed plan for carrying into effect the long-cherished purpose of the church. It consisted of three principal sections, which were taken up and discussed *seriatim;* viz., that on Education for the Ministry, on Home Missions, and on Doctrinal Tracts. The stress of the discussion came upon the first, chiefly perhaps because it was taken up first; for they all involved substantially the same principles, and the adoption of either was felt to be a virtual committal of the Assembly to the whole policy. The discussion was able, earnest, and protracted. Two parties discovered themselves, one, — of those particularly jealous of what might in any degree impair or imperil the system of voluntary societies, to which the church had been committed from the beginning; the other making no objection to that system, but resolute to secure, at whatever cost in that direction, a more efficient method of Church Extension and Home Evangelization. Elaborate arguments were presented on the one side by Dr. Asa D. Smith, then a member of the Executive Committee of the American Home Missionary Society, and

Dr. Beman, that prince of debaters, who had always been an earnest champion of the voluntary or non-ecclesiastical system. These were answered by arguments, if not as elaborate, yet quite as effective, at least with those predisposed to that side of the question. In particular, the commissioners from the West were drawn out and encouraged to tell freely the story of their embarrassments under existing methods; which they did, using their rifles as practised marksmen, in pithy speeches or plain statements of facts. The debate, although eager, was eminently courteous and fraternal, and resulted in the very general conviction that *something must be done*, and that quickly, if we would perform our proper part in carrying forward the Lord's work, or save ourselves from being *absorbed* on the one hand, or losing our very name as Presbyterian Christians on the other.

At the end of three days the discussion was arrested, and the whole subject referred to a special committee. It may be of interest to recall the names of those who at this important juncture were entrusted with the responsibility of harmonizing the opinions of their brethren and recommending the new plan of operations. They stand on record as follows: "Rev. Messrs. Stephen Taylor, D.D., Nathan S. S. Beman, D.D., Philemon H. Fowler, Asa D. Smith, D.D., George A. Lyon, D.D., Samuel W. Fisher, and Robert W. Patterson; with the Hon. Messrs. William Darling, William Jessup, LL.D., and John Mason, and Messrs John Ogden and Horace Maynard." Their report was on the first section only, — that on Education for the ministry; and the two others having received several amendments in the body

itself, the whole plan was adopted by the General Assembly with great unanimity.

The leading feature of the plan, in the intention of the Assembly, was the combination of the voluntary or co-operative system, with the effective and responsible supervision by the church judicatories of the work of the church.

In the department of doctrinal tracts, there was no difficulty, because the field was unoccupied. A committee of nine were appointed, whose duty it should be "to superintend the publication of a series of tracts explanatory of the doctrines, government, and missionary policy of the Presbyterian Church, as the Assembly should from time to time direct."

In the department of education, existing education societies, with which the presbyteries or churches might co-operate, were left undisturbed, but were requested to adopt such a plan of operation and correspondence as would make the parties concerned *mutual helps;* and, for the West, as there was no such society there, it was recommended that one should be formed, to be called the Western Education Society, which should arrange its annual meetings to be at the same time and place as those of the Assembly, and permit the members of the Assembly, *ex officio*, to act as members of the society. These societies were requested to furnish annual reports to the Assembly, "as far as their operations" should "relate to our church;" and the Presbyteries were to appoint standing committees to take charge of the funds collected in their churches, exercise supervision over their young men, and press the subject in all its

bearings on the attention and action of their congregations.

In the department of Home Missions, "the American Home Missionary Society," say the Assembly "is hereby recommended as the agency through which, as heretofore, the work of Domestic Missions shall be done." Each presbytery was to have a standing committee on church extension, "to see that, by its own ministers or otherwise, the claims of Home Missions should be urged upon the churches, and funds raised and paid into the treasury of the society with as little expense to it as possible; to recommend all applications for aid, and keep the amounts asked for as low as would answer the purpose." In order to avoid conflicting and irresponsible action, while the Assembly would not abridge the right of the society "to obtain all needed information in regard to applications" for aid, or "exercise its full discretion as to granting them in whole or in part," the society was requested so to arrange its system that the applications of the *presbyteries for their churches* should not depend, as had recently been growing to be the custom, on the "official sanction" of the *agents* of the society. The synods also were to have each a church extension committee, and on them was devolved the duty of forming a plan, and devising means to aid feeble churches, either by loan or gift, in erecting houses of worship; for which object they should require of the churches to make each a yearly collection. The Assembly also was to have its standing committee, and the whole work was to come up annually, by reports, for its supervision.

The most important provision of the plan in this de-

partment, as the case then stood, was the sixth item, viz.: "Each presbytery whose circumstances as to churches and members demand it, is recommended to appoint an *itinerant missionary* within its bounds for each synod, where it is best that two or more, or all of its presbyteries shall be united in this work, is recommended to appoint such a missionary, whose duty it shall be to act as a travelling evangelist after the scriptural pattern, to explore destitute fields, to prepare the way for the formation of new churches by the presbyteries, to seek for ministers to take charge of them, to assist and direct in building houses of worship in destitute places, and, in all other suitable ways, under the direction of presbyterial or synodical committees, promote the work of church extension." The object of the provision is not doubtful. The Assembly had at length awoke to its obligation, too much overlooked in times past, to superintend the developement, in all legitimate ways, of its *own branch* of the *church*, and was determined to do it, not without regard to the claims of others, but with a vigilant and self-reliant energy. That there might be no misunderstandings in the matter, a committee of five was appointed "to confer with the executive committee of the Home Missionary Society, expressing to it the confidence of the General Assembly, and the churches it represents, and requesting its co-operation in this plan, as far as its principles will admit, and also requesting a statement of the *principles on which its appropriations are made* to the *churches* of the *several denominations* of *Christians* who *support it*, and report the result to the next General Assembly."

One department, second to none in importance, both as a necessity of the work, and a bond of union to the church itself, viz., that of aiding feeble congregations in the erection of houses of worship, was not finally acted upon till the following year. The assembly of 1853, instituted a CHURCH ERECTION committee, and, following out a scheme devised and put in successful operation in Missouri, under the influence of Dr. Artemas Bullard, resolved to raise by contributions from the churches the sum of $100,000, which should constitute a *permanent fund* for that purpose.

As a further instrument of the new plan, the assembly at Washington took measures to encourage the agency of the periodical press as sustained by the friends of the church. An arrangement, partially effected with the New York *Evangelist*, and New York *Presbyterian*, then recently united, by which that paper should be made to subserve the interests of the denomination, received the approval of the Assembly; and the announcement of the recent establishment of a *quarterly*, to be called the PRESBYTERIAN QUARTERLY REVIEW, in the city of Philadelphia, and to be "under the control and superintendonce of several of the most distinguished ministers of our connection," called forth a warm expression of satisfaction, and a cordial recommendation of the enterprise.

The results of this Assembly were eminently gratifying to the friends of progress. The members went home to their presbyteries and churches feeling that a new era had at length opened on their beloved church. It had now fairly taken its stand as an independent body of Presbyterian Christians. It had abandoned, at

least for the present, all thought of reunion with the Old School, having made its last ineffectual effort, in 1849, in a proposition for friendly "correspondence," and with a solemn renewal of its declaration of "readiness to meet in a spirit of fraternal kindness and Christian love any overtures that may be made to *us* from the *other* body," resolved, in present circumstances, "to take no further action in the matter." In respect to the Congregational churches, while it still clung to the idea of co-operative or voluntary societies, regarding them, as they had been regarded by all parties at the beginning, simply as suitable *agencies* through which the *church might act*, they still claimed for themselves, as they freely conceded to their brethren, the right and duty to look after their own safety and prosperity as an organized body, and superintend and carry forward their own proper portion of the work of the gospel. The church had now, to a degree never felt before, the consciousness of a *mission* among the churches of Christ, and in the spirit of a sacred zeal, trusting in God, was resolved to hold on its way, and press forward in the holy rivalry of love and good works.

But the way was not as clear yet, as, perhaps, some sanguine men had supposed. It is the lot of men to encounter antagonisms, and that in the best pursuits and among the most sincere brethren. When the plans of the Assembly were adopted, there seemed no doubt that they could be carried into execution with the cordial concurrence of the Home Missionary Society. They were in full accordance with the principles on which that society was founded and which had been repeated again and again in its official documents. In

its earliest communications to the Christian public, it had invited ecclesiastical bodies, "presbyteries, and synods," to become its auxiliaries, and pledged itself, in the most explicit manner, not to interfere in the slightest degree with their denominational preferences or their denominational work. "It had no desire," it said, "did it possess the power, to assume the control of missionary effort on the field, any further than it should be conceded by the confidence of the public." It aimed only "to be the servant of all in building the house of Jehovah in the length and breadth of the land." This is strong language; but the founders of the society did not mean to be misunderstood. These pledges, had they been steadily adhered to, would have secured every object which the General Assembly had in view. The rules which the society had adopted were good in the main. But they left unprovided for some objects which the Assembly thought quite indispensable to the prosperity of its churches. And how were these to be supplied? The question was asked, Cannot the society so modify its rules as to include them? This it declined to do, for reasons of which it was competent to judge. But its executive committee agreed with the Assembly's committee, that it was better, on the whole, that cases of that class should be provided for "by such local arrangements as would not divert funds from the Home Missionary Society." So far all seemed satisfactory. The Assembly's committee made a temporary arrangement with a few individuals in Philadelphia, to supply the means, and the work was commenced. But finding that arrangement not sufficiently reliable, the Assembly, at length, made a more adequate provision,

THIRD CHURCH, PITTSBURGH, PA.

by the establishment, in 1855, of its CHURCH EXTENSION COMMITTEE.

The functions of this committee were strictly limited. It was not to be in "an Ecclesiastical Board," or "to interfere with the proper functions of the Home Missionary Society;" but only to provide for those exceptional cases which, being important to be met, could not well be included under the society's general rules. The committee, in their Declaration of Principles, on which they proposed to govern themselves, and which were afterwards sanctioned by the Assembly, are careful to say: "We have no wish to divert funds from the Home Missionary Society. On the contrary, we hope and expect that this supplementary agency, by increasing light, will tend, both directly and indirectly, to enhance the receipts of the society. We feel quite sure, that the ends of our appointment will be most fully accomplished by preserving, if possible, unharmed, the holy ties of fraternal love and confidence which have so long united us and our Congregational brethren, in furthering, at home and all over the earth, the kingdom of our blessed Lord."

But times had changed, and were changing rapidly; and what would once have been regarded as a matter of mutual congratulation was now looked upon with distrust or severely censured. For several years there had been a growing jealousy between the two denominations co-operating in the society, especially at the West. It was gradually infecting public opinion at the East, and was industriously fomented by a portion of the eastern press. The correspondence between the Assembly and some of the Congregational bodies had

begun to be disturbed by it. The plan of union abrogated by the Old School, in 1837, as subversive of Presbyterianism, had been abolished by the convention at Albany, in 1852, as injurious to Congregational interests. Congregationalism, once contented with its New England home, and regarding New School Presbyterianism as its best representative in other parts of the country, had now, as it had a perfect right to do, entrenched itself at the commercial centre, and was spreading itself as a distinct denomination over all parts of the Western field. The competition was sharp. And the question of slavery, in this, as in everything else, took its share as a disturbing element.

In these circumstances, the society, or rather its executive committee, allowed themselves to be drawn into the controversy. Their position was no doubt a difficult one. They made it worse by undertaking to arbitrate between two great rival denominations, and assuming to control the policy, at least, of one of them. In various quarters, in the Congregational ranks, the action of the General Assembly, in the establishment of its *Church Extension Committee*, was denounced as an unfair and unfriendly attempt to gain denominational advantage. The society took up the contest, and proceeded to execute, according to its own discretion, rules, excluding from the benefit of the common fund, to which the Presbyterian church largely contributed, both missionaries and churches who did not themselves, or who *belonged to ecclesiastical bodies who did not* "contribute to the funds of the society, according to the *full measure of their ability;*" that is, as the practice under those rules showed who did not make the society their

exclusive agent in Home Missionary work. All the churches of one presbytery were excluded because *one* prominent *church* in that presbytery gave its collections to a feeble church at its side; and those of another, because the *presbytery*, as such, employed a considerable portion of its contributions, as it had always done, in sustaining its own itinerant missionary. Congregational bodies, it is true, took the same liberties. But then, as they were only voluntary associations, individual churches were not held responsible for their action. The adoption of this policy, as might naturally have been expected, called forth loud remonstrances. By impairing confidence in the impartiality of the society, it did no doubt divert funds from its treasury. It increased rapidly the work of the *Church Extension Committee*, and made it necessary for the Assembly to enlarge its functions. To aggravate the growing difficulty, the society claimed to sit in judgment on the position of the churches, in regard to the vexed question of slavery, and to determine, as a condition of aid, whether or not the decisions of the Assembly on that subject were satisfactorily carried into execution.

It was in this posture of affairs that the Assembly came together at Wilmington, in the year 1857, and the complaints were urgent. It was plain that some decisive action must be taken. The society, from being, as it declared itself at the beginning, "the servant of all," was becoming, unconsciously perhaps, and by the force of circumstances, the master of all. The Assembly could not submit to the new policy without sacrificing its own independence, and allowing an irresponsible body, com-

posed of different denominations, to interfere, both with its policy and its ecclesiastical discipline.

That it might not act without a full understanding of the case, a commission was raised with directions to ascertain, by a thorough investigation, the facts in the case, and to procure such other information as may be in their power, relating to the history of our connection with the work of Home Missions, and our present relations to it; also, to learn the principles and modes of administration of the American Home Missionary Society over the entire field of its operations, and to submit the whole, well authenticated, to the next General Assembly.

In pursuance of the object of their appointment, the commission during the year, made a thorough examination of the historical documents, compiled from the publications of the society a careful estimate of contributions and benefactions, instituted an extensive correspondence, conferred in writing with the executive committee of the society, and prepared an extended report which they presented to the General Assembly convened at Pittsburg, in 1860.

It was now clear that a separation must take place. The Assembly came reluctantly to the conclusion. The churches had been warmly attached to the society. In the whole system of voluntary societies, there were none which they regarded as so emphatically their own. It was founded chiefly by Presbyterians, and sustained by them several years before their Congregational brethren came into it. They had important interests, moral and pecuniary, involved in it. And if part they must, they desired earnestly to part amicably and with a fair ad-

justment of all mutual claims. To accomplish, if possible, this object, the Assembly made one more effort at conference; and, since the society held no meetings, except once a year, and those but formal ones and with out an adequate representation, it resorted to the appointment of a committee, with instructions to invite the appointment of corresponding committees by the associations with which the Assembly was in correspondence, to confer with reference to the adjustment of their and our mutual relations with the society, and, if a separation should be found necessary, to agree upon equitable terms. This proposition was declined. Most of the associations declared their approval of the offensive acts of the society and saw no good to be expected from negotiations.

The next year the Assembly withdrew, leaving be hind all the interests of its churches in an institution which they had done so much to build up; leaving also, for the sole benefit of the sister denomination, all the unexpended funds and legacies, some of which were large, of Presbyterian contributors. The committee of conference, in accordance with the duty assigned them by the Assembly, "to recommend to that body such plans and measures pertaining to the Home Missionary work, as they may deem wise and necessary," presented a constitution, carefully drawn up, in the adoption of which the Assembly resolved, that "the General Assembly, in accordance with the obvious indications of providence, and agreeably to the constitution of the church (Form of Gov. xviii.), assumes the responsibility of conducting the work of Home Missions within its bounds." To this end, the Assembly hereby insti

tutes a permanent committee, to be known as the PRESBYTERIAN COMMITTEE OF HOME MISSIONS.

The Church Extension Committee, of which the lamented Dr. Wallace was the indefatigable secretary, discharged its difficult and responsible trust, during the six years of its continuance, with eminent wisdom and fidelity, and with perfect good faith to all parties. In all that time it never had a divided vote, and to its agency it is largely due that the church, in that critical period, was not only preserved from disintegration, but advanced in prosperity and usefulness.

This was the only serious collision which the New School ever had with their Congregational brethren. Some misunderstandings threatened at one time to disturb their relations with the American Board. But the prompt and fraternal manner in which the Board met the case in their action at Newark, in 1856, and again at Philadelphia, in 1859, quelled at once the rising discontent; and from that time the harmonious co-operation of the two parties in that most beneficent institution, has continued unabated to this hour.

We have had occasion to glance more than once at the question of slavery. The relations of the New School Church to that subject demand a much fuller consideration than the limits of this chapter will allow. Probably no denomination of Christians in the land has devoted a larger, if so large a portion of its time and strength to the discussion of it. It finds a record in the minutes of almost every Assembly, from the organization of the separate body till the providence of God, forcing on the issue, took it out of the range of deliberation. In 1846, nearly the whole time was con-

sumed with it. The roll was called, alternating between the top and the bottom, to give every member, northern or southern, conservative or radical, a full and equal opportunity to express his opinions. At the close, resolutions were adopted by a large majority, — 92 to 29, — declaring "the system as it exists in the United States, viewed either in the laws of the several states which sanction it, or in its actual operation and results in society, an intrinsically unrighteous and oppressive system, and opposed to the principles of the law of God, the precepts of the Gospel, and the best interests of humanity." The Assembly of 1849, in a paper occupying four pages of the minutes, recites the action of former Assemblies, and, while deprecating all harsh and indiscriminate judgments, exhorts all under its care to do their utmost, and "make all necessary sacrifices to remove this foul blot on our holy religion," and specifies certain evils incident to the system, as the buying and selling of slaves by way of traffic, and the separation of families, as "evils which should be corrected by discipline." The Assembly of 1850, after another long discussion running through nearly a week, adopted by a majority of 87 to 16 the article known, from the place of meeting, as "the Detroit resolution:" That "the holding of our fellow-men in the condition of slavery, except in those cases where it is unavoidable by the laws of the state, the obligations of guardianship, or the demands of humanity, is an offence in the proper import of that term, as used in the Book of Discipline, chap. i. sec. 3, and should be regarded and treated as other offences." The Assembly of 1853 reaffirms the Detroit resolution, exhorts to "patience and fraternal confidence

towards brethren who are subject to embarrassments from which we are happily free," and in order to correct misapprehensions, and allay irritations by a knowledge of the real facts, requests the presbyteries in the slave-holding states, to lay before the next general Assembly distinct statements respecting the number of slaves and slave-holders in the churches, how far they are included in the excepted cases of the Detroit resolution, and what regard is paid to the parental and conjugal relations and the religious needs, privileges, and well-being of the enslaved. To this request there were urgent protests: it was pronounced unconstitutional and offensive, and was never complied with. In 1856, both the Assemblies met in the city of New York, and were numerously attended. The question came up on the report of a committee on the constitutional powers of the General Assembly. It was ably debated; and the southern brethren by general consent occupied a large proportion of the time. They put a special construction of their own on the Detroit resolution, frankly acknowledged that the views of the South, their own among the rest, had materially changed in regard to the alleged evil of slavery, and did not hesitate openly to avow that they now *accepted the system* of *slavery*. The report of the committee, which was a guarded one, and carefully limited the constitutional powers of the Assembly, was adopted, and the report of the minority, a document covering eight pages, contrary to the custom, was, at the request of the southern members, printed side by side with it in the minutes.

The Assembly of 1857 found itself in a new posture of affairs. Developments had been made during the

year, which seemed to call for the most explicit declarations. The Presbytery of Lexington, Ky., gave official notice, that a number of its ministers and ruling elders held slaves from *principle* and of *choice*, believing it to be, according to the *Bible*, *right;* and that they, without qualification, assumed the responsibility of sustaining them in so doing." This position, the Assembly felt itself called upon pointedly to condemn, and while still expressing "a tender sympathy for those who deplore the evil and are honestly doing all in their power for the present well-being of their slaves, and for their complete emancipation, declared emphatically, "Such *doctrines and practices cannot permanently be tolerated in the Presbyterian Church.*"

The question had now reached its final issue. The Assembly, planting itself upon the well-defined principles of the Presbyterian Church from the beginning hitherto, had only to abide the result. The southern synods, determined to stand or fall by the new doctrines, immediately withdrew from the body, and formed themselves into a separate body called the UNITED SYNOD OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

In all this procedure, two things mark the conduct of the Assembly; viz., a firm and explicit condemnation of the whole system of slavery, on the one hand, and a considerate and charitable regard for the circumstances of those connected with it, on the other. Its action was, all the way, decisive and yet conservative, resolute to destroy the tares, yet tenderly careful not to root up the wheat with them.

The New School Presbyterian Church had now gone through its last conflict, and, deeply as it regretted the

loss of so many valued brethren, perceiving that there was no alternative, acquiesced cheerfully, and felt itself only the stronger for its diminished numbers. The terrible struggle through which the country was about to pass, and by which other bodies were so sorely agitated, found them a unit. Their views in respect to it, were outspoken and unanimous; their position was unambiguous and well understood; and it is no disparagement to any others, to say that, in respect to loyalty to the government, and readiness to make any sacrifices for the salvation of the country in the time of need, none were more prompt and earnest, whether in the Assembly or the pulpit, in the social circle or on the field of battle. All their church judicatories spoke one voice, and all their pulpits rang out clear and strong, the obligations and incitements of Christian Patriotism.

On this point, the General Assembly led the way, and set the example. At the meeting in Syracuse, in 1861, just after the commencement of the war, "the absorbing topic that is pressing upon the heart of the whole country," says the *Presbyterian Quarterly Review*, "it now appeared was the first to occupy the Assembly." Meetings for prayer, and discussion on the state of the country, were held on three successive evenings, and "the deepest enthusiasm was manifested." A carefully prepared paper was adopted, in which, after stating the main facts of the rebellion, and citing the patriotic words of the old Synod of New York and Philadelphia, at the opening of the war of the Revolution, in 1775, the Assembly declared: "We should be recreant to our high trust, were we to withhold an earnest protest against all such unlawful and treasonable acts:" and, in pursuance of this declaration, —

"*Resolved*, 3. That inasmuch as we believe, according to our Form of Government, that God, the Supreme Judge and King of all the world, has ordained civil magistrates to be under him, over the people, for his own glory and the public good, and to this end hath armed them with the power of the sword for the defence and encouragement of them that are good, and for the punishment of evil-doers, there is, in the judgment of the Assembly, no *blood or treasure too precious to be devoted to the defence and perpetuity of the government in all its constitutional authority.*"

The Assembly at Cincinnati, in 1862, again referring to the same explicit words of our Form of Government, condemning the rebellion, approving the war as just and necessary, expressing great confidence in the President and his cabinet, the commanders of the army and navy, the soldiers, etc., and recording the opinion, that, "This whole insurrectionary movement can be traced to one primordial root, and one only — African slavery and the love of it, and the determination to make it perpetual:"

"*Resolved*, 7. That we here, in deep humility for our sins and the sins of our nation, and in heartfelt devotion, lay ourselves, with all we are and have, on the altar of God and our country; and we hesitate not to pledge the churches and all Christian people under our care, as ready to join with us in the same fervent sympathies, and united prayers, that our rulers in the cabinet, and our commanders in the field and on the waters, and the brave men under their leadership, may take courage under the assurance that the PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF THE UNITED STATES *are with them with heart and*

hand, in life and death, in this fearful existing contest!" A copy of the resolutions was sent to the President, accompanied by a letter expressing "in a more personal manner, the sentiments of the church in reference to himself, and the great issues with which he was called to deal." "Since the day of your inauguration," they say, "the thousands of our membership have followed you with unceasing prayer, beseeching the throne of grace in your behalf." "In our great church courts, in our lesser judicatures, in our weekly assemblages, in the house of God, at our family altars, in the inner place of prayer, you have been the burden of our petitions." "We give praise not to man, but to God. In your firmness, your integrity, challenging the admiration even of your enemies, your moderation, your wisdom, the timeliness of your acts exhibited at critical junctures, your paternal words, so eminently fitting the chosen head of a great people, we recognize the hand and power of God." Expressing their "deep sympathy" with him in his great trust, and in the depth of his then recent personal bereavement, pledging him "all the support that loyal hearts can offer," referring to the sons of the church, ministers, and others, who had served, and some of them died in the common cause, and adding, in regard to the latter, "we are glad that we have given them: we gladly pledge as many more as the cause of our country may demand," it concludes thus: "We believe there is but one path before this people: this gigantic and inexpressibly wicked rebellion must be destroyed; the interests of humanity, the temple of God and his church, demand it at our hands. May God give to you his great support, preserve you,

impart to you more than human wisdom, and permit you ere long, to rejoice in the deliverance of our beloved country, in peace and unity."

To this warm-hearted, as well as patriotic letter, the President returned, through the Secretary of State, the following reply: —

"DEPARTMENT OF STATE, June 7, 1861.

To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States holding its Annual Session in the city of Cincinnati: —

"REVEREND GENTLEMEN, — I have had the honor of receiving your address to the President of the United States, and the proceedings of your venerable body on the subject of the existing insurrection, by which that address was accompanied.

"These papers have been submitted to the President. I am instructed to convey to you his most profound and grateful acknowledgements, for the fervent assurances of support and sympathy which they contain. For many years hereafter, one of the greatest subjects of felicitation among good men will be, the signal success of the government of the United States in preserving our federal union, which is the ark of civil and religious liberty on this continent, and throughout the world. All the events of our generation which preceded this attempt at revolution, and all that shall happen after it, will be deemed unimportant in consideration of that one indispensable and invaluable achievement. The men of our generation whose memory will be the longest and the most honored, will be they who thought the most earnestly, prayed the most fervently, hoped the

most confidently, fought the most heroically, and suf fered the most patiently, in the sacred cause of freedom and humanity. The record of the action of the Pres byterian Church, seems to the President worthy of its traditions and its aspirations, as an important branch of the church founded by the Saviour of men."

"Commending our yet distracted country to the interposition and guardian care of the Ruler and Judge of nations, the President will persevere, steadily and hopefully, in the great work committed to his hands, relying upon the virtue and intelligence of the people of the United States, and the candor and benevolence of all good men."

"I have the honor to be, Reverend Gentlemen,

"Your very obedient servant,

"WILLIAM H. SEWARD."

The Assembly met in Philadelphia, 1863, at a perilous crisis. The national heart had been wrung to the core by the defeats of the previous summer. The *conscription* was in process of enforcement, and treason and semi-treason were bold and boastful. The Assembly reaffirmed all the principles and declarations of previous assemblies on this subject, declared it to be "the religious duty of all good citizens promptly and cheerfully to sustain the government by every means in their power, and stand by it in its peril;" that "loyalty, unreserved and unconditional, to the constitutionally elected government of the United States, not as the transient passion of the hour, but as the intelligent and permanent state of the public conscience, is not only a sacred Christian obligation, but indispensible, if we

would save the nation;" that "the Proclamation of Emancipation, issued by the President," is to be recognized "with devout gratitude," as a fruit of the "wonder-working power of God:" and exhorted all the churches and ministers, "to stand by their country, to pray for it, to discountenance all forms of complicity with treason — having on this subject one heart and one mind; waiting hopefully on providence; patient amid delays; undaunted by reverses; persistent and untiring in effort, until, by the blessing of God, the glorious motto, *One Country and Constitution, and one Destiny*, shall be enthroned as the sublime fact of the present, and the sublime harbinger of the future." A copy of the whole paper was transmitted to the President, and appointed to be read in all our pulpits.

The utterances of the Assembly of 1864 were of the same tenor, reaffirming the previous action, recognizing the good hand of God in the disappointments and delays of the war, exhorting to renewed zeal, and urging all Christians to refrain from weakening the administration by "ill-timed complaints," "and from all speech and action which tend to difference."

When the Assembly of 1867 met in Brooklyn, the rebellion was conquered; but the final stroke which struck down the beloved and honored chief of the nation had filled all loyal hearts with the profoundest horror. The Assembly recognized with joy and thankfulness, the divine goodness in the happy termination of the war, and added its emphatic declaration, "that in our opinion a nation like ours, whose corner-stone is equal rights, cannot permanently prosper, nor be exempt from future convulsions unless the principles of

civil and religious liberty are firmly carried out and fully applied, with only just and healthful limitations, without reference to *class or color, to all the people.* Neither the law nor the Gospel, when rightly understood, will allow us to exclude from the rights and privileges of free men, those who are citizens like ourselves, many of whom have imperilled their lives in this conflict."

The tribute of this Assembly to the excellences of the martyred President, will form a fitting conclusion of what we have here to say on this subject: "In his life, he struck the chains from the trembling limbs of millions, vindicated the rights of humanity, and illustrated the glory of a patriotism made strong by devout confidence in God; in his death, he touched the cords of sympathy in the heart of universal man, and won over to our holy cause, every true lover of his race, every soul in which dwells the hope of freedom."

The unanimity which pervaded every Assembly during all this period was very remarkable, and illustrates in an eminent degree, the wisdom of that freedom of discussion, and that frankness and firmness of testimony which, in all matters pertaining to the interests of the country, and the rights, as well as duties of man, had characterized their procedure from the beginning.

We shall be obliged, for want of space, to pass hastily over the years of steadily increasing prosperity which succeeded these conflicts. We may say of them, in words borrowed from an earlier history, "Then had the church rest, and was edified, and, walking in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Ghost, was multiplied." Its several departments of self-developing

and evangelizing work had now attained their full organization, and were in vigorous and hopeful operation.

"The Presbyterian Committee of Home Missions" was organized in 1861, and has been steadily increasing in efficiency. Its receipts, the first year, were $27,244, and the number of its missionaries 195. In 1869, it had 465 missionaries and an income of $162,421. Its missionaries report 70 new churches formed during the year, 2,400 hopeful conversions, and 2,191 added to the churches on profession of their faith. The freedmen's department, organized in 1865, received and expended, during the same year, about $16,000, and reports 79 teachers employed and 20 others under appointment — all in the southern States.

"The Trustees of the Church Erection Fund," appointed in 1854, were incorporated by the Legislature of the State of New York, in the year following. The original basis of their operations was the permanent fund of $100,000, raised by contributions from the churches, most of it in the year 1854, the *interest* to be employed in promoting the object *chiefly* in the way of *loans.* The establishment of this fund operated as a strong bond of union in the church. In the year 1866, the basis was enlarged, and an annual contribution ordered, and freer disbursements. Since that time this organization has been rapidly growing in importance, and now stands in the very first rank of the evangelizing agencies of the church. In 1869, it reports an increase of $54,996, and of churches aided about 70.

The "Permanent Committee on Education for the Ministry," organized in 1856, came slowly into opera-

tion, moulding its plans gradually, and embarrassed by the remains of the old voluntary system. In 1869, its income amounted to $26,569, and the number of its beneficiaries to 210; viz., 63 in the theological, 102 in the collegiate, and 45 in the preparatory department.

The Committee "on Doctrinal Tracts," organized in 1852, has become the "Presbyterian Publication Committee." In 1869, its income from all sources was $66,214, of which $6,851 was expended in its *purely benevolent* work.

"The Trustees of the Presbyterian House" located in Philadelphia and incorporated by the Legislature of Pennsylvania, hold for the uses of the church a valuable property, purchased chiefly by donations made by individuals in the city of Philadelphia, now estimated to be worth more than one hundred thousand dollars. Under their charge has been placed the Ministerial Relief Fund, managed by an executive committee, which commenced its operations in 1864. In 1869, they report $13,465 received from ordinary sources, and $8,200 a special donation towards a permanent fund; also 29 disabled ministers aided, 33 widows, and 4 families of orphans. The average age of the ministers was 76 years, and of their ministry 40 years.

The Assembly has also a Permanent Committee on Foreign Missions whose functions are not the raising and distributing of funds or the conducting of missions, but the supervising of our part of the work and reporting the results to the Assembly. From their report, in 1869, it appears that our contributions for that year to the American Board were, in money, about $93,643, and in laborers, 71; viz., 52 male and 19 female mission-

aries. In 1868 the contributions were $110,602; in 1867, $110,725.

The literary and theological institutions with which the New School Church has been connected, are independent in their control and management, though in perfect harmony with it, for the most part, in their views and aims. It was no part of its original policy, even where it had a controlling influence, to establish an organic connection.

Marysville College, in East Tennessee, was founded in 1819. It had a theological department, and, of its graduates, 120 have found their way into the ministry. Its work was suspended during the war, but resumed in 1866. Efforts are now in progress for its endowment, towards which $65,000 have been pledged.

Of Hamilton College, President Brown remarks: "The relations of the college to the Presbyterian Church are very intimate. It is under no ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and is liberal in its general policy, but the large majority of its trustees, officers, and students are connected with that church. It is prosperous and growing, and during the period of the separation has graduated 923 pupils, and added $300,000 to its property." That eminent benefactor of the church, John C. Baldwin, recently deceased, has made the college one of four, his residuary legatees.

In the valley of the Mississippi, where the New School at the time of the disruption found its chief field of labor and promise, there is a cluster of colleges, some of which were then in their infancy, and others sprang into being soon after, — Western Reserve, Marietta, Illinois, Wabash, Knox, and Beloit. They were founded,

for the most part, by Presbyterians, and sustained largely by New England liberality. In these, Presbyterians and Congregationalists have a joint interest, though some have come to lean chiefly to the one denomination, and some to the other. In a most critical period of their history, they were sustained, if not saved from utter extinction, by the timely aid of that unpretending, but most useful, organization, "The Society for promoting Collegiate and Theological Education at the West." Its indefatigable secretary, the Rev. Theron Baldwin, D.D., a man as noble, energetic, and far-seeing as he was unassuming and modest, — a Presbyterian at the beginning, a Congregationalist afterwards, a sectarian never, — was for more than a quarter of a century the life and soul of the institution; and the cause of Christian learning in our land (especially at the West), which now joins his many personal friends in their sorrows over his new-made grave, will hold his stainless memory in devout admiration as long as such learning retains a place in the hearts of American Christians.

Illinois, Knox, and Beloit are now chiefly Congregational; though they have been largely patronized by Presbyterians and done them much valuable service.

Western Reserve was founded in 1826, and was regarded with special interest by the New School Church in its early struggles, for the theological department attached to it. President Hitchcock says of the college, in 1868: "Its number of alumni is 319. Of these, more than one-third are ministers of the gospel." Among them are not a few Home and Foreign Missionaries.

Wabash College was founded in 1832. "On the 23d of November," says President Tuttle, "five ministers

and three laymen met, and counselled, and prayed, and resolved to go forward." "They selected the spot, drove a stake to mark it, and all kneeled down in the snow, and consecrated the proposed enterprise to God." Its alumni, in 1868 were 199. It has seen hard times, but is now free from debt, has a permanent endowment of $105,000, a library of 10,000 volumes, and several thousands of acres of wild lands, on which to found golden expectations. This college is another of the residuary legatees named in the will of the late Mr. John C. Baldwin.

Marietta College graduated its first class in 1838. The history of its struggles and triumphs is much like that of the other two. Its graduates number 298, of whom 115 are devoted to the ministry. During twenty-five years, the West has raised for its use $150,000. Its property now amounts to $180,000.

Lake Forest has as yet no organized collegiate department, but the Preparatory department and Female seminary are well established and prosperous; and the property and funds may be safely valued at from $250,000 to $300,000. It is "wholly under Presbyterian control." There is also the beginning of a college enterprise in Iowa, for which there is a property of perhaps $50,000 in value.

Of the Theological Seminaries, Auburn is the oldest. It was founded in 1819; it has a professorship fund of $125,000, an education fund of $65,000, a small library fund, and a library of 8,000 volumes. The corner-stone of a new library building has just been laid, to be erected through the munificence of Hon. Wm. E. Dodge, and Hon. E. B. Morgan. Its graduates number

not far from 950, of whom 550 were graduated since 1838.

Lane Seminary went into full operation as a theological institution, in 1832. The history of its early hopes, embarrassments, struggles, disappointments, and successes, is one of uncommon interest. Some of the ablest names in the church are to be found in the catalogue of its faculty. The receipts in 1869, were $27,041. During the separation, there has been contributed to its funds about $120,000. The whole number of its graduates is 481.

Union Theological Seminary is the youngest of the three. It was organized in 1836, and was incorporated by the Legislature of the State of New York, March 17, 1839. The design of the founders as expressed in the constitution, was "to provide a Theological Seminary in the midst of the greatest and most growing community, which may commend itself to all men of moderate views who desire to live free from party strife, and to stand aloof from all extremes of doctrine or of practice." Every director on entering upon his office, and every member of the faculty, triennally, or as often as required by the board, must declare his approval of the Westminster Confession of Faith, and the Presbyterian form of church government, and promise to maintain them in the discharge of the duties of his office. The institution has been eminently prosperous, its property exceeds half a million, and measures are already in operation for securing for it half a million more. It has a library of great value, containing about 35,000 volumes. Its graduates number 853, among whom are a very large proportion of Domestic and Foreign Mission-

aries. The Seminary is not under ecclesiastical control, but is, in a measure, under the supervision of the two nearest synods, who appoint annually a committee to attend the examinations and report.

The beginning of a Theological School for the education of ministers for the GERMANS, in which instruction is to be given both in German and English, has been made, during the past year, at Newark, N.J., with encouraging success.

The periodical literature of the New School church deserves honorable mention. Besides other local papers, the *American Presbyterian*, at Philadelphia, has shown a warm zeal for its interests, and the New York *Evangelist* has done it excellent service. Much credit is due to the *Presbytery Reporter*, a monthly published at Alton, Ill., now in its eighth volume, for the ability and faithfulness with which it has watched over the interests of the church in the North-west. During the ten critical years, from 1852 to 1862, the PRESBYTERIAN QUARTERLY REVIEW, ably conducted by an association of ministers in Philadelphia, defended its cause and was an honor to its Christian intelligence. The AMERICAN THEOLOGICAL REVIEW, founded in 1859, on a basis not distinctly denominational, and united with the *Presbyterian Review* in 1863, combining the names and objects of both, has, under the charge of Prof. H. B. Smith, its editor from the beginning, assumed and secured a place second to none in the land.

The general statistical results of the thirty years of the separate existence of the church, will be given in the appendix, by a more accurate and practised hand. It need only be said here, that with some vicissitudes,

the body has made steady progress both in strength and numbers. The sifting process referred to in the early period, and the retirement from it of the southern synods in 1857, greatly reduced its numbers, but they were soon replenished; and whereas, in 1843, there were but 94 Presbyteries, 1,263 ministers, and 1,496 churches, in 1869, there were 113 Presbyteries, 1,848 ministers, and 1,631 churches. It would be instructive could we trace its fortunes in its local developments, in cities and towns and in the new territories of an advancing country. In some places the progress has been cheering, in others slow and embarrassed. For example, in Cincinnati and St. Louis, neither branch of the church has gained much during the whole period, owing partly, it is believed, to mutual jealousies. In Chicago, since the year 1842, the advance has been rapid. Whereas, then, there was but one church, and that in an uncertain condition, now there are in the city, or closely connected with it, fifteen, and they are all flourishing. In Missouri, under the energetic influence of Dr. Artemas Bullard and his associates, the growth was rapid till about 1856; then, owing to the growing influence of slavery, the decline was constant till the war began and everything was thrown into confusion. Since the war, New School men have met a hearty welcome in the regenerated State, and now it shows a larger roll of ministers, churches, and members than ever before. Somewhat similar has been the case of East Tennessee, where we have now 38 churches and an encouraging opening for the future. In Kansas, not much was accomplished till 1838, when a band of eight young men from one class in Union Seminary, entered

the State, and the success was signal. In October of that year, ten young men were ordained at the same meeting of presbytery, and now we have a Synod of Kansas with three presbyteries, thirty-one ministers, and forty-one churches; and the work of exploration, organization, and church erection is going rapidly forward.

The position of the New School Church towards the Reunion requires but a word here, as that will be the subject of another chapter. Suffice it to say, that position has been throughout frank, cordial, and remarkably unanimous. The ill success of their early efforts seemed to forbid their again taking the initiative; and, on strictly denominational grounds, they had no desire to contract new relations. After many discouragements and long struggles they had won a place among the branches of the church of Christ, in their own esteem inferior to none. Their organization for church work was completed, and seemed, from experience, to have some special advantages. They understood each other perfectly, and were happy with each other. They loved their own church, and the name New School had come to have very pleasant and inspiring associations. They shrunk from breaking up old ties and forming new ones, which might, for aught they knew, lead to new complications. But they looked to the common interest of the Presbyterian cause and especially of the cause of Christ, and had no hesitation. It may be confidently affirmed that, among all the parties now brought together in the happy union of which this volume is a memorial, none worked harder or prayed more fervently, or were more willing to make

every reasonable sacrifice, to bring about the blessed consummation.

As to the Basis on which the Reunion stands, the members of the now historical New School Church have nothing more to desire. "The standards pure and simple" have ever *been* their preferred standards. When they stood alone, in the days when suspicion was thrown by some upon their orthodoxy, their General Assembly, again and again, enjoined upon their churches "the faithful use of the Westminster Catechism, in the instruction of the young." If any ask for a more explicit exposition of the particular *phase* of Calvinistic doctrine which should be distinguished as "New School Theology," they will find none so likely to be accepted as such, by the *larger number*, as that first drawn up by Dr. Baxter Dickinson, and afterwards formally adopted, under the title of "Errors and True Doctrine," by the convention at Auburn, in 1837, of which Dr. James Richards, of Auburn was the President, and nearly two hundred ministers and laymen, the very flower of the New School body, were the members. But, in truth, there *is* no such phase of theology, which either the body as a whole, or its theological seminaries would agree to distinguish by that name. They take the standards of the Presbyterian Church just as they are — the Bible as "the only infallible rule of faith and practice," and the Confession of Faith "as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures." Further than that, they give, and claim from others *no pledges*, — they give and take reasonable *liberty*.

The task assigned to the writer of this chapter is now finished. It has been a pleasant task, though a

laborious and painstaking one. As he has gone from page to page of the annals, covering a period of more than thirty years, memories both sad and animating have, in turn, taken possession of his thoughts. The New School Presbyterian Church need not be ashamed of its history. Noble men and noble deeds stud the line of its fortunes. It has met frankly and earnestly every question of the day, as affecting the moral and religious interests of man and the cause of Christ, and pronounced judgments and assumed positions which it has no occasion to retract. It has grappled with difficulties before which any but resolute, courageous, and believing men would have succumbed. It has risen above them. The conviction is deepened, as we examine its records, that we have here a band of true, trusty, intelligent, well-grounded, liberal Presbyterian Christians, — men who can re-examine and test, over and over, the foundations of their faith, and stand only the more strongly and squarely upon them; eminently catholic towards all Christian denominations, eminently loyal to their own chosen standard. The contribution which they now bring to the United Presybterian Church, in strength, wisdom, activity, and resources, is one worthy of its acceptance. They will stand by it, as they have hitherto stood by their own particular branch of it, in the spirit of a true self-devotion, and a firm, courageous trust in the divine promises.

And now the long and troubled drama of New and Old School is at length finished. The seal is on the past, and the future, with its responsibilities, opens before us. And now, forgetting the things that are behind, all the grudges, all the alienations and rivalries

of the past, and reaching forth to those things which are before, what have we, but to press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus? The church expects of us, — the world with all its sorrows and sins, well aware that the true church is by its vocation the salt of the earth and the light of the world, expects of us, — more than all, the Master himself expects, — that we, thus favored in the happy healing of our long-broken unity, should now unite our force in one harmonious, resolute, persevering effort for the salvation of our race and the spread of the benign principles of our Holy Religion.