

REPLY TO
Dr. S. I. Baird's
PAMPHLET

IN FAVOR OF

ORGANIC UNION

—BY—

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Dr. S. I. Baird on Reunion.

Among the papers drawn out by the organic Union movement is a pamphlet issued by Dr. Samuel I. Baird of the Presbytery of Greenbrier. It is the best discussion in point of ability we have ever yet seen favoring the proposal. It is by no means extreme in its advocacy; its main immediate purpose according to its own assertion is not Union, but to show how greatly the Northern Presbyterians are misunderstood by the Southern, and that the latter are even far more grievously involved in inconsistent dealing with the non-secular character of the Church than the former. In this assertion and in the attacks on the spirit and consistency of Drs. Dabney and Palmer, an extravagance of the churches is shown out of keeping with the manly integrity of the argument in other parts of the discussion, and also with the alleged want of zeal for the reunion of the Churches. While he makes a positive disclaimer that his discussion has not been pursued in the interest of the reunion and asserts that on that subject as matters now stand he "has no zeal," yet unquestionably the whole tendency, if not the design of the discussion is the ultimate reunion of the churches involving as a matter of course the loss of Southern independence and our entire subjection to Northern control. Even if this argument should succeed in vindicating the ecclesiastical purity of the Northern Church, there was something within us which brought to mind the inquiry of Dr. Caius when an intruder was found in his chamber, and certified to be a gentleman:

"Vat a shentleman do in my closet?"

If the New School element of the Northern Church has as thoroughly purged out the errors of Barnes, Bernan, and the Congregationalists who once destroyed the unity of their system as this argument of Dr. Baird's aims to show, it would be as far from advisable as ever for us to yield our autonomy to their numbers and correct sentiments. The Dutch Reformed and the Associate Reformed are both sound Presbyterian bodies, for the most part at least; yet no one has raised any issue, for an organic union, with them. But why not, if soundness is a reason for it? They are quietly doing their work; they are leaving us to do ours: our relations are recognized as settled; and peace prevails between these regiments of the King's army. Why not the same results from the same policy with the Northern Church? Admitting the full force of Dr. Baird's argument, its result, whatever may be its present design, is no more proved to be wise, safe, or consistent with duty than it was before the discussion was penned.

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Dr. Baird makes ten points, upon only a few of which we propose to make a few respectful comments. *First*, the Board question. *Second*, the Slave question. *Third*, Union of the Old and New School. *Fourth*, Political Action, Our Own Record. *Fifth*, Political Deliverances of the Northern Assemblies. *Sixth*, Comparative Demerits of the Two Records. *Seventh*, the Political Spirit here evinced. *Eighth*, The Walnut Street Church Case. *Ninth*, the Declaration and Testimony; and *Tenth*, the Results of our Discussion.

1. THE BOARD QUESTION.

We shall pass a part of this by, leaving it to others more familiar with the subject. All we have to say is, if Dr. Baird's account of the present organization of the Northern Boards is correct, they are no longer Boards, but Committees. They have been reduced from 120 members scattered over the country, so that a meeting was impossible to an average of 15, conveniently located to attend to business. The Honorary members buying their seats have been swept away, and the Board instead of an intermediate body between the Assembly and its work, is now the direct organ of the Court to do its work. This is a Committee. Dr. Baird says, that this is the result of Dr. Thornwell's discussion, in good measure at least in the Assembly of 1860, and of the Reunion in 1869. This influence of the Re-union was probably due to the influence of the New School. When they got sick of giving their work to the benefit of Congregationalism in 1854, they went manfully to work to do something for themselves. They set up a series of their own Boards as they called them. Openly disparaging the Boards of the Old School, they aimed to make their own agencies small in number, competent to work, and directly responsible to the Assembly. They were Committees in fact, not Boards. The distinction between Boards and Committees as developed in the facts, was simply the difference between a body so conditioned that it could not do its work, and one which could. The consequence was, the Board was nothing but an agent of the Assembly, to appoint those who did the work of the Church; the Board did not do it, but had it done. It was then demonstrated to be superfluous, for the Assembly could just as well appoint the Executive Committee, as the Board could do it. This distinction was pointed out by Robert J. Breckinridge, early after the disruption, who laid down then the guiding lines which have regulated all the subsequent modifications of the Board System, both in the Old School and Southern Church.

Stuart Robinson, while heartily praising in the *Baltimore Critic*, the course of the New School Assembly in 1854, laughed merrily at their claim to a new invention in the line of Boards, and quoting at length from the *Baltimore Literary and Religious Magazine*, proved their patent had been anticipated fifteen years before by the most obnoxious leader of the exscinders. If Dr. Baird is right in attributing to the Reunion of 1869 this modification of the Old School System, it is a little curious that the theoretic principles of Breckinridge should have gained supremacy at last in his own

Church by a circuitous route through the New School. Certainly so far as the *form* of the Northern Boards is concerned—there is no difference between their Boards and Committees, if Dr. Baird, rightly informs us. The whole Northern System according to this account has been brought into accord with the principles of Breckinridge and Thornwell. This statement of Dr. Baird, effectually spikes the gun of some of the advocates of Reunion, which roared to the assertion of the essential and high advantage of a Board over a Committee. We leave all account of the actual constitution and powers of the Northern Board, to those who have better opportunities of inquiry than we have.

Baltimore Literary and Religious Magazine, August, 1839; p. 378.

2. THE SLAVERY QUESTION.

Dr. Baird, touches briefly and less satisfactorily on this question than any other. Yet Paul's directions in Timothy are positive and pointed in two things concerning the moral element in the relation between master and servant. The command is given in more pointed and categorical terms, than in regard to many other points of both doctrine and duty—"these things teach and exhort." In case obedience is refused, the command is equally clear and imperative "from such withdraw thyself." The warrant to refuse a responsible union with any party refusing to teach the essential lawfulness of the relation of master and slave is as absolute as the command to teach it. Dr. Baird, makes three statements on this question, neither of which are we able to appreciate. He says, *first*: "the deliverances of 1818 and 1845, embody the present testimony of that Church," and that "if the New School Assembly adopted any sentiments, before or during the war, at variance with that deliverance (of which I am not aware), the Concurrent Declaration "in terms of Union annulled the action" We call the attention of the New School Press of the North to this assertion? Is it true? Have all the testimonies of the ardent, liberty loving New School Church of the North been swept away? Do they stand on the Old School Testimony of 1845? We should be delighted to hear it; *but is it true?*

The second statement of Dr. Baird, which we do not appreciate is that the testimony of 1818 was "in perfect accord" "with testimony of 1845." To this statement we must demur. We are not able to lay hands now on the two documents; but our recollection is so clear and decided that there was a marked difference in the two testimonies as to make us altogether skeptical of this assertion. The testimony of 1818 was constantly referred to by the New School abolitionists, and that of 1845 was constantly handled by them to the reproach of the Old School, so called, pro-slavery Church. The testimony of 1818, as we remember it, was even violent in the denunciation of slavery. That of 1845, was a calm statement of the Scripture doctrines upon it. If Dr. Baxter, who was in thorough accord with these views was ever implicated in the violent assertions of 1818, it was due simply we suppose to the fact that at

that day the views of Clarkson Wilberforce and the Quakers had permeated the whole English speaking world. All men at that day were more or less imbued with some modification of the idea that slavery was a moral evil. Yet, a change came, which might have been expected on the supposition that the Bible was the word of God. In two places on the Tables of Stone in the very letter of the Law, traced by the finger of God, this relation was recognized as lawful. All over the Bible the same idea was inculcated. Yet here is Christendom—the part of the world which recognizes the authority of the Scriptures, pervaded by the idea that this relation is a sin. What might have been expected? Nothing less than what happened, the excitement of inquiry until correct conceptions were formed on a scale sufficiently large at least to secure an efficient testimony to the Bible truth. Dr. Baxter, if he was concerned in the draught of 1818, clearly passed over upon scripture grounds and testified to the last with all his great abilities to the truth.

Since the above was in the hands of the printer, we have received the documentary evidence upon the deliverances of 1818 and 1845 on the subject of slavery. Our memory is confirmed; the two testimonies are directly opposed. The testimony of 1818, declares slavery "as utterly inconsistent with the law of God"—"as totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the Gospel of Christ."*

*Baird's Digest, p. 820.

The testimony of 1845, says: Among other things of the Apostle's teachings on slavery "that they did not denounce the relation itself as sinful, as inconsistent with Christianity."* The testimony of 1846 asserted boldly that the testimony of the Church was always substantially the same. The testimony of 1818 pronounced slavery a sin; that of 1845 pronounced it no sin. To call these testimonies the same is simply absurd. To say two and two make four, and two and two do not make four is flat contradiction. To say a thing "is totally irreconcilable with the spirit of the Gospel," and that it is not "inconsistent with Christianity" is a contradiction as flat.

*Baird's Digest, p. 823.

The *third* point of Dr. Baird which we do not appreciate, is "that he is at a loss to see upon what point or in what way the issue is to be made." Now here is a plain and positive requisition of the Holy Spirit of God that certain moral views are to be taught. If refused, He commands the obedient to *withdraw* from those who refuse to teach them. Here we are in a deliberate consideration of the question of uniting with another Church, and a Committee is actually on foot to inquire whether terms can be made practicable. Yet one of the ablest of our brethren can see no way in which the issue can be raised whether that Church will agree to teach with us on a moral issue which is made imperative on us in the *ipsissima verba* of the Holy spirit. There is no difficulty about raising the issue. Let our Committee of Inquiry simply ask the question, to be referred to the Northern United Assembly. That will make them face the

music. Our convictions are fixed; the testimony of our Church is clear in the open heavens of Christendom. We stand on positive commands of the Holy Spirit which we cannot evade, or empty of significance by any arts of interpretation. Nay, more, we feel a deep conviction that the world is yet to have use for these teachings of this Bible. They will never cease to be authoritative, never cease to be useful. The world has gone mad with the wild speculations upon freedom and equality. They are shaking the stability of property, the sanctities of domestic life, the existence of society itself. A great thinker long ago said:

"The parties in this conflict are not merely abolitionists and slave-holders—they are abolitionists, socialists, communists, red republicans, jacobins on the one side, and the friends of order and regulated freedom on the other. In one word, the world is the battle-ground—Christianity and Atheism the combatants; and the progress of humanity the stake."—Thornwell, *Southern Literary Messenger*, July, 1851.

The thirty-six years which have elapsed since these monitory words were spoken have only added proof to the truth asserted, and brought the dangerous issue fully within our American society. The Southern Church in all its various branches would be derelict to God and unfaithful to man if it abates one jot of its testimony, when required in the plainest words of the Holy Spirit. The issue *must* be raised and determined by the adhesion or refusal of the testimony before we can take one step without sin towards organic union. There is no difficulty about raising it, and no matter how disgusted Northerners or timid Southerners may deprecate it, we are compelled by the positive command of the Holy Ghost to raise it or refuse point-blank to obey those commands.

3. UNION OF THE OLD AND NEW SCHOOL.

Under this section of his discussion Dr. Baird enters upon an elaborate attempt to prove that none of the errors current among the New School party in 1837 were allowed entry into the United Church in 1869. He admits the errors current at the earlier period. He does not impeach the Old School testimonies of 1837 to the existence of these errors of doctrine, order and discipline. He enters into a formal announcement of the separate elements of the aggregated mischiefs. That aggregate consisted: 1. Of the Congregational elements which had reached a formidable development in the Presbyterian Church. 2. Those who were tainted with Pelagian Theology. 3. Those who preferred Voluntary Societies to the agencies of the Church; and 4. Those who disowned the excising acts. But a purging process began to take place, and continued from a period not very long after the establishment of the New School Church, until the church began to seek the development of her own life in 1854. Some hints are given in the negotiations of 1868 that some of these unassimilating Congregational elements were still in connection with the body. Consequently our essayist tells us the "result was, that when the two branches of the church reunited, there were very few remaining of the known teachers of error: and of the younger generation of preachers, graduates of Auburn and of Union in New York, the standard of orthodoxy was

probably to the full as high as those of the Old School Seminaries." Here it is acknowledged that up to the time of the reunion, there were some few remaining teachers of error. What with these and the Congregational Churches remaining, it is clear the Old School in 1869 did embrace a body in which some of the errors in doctrine and order which their fathers repudiated in 1837, still existed. Giving credit, however to the statements of Dr. Baird, it would seem that the New School had become more fully orthodox than at the beginning, though even then it is possible the sound Presbyterians may have been in the majority. We would like to know what was the status and authority of *Barnes' Commentaries* among them at the time of the Reunion, as bearing on this question of soundness in the body at large. Can any one tell us? It is very certain that for many years after the Disruption he was the leading authority; the shelves of the New School book-stores groaned under successive editions of his works; and it was stated in a responsible publication (*Cheesman's Differences—Old and New Schools*, p. 31.) that they had to a great extent superseded Scott and Henry, and formed the most controlling influence on the New School mind. Now we are free to say that we are not to be easily persuaded of the soundness of any views moulded by Albert Barnes. The influence of Auburn and Union may have done much to counteract, but it would be well nigh an impossible task for one or two Seminaries to control the influence of a popular series of Commentaries subtly insinuating error all through life. Can Dr. Baird inform us as to the present status of Barnes, Beman and Finney among the New School section of the United Church?

But Dr. Baird urges, that "if a few upsound theologians were embraced in the reunited church, yet the rule for the adoption of the Confession" was "not corrupted by the acceptance of loose principles of interpretation." He then enters upon a history of the reunion negotiations. The Old School took the initiative. A Committee of Conference was appointed by each Assembly. That committee first drew up terms which were submitted to public consideration for a year. They were not acceptable, and amended terms were submitted to the Assemblies in 1868. These were sent down to the Presbyteries by the New School Assembly. The Old School finally did the same after a struggle for amendments, and a powerful protest offered by some 57 members, at the head of whom were Robert Breckinridge, Charles Hodge, Edward P. Humphrey, Archer Alexander Hodge and John C. Backus." Subsequently to the Assembly's answer to this protest, it proposed a change in the terms, leaving out the obnoxious clause; and submitting simply a proposal of union on the Standards. This was adopted and forwarded in haste, by a special committee to the New School Assembly. It was too late to be acted on, and the amended terms, of the Committee of Conference, with the clause obnoxious to so many leading men went down to the Presbyteries of both bodies. They were accepted by the New School lower courts nearly in mass. They were rejected by the majority of the Old School Presbyteries. This created a crisis, but the union was predetermined, and the following year, 1869, the basis

of the Standards pure and simple was adopted and the fusion was consummated. Dr. Baird says: "In neither form of the explanatory clause is there a *loop hole left open for the entrance of New School error.*" By one of these forms, he means the first project of this Committee of Conference, submitted to public consideration for a year. This by terms, excluded Arminianism and Pelagianism, and Antinomianism and Fatalism from the teachings of the church. This never came to anything and is of no bearing specially on the issue. The second form alluded to by Dr. Baird was the Amended Terms with the obnoxious clause accepted by the New and rejected by the Old School. This obnoxious clause following the statement that "it is understood that this Confession is received in its proper, historical—that is, the Calvinistic or Reformed sense," proceeds as follows:

"It is also understood, that various methods of viewing, stating, explaining and illustrating the doctrines of the Confession which do not impair the integrity of the Reformed or Calvinistic System, are to be freely allowed in the united Church, *as they have been hitherto allowed in the Separate Churches.*"

Dr. Baird says this extraordinary clause "does not leave a loop-hole for the entrance of New School error." To prove this he relies upon the inhibition of any "teaching" that would impair the integrity of the Calvinistic or Reformed System." He relies upon the answer to the protest of Breckinridge, Hodge and others. This answer agreed with Dr. Baird that not a loop-hole was left for the entry of New School error. He relies, also on the fact that these terms were finally rejected—clause and all, and another basis adopted. He again relies on the Answer as going forth from the Old School Assembly as an authoritative exposition of the sense in which they understood the contract. He relies also on a supposed *correlative* fact that the New School did, after a year and six months consideration, and in view of the Old School's rejection of the basis, accept the Standards, pure and simple. He finally relies on Dr. Henry B. Smith's indignant repudiation of loose terms of subscription. Thus fortified, he proceeds to arraign Drs. Palmer and Dabney for inaccuracy of information and to "admonish them of their failure to appreciate the obligation of accuracy." To these Statements we beg leave to interpose some possible abatement of their force.

In view of the extraordinary weight attached to the Answer to the Protest of the Old School Assembly, we would inquire why more weight is allowed to these papers of the Old School than to similar papers adopted by the New School in connection with the negotiation? All these papers were cut off from having any direct control over the event of reunion by the adoption of other terms: They are simply parts of the history of the case. But on the very same footing with the wonderful Answer, stand the papers of the New School Assembly! The final basis, and that marvelous "solution of continuity" in the body worked by the act of fusion which has embalmed all the objectionable acts of both parties previous to the union and endowed them with the force of immortality—has wrought the same effect on all the papers of the two Assemblies. The answer to the protest of the Old School is absolutely powerless on the

New School; as much so as the paper of the New School adopted in 1868 is on the Old School. Commenting on the "obnoxious clause which killed the amended terms before the Old School Presbyteries—that paper proceeds to say: Moore's Digest, p. 79, 80.

"Various methods of viewing, stating, explaining and illustrating the doctrines of the Confession of Faith are to be fully allowed in the United Church, as they have hitherto been allowed in the Separate Churches," only they must "not impair the integrity of the Calvinistic System. And now, who shall decide whether the views do impair the integrity of the system? If there be a strenuous and rigid umpire, such will doubtless be found intolerant of opinions and interpretations contrary to its own. A mind cautious and jealous of all encroachment on religious liberty will doubt, and in proportion to his fears, he will hesitate or object.

But is the danger here really formidable? Admit the majority of the ecclesiastical body must decide; but, in the way the members of our Presbyteries now, will have their standing in the united church, then will they be unsafe and exposed to oppression? Aside from the manifest liberality, and confidence, and love, which there must be in the members of the opposite branch before three-quarters of its Presbyteries shall vote us together, there are these quite impregnable safe-guards. The man whose sentiments do not violate the Calvinistic System cannot be hurt. And if the fear still is that in the opinion of the judicatory, the sentiment may be in violation of the integrity of the Calvinistic System, and that this opinion must rule, the answer at once is, *not the judicatory on its own opinion, but the judicatory as convinced that the opposite branch of the Church has allowed or not allowed the sentiment to be in consonance with the Calvinistic System.* If the man is not out of the pale of his former church's orthodoxy, he cannot be in danger from any ecclesiastical court's, rigidity or bigotry. Danger from this cannot be further pressed without directly questioning the candor and honesty of the judicatory, and then we are at once beyond all Christian redress or regulation."

"And now, suppose we take this doctrine of previous examination in cases of last extremities, or even suppose it to be held as very commonly allowable, what danger of oppression is there? Let the examination be as common or as rigid as it may, the judicatory *can do nothing against the man who is still within the pale of orthodoxy according to the allowance of the old body with which he is in sympathy. The united Church is to fellowship the orthodoxy of both the present Churches.*"

Now, Dr. Baird asserts the absolute unity and soundness of doctrinal view in the United Church. He appeals to the Answer to the Protest in the Old School Assembly to prove it. He speaks frequently of the Basis of the Standards as adopted by the New School *in the light of this Answer.* He therefore holds them bound by it. He evidently infers unity of sentiment from the adoption under light of the Answer. He evidently thinks the New School in honor bound by the views of the Answer. But now, what is the meaning of the above cautious soothing of the uneasiness in the New

School Assembly? If they were all conscious of unity of views, why should any uneasiness be felt? Why should these restless hearts be reassured by being pointed to a refuge in the orthodoxy of their former Church? They are told, that while the judicatory is to judge whether the system is impaired, yet the judicatory is *limited* in its decision on that point, by the view which once had currency in the former Church of the man examined, inasmuch as the united Church is to "fellowship the orthodoxy of both the present Churches." Now, here are one or two plain points. It is evident there were among the New School a consciousness, or a fear of divided views. There was a dread of being troubled on account of them. There was a distinct assertion that a bulwark was thrown up before every man, in the orthodoxy of his own Church, even though questioned by the orthodoxy of "the opposite Branch." *What does all this mean, if Dr. Baird is right in saying the actual basis and terms of the Reunion, "did not give a single loop-hole to the entrance of New School error."* Is it safe to believe this?

Yet, further: Dr. Baird has no more right to use the *Answer to the Protest* as giving special force to the Basis of Union, than any one else has the right to use the New School paper we have quoted, for the same purpose. Neither had anything to do with the binding force of the Basis. But both are historical papers connected with the negotiation; both may be used to throw light upon it, and exhibit the *answers* with which the Basis was adopted. The *Answer* undoubtedly shows that the Old School Assembly *intended*, as Dr. Baird is convinced they *did*, to shut out all New School errors. The paper of the New School shows that *they intended* to go into the union *with full security to everything once sheltered under the orthodoxy of their own Church*. Barnes was once so sheltered; his views, according to his own and the convictions of his New School brethren "did not impair the integrity of the Calvinistic Faith." It is particularly obvious that the limitation, "not to impair the integrity of the faith," is perfectly nugatory to produce *unity of faith*, so long as each party is to judge what does, or does not, impair this integrity. To cite that limitation as giving adequate security to unity of view is to trifle with our credulity.

The Basis of the Standards actually adopted gives no more security against *loop-holes*—for the same reason—the right to judge what does or does not impair the integrity of the system. Neither are we at all bound to question the integrity of either party, nor the strict principle of interpretation so indignantly asserted by Dr. Henry B. Smith. Both accept the Standards; both pledge themselves not to impair the integrity of the Calvinistic System; both accept the Standards in the historical or Calvinistic sense. But both, with equal integrity and equal strictness of interpretation, claim the right to decide what is "the historical and Calvinistic sense." Both claim to interpret what is or is not, an "impairment of the integrity of the System." The New School may, for all we now know, endorse the Calvinism of Barnes. The

Old School would condemn it, and at once there is trouble. If no trouble could ever arise over Barnes, yet it is clear that two recognized parties, each claiming to judge what is, or what is not an impairment of the System cannot possibly be said to give no loop-hole to error. From all this it would seem that Dr. Baird might, with some propriety, qualify his censure of Drs. Palmer and Dabney for their expressed suspicion as to the existing doctrinal unity of the Northern Church. It is at least certain, *the adoption of the Basis in the light of the Answer to the Protest does not at all prove it*. The New School are no more bound by that Answer than they are by a Government Report on the Mines and Forests. It is resistlessly clear that the New School adopted the Basis of the Standards, with the right to any interpretation once sheltered under the orthodoxy of their own Church.

4. POLITICAL ACTION.

In this part of his Pamphlet, including several of the sections, Dr. Baird rises to an attitude of severity towards both the Church at large and towards Drs. Palmer and Dabney in particular. He expresses reluctance towards the censure of his own Church, but fully acquits his conscience before he is done. He proceeds first to develop the records of the Southern Church in its supposed *political* acts, and deliberately attempts to show that it is not only as bad as the records of the Northern Church, but *decidedly worse*. He then brings forward "the Political Deliverance of the Northern Assemblies," which he quietly censures, and at once proceeds to assail Dr. Palmer and Dr. Dabney's views of them, and again deliberately makes the Southern record by far the worse, inasmuch as the Northern Assemblies assumed position only "*as spectators*," while our Church identified itself "*as a party in the conflict*." He then sets up a distinct section in his discussion as "Comparative Demerits of the Two Records," in which the Southern Church is again and deliberately overweighted in the comparison. He then, under a distinct heading, "The Political Spirit here evinced," boldly attributes all the resistance to organic union at least, on the part of the two noble Servants of the Church whom he specially attacks, to *political animosities*, and in the close of his pages again attempts to make the Church generally, suspicious of her political feeling as animating the resistance to this scheme of fusion and to arm their Christian Sentiment for submission, just as if no Christian or religious principle whatever was involved. These are the features of his discussion on the political aspects of the question. We will briefly follow his own order.

We assent, as a preliminary, to a certain amount of propriety in Dr. Baird's demand to have the line of division between the Northern and Southern construction of the Non-secular character of the Church drawn with some useful degree of distinction. It probably never can be drawn with an absolute logical precision. It is a question hard to be settled, even measurably. It has been disputed all along the lines between and within the Churches, Papal and Protestant. The Ultramontaine and Galli-

can, parties in the Roman Church have contended over it for centuries. The Erastian parties in Scotland and England could never come to terms upon it. Parties in the Northern Presbyterian Church are to-day battling over it. Expressions of sentiment among ourselves, as in this pamphlet of Dr. Baird, indicate unsettled and far from consentient views. In this posture of affairs, it would be presumptuous in any one to undertake an exhaustive analysis and settlement of the question. Yet, we are so confident in the Word of God, we dare not assume that no useful light can come from the great maxim of the Master, "My Kingdom is not of this world." So profoundly are we convinced that Dr. Baird has done scant justice to our noble Church and our noble brethren, we are willing to risk something to vindicate their honor. That our Church may have blundered in the application of her creed, principle, may possibly be true; but that she has sinned worse, or gone as far as the Church which holds the same Creed principle and is as much responsible for its right application, in our deliberate opinion is not true.

1. It is admitted on all sides that the Christian body has certain duties to discharge towards the Secular Spheres. The Church is commanded to inculcate "obedience to the powers that be," and to pray "for all who are in authority." The Standards of our Church while prohibiting the Assemblies of the Church to handle or conclude what is not ecclesiastical, do at the same time specify two limited classes of exceptions. This is well known. These authorities then show that the Kingdom of our Lord, though not of this world, may yet lay its hands lawfully on that which is secular or non-spiritual *to a certain extent*. The question in view is one touching *this extent altogether*. To what extent then is such action lawful? Eliminating all the issues belonging to the subject which do not bear upon the matter now in discussion—all questions of secular things incident and necessary to ecclesiastical action, and all the weighty questions involved in the Ultramontaine controversy, we shall simply cite the precepts of the Scriptures and test the instances cited by Dr. Baird to the discredit of our Church and our brethren, by the principles of the Word of God.

2. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God."—Rom. 13; 1.

Test under this precept of the Scriptures the action of the Convention at Atlanta, August 15th, 1861. This Dr. Baird condemns, because, as he alleges, by it the body proclaimed itself a partizan of the "Confederate" theory of the Constitution of the United States, and of the States rights party in the war. Waiving all stress upon the fact that this Convention was not a Church Court What does it say? After quoting the obnoxious part of the Spring Resolutions it thus expresses itself.

'By this act of the Assembly a large proportion of the churches under its care felt themselves agrieved; not because they disputed the right of the Assembly to give a deliverance upon any question of duty growing out of their various relations, civil, social and ecclesiastical, but because, during a state of war between two sections of the *Confederacy* formerly known as the United States of America, one of which *had found it necessary* to withdraw from the other, and to establish an independent govern-

ment of its own, and to resort to arms in maintenance of its rights, and in defence against threatened invasion of barbaric character, the Assembly assumed the right of determining the political status of every member of every church under its care, a right inherent in the State and not in the Church; and in the assumption of this right, enjoined upon said members the performance of acts which, as to those residing within the Confederate States were absolutely treasonable, in view of the political relations established for them by those States."

Dr. Baird condemns this, *first*, because *Confederacy* is used in describing the U. S. of America, and *second*, because he supposes the paragraph generally to imply adherence to the States right theory, which the Church in Convention had no right to express. Now, let it be remembered that the Republic of the United States had been for many years judged a Federal institution, or Confederation of States by immense masses of her people. The name *Confederacy* was freely applied to it. The name had become *historic*: it had become as much a descriptive name as the word Union. It was often used without direct reference to its actual structure—as a mere title. Its use as a term, designedly employed to express its structure, was also frequent on the lips of those whose thoughts were directly concerned about its structure. Now, when the word had two distinct uses, one a mere designation, the other a term of description, is it not rather solicitude to find offence for Dr. Baird to construe the use of the term by the Atlanta Convention as employed, for the purpose of expressing a political opinion on the nature of the United States Government? They may have used the term simply to express a fact—the name often given to the United States Republic. Does Dr. Baird rely on the use of the terms "acts" "absolutely treasonable," to prove complicity with the States rights theory? This and every other statement possibly construable as yielding such an inference are mere *statements of fact*. The existence of "an independent government"—"the resort to arms," "the maintenance of rights," "the defence against invasion,"—the hazard of responsibility for treason—all are statements of fact. They may have been stated by men who did not approve of them. If the Convention did approve them, they said not a word to that effect. All they stated was a *line of facts*. If Christians are required to obey the powers that be, may they not openly recognize the powers they are required to obey? The existing Confederate government was simply recognized as existing in the above paragraph. In the act of the Southern Assembly in 1862, the same fact is recognized: and a further acknowledgment is made that there is "a right of the State to claim the services of any or all of her citizens in her time of need." Both of these acts—the act of the Convention and the act of the Assembly—were in strict accord with the command of Paul, "Be subject to the powers that be." Does Dr. Baird believe the Confederate Government, as a *de facto* government, was entitled to the support of its citizens or not? If not, does he deny that the Confederate Government was a *de facto* government, or does he refuse to admit Paul's principle to be applicable to *de facto* governments? But if he does so believe, and the people were bound to obey the powers that be, why might not the church inculcate the duty plainly defined in the precept of the Apostle?

Now, test under this same precept the action of the Northern Assembly in passing the Spring Resolutions. The only part of these resolutions which is necessary to present the action taken, is in these words:

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

Now, what is the difference in this act, and the act of the Assembly of 1862, of the Southern Church? The right of the State to claim the services of all its citizens was acknowledged by that Assembly as we have just seen, and the duty of the people of the country to drive back the invaders was asserted. We have already vindicated this action; let us examine the meaning of the Spring resolutions.

1. They assert that a spirit of patriotism is required by the Scriptures. No exception can be taken to this.

2. They assert the duty of the Church "to preserve and perpetuate the integrity of these United States." In these words reference is made, not to the Government of the United States, but to the whole territory occupied by the States. If the reference had been made to the government, and the call made to obey it simply,—not to preserve and perpetuate it, there would have been nothing objectionable, because that government was the government under which the Church was living as a matter of fact. *It was their own de facto government*, "the powers that be" over them. It was right for them to obey it, to pray for it, and to teach their people the duty of obeying it. But when the Church avows a duty "to preserve the integrity of the United States," either as a geographical territory, or to perpetuate its special form as a government, the case alters. Large sections of that territory had passed out of the jurisdiction of the United States government. *Quo ad* that territory, that government had ceased "to be a power" over it; nor could it ever be again, except as the result of conquest. The Church in its General Assembly confesses its duty to engage in this war of conquest when it confesses its duty to preserve the integrity of the United States. It no longer merely adheres to the government *over itself*—it now engages itself under a duty defined by its own construction, to compel millions of others to adhere to it. Those millions had withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the Union in obedience to another government, not as a mass, an illegal mass, appealing simply to the law of justice for their warrant. They had gone out in the use of a written and accepted reservation of a right to do so, when they first entered the compact of union. The Spring Resolutions in declaring the duty of the Church to preserve the integrity of the United States, declared it her duty to violate the written conditions of the Union, and to make a war of conquest—the only means of preserving that integrity. WHERE WAS THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN ANY LAND ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH IN WHICH IT MAY

EXIST, A WARRANT FROM THE WORD OF GOD TO GUARANTEE THE TERRITORIAL DOMAIN OF SUCH A COUNTRY? Here is one grand difference between the political record of the Northern and the Southern Church. The Southern Assembly recognizes the Confederate Government as a government *de facto* over them—as powers that be, and in obedience to the Holy Ghost, prays for it and exhorts its people to obey it. The Northern Assembly avows its duty to guarantee what it esteems to be the whole just territory of the government under which it exists and pledges itself to a war of conquest to secure it. Yet Dr. Baird judges the record of the Southern Church to be not only as bad, but far worse than the record of the Northern!

3. There is yet another marked and radical difference. The Divine Law requires obedience to "THE POWERS THAT BE." This is what the Southern Assembly did do for the Confederate government. But when there are two distinct systems of powers that be—two governments over the same territory and the same people, whenever a dispute of precedence springs up between them, it is not the part of the Church of God to determine that precedence. That question is to be settled exclusively in the civil sphere. The General Assembly of the North did determine that question in the Spring resolutions. The political sentiments of its members favored the supremacy of the Federal government over the State governments, and they voted these sentiments in defining the duty to support the Federal Constitution, and to assert its jurisdiction over the people and territory of the retiring States. THE CHURCH OF GOD HAD NO SUCH RIGHT; it did claim, as Dr. Palmer asserts, to determine a civil question—the question of all questions in our American system. Mark the difference: The Southern Church recognizes a government *de facto* over its members, in obedience to plain, divine law. The Northern Church determines the civil question as to which of two powers that be, is entitled to precedence. Yet the record of the Southern Church is far worse than the record of the North!

4. Dr. Baird cites another enormous instance of Southern inconsistency with its principle of the spiritual character of the Church. In 1861, under Thornwell's watchful presence, it avoided the mistake of the Convention, but did not fail to identify itself with the Confederate cause by the following act.

"The Assembly met and spent the first half hour in special prayer for the blessing of God upon the Confederate States, according to previous order."

The same authority which pronounced "My Kingdom is not of this world," also commanded that "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men; for Kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." The Assembly did just this; and yet her record is far worse than the record of the Northern Church! The above two declarations of Scripture are entirely consistent.

5. Another outrage due to Southern inconsistency, is the behavior of the Atlanta Convention of August 15th, 1861. True, that body, in sharp contrast with the Assembly in passing the Spring Resolutions, did in explicit terms repudiate all claim for it.

self and for the church of Christ of "any right to determine the political relations of individuals, or to solve for them political questions." Yet it, though a mere Convention, and not a Court of the Church, did presume to recognize the Confederate government as a de facto power—avow their attachment to it, and proclaim the duty of obeying and supporting it. This was exactly in the line of obedience to the command touching the powers that be. If required to obey, there is surely no inhibition of obeying it WITH WILLING AFFECTIONS. Yet, here once more, is a proof of disgraceful inconsistency with a favorite principle, and a new instance in the record of Southern Presbyterians which shows it to be worse than the record of the North.

6. The last and worst of all, according to Dr. Baird—by which the Church was actually made "a party in the conflict"—is the Narrative drawn by Dr. Girardeau. In this the struggle is recognized as "not alone for civil rights, and property and home, but also for religion, for the Church, for the gospel and for existence itself." That is to say, that while a Church court may testify to the civil obligation to obey the powers that be, if it should allude to the interests of religion imperiled in a civil contest, it "makes itself a party to the conflict." What absurdity! If the Church may teach the duty of obeying the powers that be, and urge to obedience, is she really precluded from bringing the powerful stimulus drawn from a merciless war on churches, chapels, mansees, and all other church property, to bear on the hearts of the people? The abolition sentiment which prevailed in the Federal armies, delighted in ruining the false sanctuaries where servants had been taught to obey their masters as the Holy Ghost had commanded. Yet no allusion to the merciless fanaticism which was walking red-handed, in full Federal equipment among the ruins of sanctuaries—blatant in its horror of a religion which recognized slavery in the very Tables of Stone—no peep or mutter there anent can be made in the Narrative of a church court, without making that court an actual party to the conflict, and its record far worse than that which deliberately pronounced itself a party to a war of conquest! EHEU JAM SATIS.

The other two instances copied from the Southern record by Dr. Baird, need no discussion. In one, allusion is made to the blood shed, and in the other, to the work of grace in the army. The latter is received as a token of God's favor. For what else ought it to have been received? Would he have poured out his Spirit on a gang of pirates or an army of Bashi-Bazouks?

There is one thing which deserves to be noted in the conclusion of our examination of Dr. Baird's comparison between the political records of the Northern and Southern Church. In making this comparison, he cites formally the Spring Resolutions alone "as a chief and adequate exemplification of the obnoxious political deliverances" in the record of the Northern Church, while he ransacks the whole history of the Southern Church and cites every incident he can find and construe into a political deliverance. Some of these instances are ludicrously forced for this purpose. Now, is this fair? It is evident Dr. Baird was aware of other examples in the Northern

record besides the Spring resolutions, for he asserts that "the fact is unquestionable, that in various papers adopted by the two Assemblies, Old School and New, during and immediately after the war, those Assemblies did implicate themselves with politics, and yield most unworthily to the passions and excitements of the civil conflict." Now, does Dr. Baird regard it as a just procedure for one who professes to be no partizan, and with no zeal for reunion, and who thus assumes the position of judicial impartiality, to cite a single questionable act on the one side and every exceptionable act on the other? Or does he claim the benefit of the "solution of identity" and the magic power of the "concurrent Declaration," as sweeping all these "implications with politics" out of existence, thus relieving the united Church of all responsibility for them? If so, why cite the Spring Resolutions "as a chief and adequate exemplification" of these "implications." The same reason would apply to these Spring enormities as to others perpetrated before and after the war. Why not relieve the United Church of them also and plead the Statute of limitations—the "solution of identity" and the great patent extractor of blots and spots, the "Concurrent Declaration?" It is to be shrewdly surmised he deemed it wisest for his purpose not to expose the Northern record in its full detail, as in comparison with the record of the South. The result might not have been healthy to the conclusion he wished to elicit, that the latter was the worst record of the two. Is this consistent with his assumption of no zeal for reunion? or is it the mere manoeuvre of a partizan after all?

5

THE POLITICAL SPIRIT HERE EVINCED.

DRS. DABNEY AND PALMER. WALNUT STREET CHURCH CASE.

CONCLUSION.

I.

In this closing part of the discussion, we group the remaining points of Dr. Baird, which we propose to notice, for a brief treatment. His attack on Drs. Dabney and Palmer is altogether out of keeping with the calm tone of his manly argument in the first section of his pamphlet. We are sorry to see it; impeachment of motives is no help in debate, and leaves the arguments of the discredited disputant untouched. Dr. Palmer is charged with inconsistency with his avowed principle of the Spirituality of the Church, on account of the sermon preached by him, vindicating the duty of the South to protect herself, and her right to secede. If we admit Dr. Palmer to have been wrong, it is poor reasoning to hold the Church, as such, responsible for this mistaken conduct or indiscretion of a particular minister. Dr. Palmer may be able to explain, or he may himself have discovered that he erred; but it is no aid in assailing a principle, to twit him with his personal error. It is human nature to do it, and no specially admirable manifestation of it either; but it is not logic. Dr. Dabney is similarly arraigned for personal inconsistency, as the author of the paper adopted

by the Synod of Virginia in 1861. It is not always easy to bring the actions of men into perfect consistency with their principles; yet this does not infer the unsoundness of their principles or their want of integrity in holding them. Admitting then the allegation of Dr. Baird, touching the inconsistency of Dr. Dabney and the Synod of Virginia—for the Synod is responsible in chief—it would by no means discredit the soundness of their principle or their integrity in holding it. But this admission is purely hypothetical; there is in fact a wide difference still between the act of the Northern Assembly in passing the Spring Resolutions, and the act of the Virginia Synod in passing the paper prepared by Dr. Dabney in 1861.

1. This difference appears first in the construction of duty by the two courts. The Northern Court, not only found it their duty to perpetuate, as far as in them lay, the integrity of the United States, but to avow unabated loyalty to the Constitution of the Federal government. What right has the Church of God to pledge itself to the special support of ANY PARTICULAR CONSTITUTION of civil government? Her Scriptural obligation is to "THE POWERS THAT BE." Her lawful relation to the United States government would not change if its republican constitution was altered to-morrow and merged into an Imperial institute; it would still be the power that be over them. The Church of God has no commission to adhere to one CONSTITUTION of government. She is designed to exist under every form of government, and is commanded to be obedient to the powers that be, no matter what they may be: In avowing her duty to support the particular Constitution of the United States government, she passed beyond her bounds and implicated herself in grave error.

The Synod, on the other side, pronounced that the act of the Northern Assembly in determining the supremacy of the United States government, 'necessarily sunders our ecclesiastical connection with that body—because it violates the Confession of Faith—Chap. 31, §4; because the question of civil allegiance upon which this Assembly has presumed to decide, has been properly determined as to us, by the act of the Commonwealth of which we are citizens; because the war waged against us by the federal government of the United States is unjust, tyrannical and barbarous, both in pretext and conduct; and because the assertion of their rights and separate independence by the Confederate States of America is necessary and righteous.'—See Minutes of Virginia Synod, 1861.

Now examine each specification of the act taken by the Synod. It pronounces upon a violation of the Confession of Faith. To this, a Church Court was competent. It pronounces upon a matter of fact, that the question of allegiance had been settled by the proper authority. It thus disclaims the right to settle it, and censures the assumption of any ecclesiastical body to do it. This was competent to a Church Court; it was an act proper in the recognition of a right of the State, on which it was called to adjudicate in condemning the counter claim of the Church, and it was proper as an act directly repudiating that claim of the Church. Again the paper condemns the moral char-

acter of the war, and testified against its justice—in its pretexts and its conduct. This also was competent to a Church Court; for inasmuch as the Church is the pillar and ground of the truth, and is commissioned to testify the law as well as the gospel of God, it is competent for any of its courts to testify against any great moral wrong. In the last specification, the Synod pronounces that "the assertion of their rights and independence by the Confederate States of America was necessary and righteous." Now, was this competent to a Church court? It is, on the face of it, a judgment on the moral quality involved in the assertion of Confederate independence; it is pronounced righteous; it is pronounced the only alternative left—a necessary line of conduct. Be it remembered, that when this paper was passed, the Confederate government had been for months the established government of the Southern States. *The Church was bound to call on her members to obey it as the power in being.* Even if in the judgment of the Church there was no sufficient justification for the existence of this government, its established dominion within and all round the boundaries of the Church, required the obedience of her members as the power and the only general government in being. But if in the deliberate judgment of the Church the wrongs of the people justified the attempt at self-protection, why might she not enforce their duty to obey the new de facto government, by testifying to the injustice resisted by that government and the righteousness of resistance? If she might have testified to the insufficient call for the new government, while exhorting her people nevertheless to obey it, why not testify to the righteousness and necessity if the facts justified it? In a word, the contrast between the act of the Assembly and the act of the Synod in the last specification in the act, is simply this. The Assembly affirms its duty to guarantee the integrity of the United States in its territory, to adhere to its particular Constitution of government, and to support the administration of all its functions, military and civil, even in a war of aggression and conquest. The Synod simply recognizes the de facto government and pronounces it a righteous and necessary instrument for the defence of the rights and interests of the people. The contrast legitimately narrows down to this single point. The Synod proclaimed no right to guarantee territory, no right to adhere by her divine authority to any particular Constitution of government, no right to support a war of aggression waged in defiance of written pledges in which the public faith was indissolubly engaged. It declares simply the existence of a de facto government, entitled to support, not only as a de facto, but as a righteous and necessary instrument of self-defence. To say there is no essential moral difference between two such acts of courts in the Church, is to confound our necessary moral intentions. If the act of the Synod is even admitted to involve some degree of wrong to her spiritual character, it is utterly unjust to judge it equal in violence to the act of the Assembly; but it involves none whatever.

2. But there is yet another vigorous distinction between these acts. The act of the Synod was subsequent to the act of the Assembly and necessitated by it. If we re-

member right. the General Assembly of the Southern Church was not organized until after the meeting of the Synod of Virginia in 1861. The Synods were then the highest courts in existence, and it properly fell to them—such as chose to exert the right—to respond to the injurious action of the Assembly. That great court had led the way to the adjudication of the civil allegiance of its Southern constituents and impliedly condemned the whole movement of the Southern people for self-protection. It had led the way out of the lawful sphere of the Church. As a matter of course, if any Church court was to resist this unlawful extension of Church power, it must in terms deal with the same subject; its deliverances must in form appear as concerned with political matter. But to compound this formal condemnation of political usurpation by the Church, with the original assumption, and censure both as *equally political*, is absurd. The protesting Court has only followed the erratic Court into the unlawful bounds, to recover its mistake and expose its error for future warning. This principle is plain common sense and common justice. If one court errs in determining a matter of science and another protests against its legal competence to deal with it, the mention of science by the prohibiting Court, would be absurdly misrepresented if described as equally dealing with science. So when the Northern Assembly went out of its way to define civil duties for its Southern constituents and condemned the whole course taken by them, it was right in the Church courts of the South to testify to the errors of the Assembly and vindicate the righteousness of the acts and instruments of self-protection established by the Southern people in self-defence. The trespass over bounds on the part of the Assembly was a real and an original trespass; it involved the guilt of violating the principle of Spirituality in the Church. The act of the Synod was a necessitated act, apparently passing the bounds, but only for the purpose of repelling the unlawful act of the higher Court, and rebutting its false positions. *It thus involved in fact the defence of the principle in view and was in no sense a violation of it.* Verbally the same in appearance—a dealing with political ideas—the rights of governments and the duties of the citizen—they were in fact as different as day and night. Yet the Southern record is immeasurably worse than the Northern, according to our able and zealous brother, Dr. Baird,

Dr. Baird censures harshly the action of the Synod of Virginia in 1861, for its support of the Confederate government. Yet, subsequently, he cites with approval, the action of the Southern Assembly in 1865, exhorting its people to obey the Government of the United States. Both acts were done in the use of the very same power. Both were in direct assertion of the obligation to the "powers that be." Yet, one was altogether wrong; the other was altogether right. Is not Dr. Baird subject to the same bias of political conviction which he charges as a fault on Drs. Dabney and Palmer? The act of the Synod was wrong, because it sustained a *de facto* government opposed to the United States Government. The act of the Assembly was right, because it sustained the claims of the United States as a *de facto* government. Is not

this judgment of Dr. Baird mediated by the political sentiment in his mind that the United States Government was entitled to the support of the Church *in both instances*, because it was the only lawful government. In what is he better than the brother, good and true, whom he so harshly censures? The simple truth is the action of both courts—the Synod and the Assembly—was right for the obvious reason, they obeyed the voice of the Holy Ghost in obeying the powers that be—a *de facto* government, into whose title the Church was under no obligation to inquire. Consistency is still a jewel, intellectually and morally considered.

"THE POLITICAL SPIRIT EVENCED."

II.

One of the most, if not the most objectionable feature, in Dr. Baird's discussion is unequivocal ascription of the opposition to organic union, well-nigh exclusively to *political animosities*. "The lack of proof against the Northern Church"—"the inconsiderate haste in urging objections"—"the exaggeration of what difficulties really existed"—"the demonstrated want of regard for the Church of Christ," all proves it. The "nature of the arguments" used, the "whole history and circumstances" of the case, prove it. No allowance is made for any religious considerations as entering into this opposition, no credit is given to any protests against the imputation he makes, no faith is put in any assertions of scruples of conscience and religious convictions. In a calm, inflexible fashion, as if no doubt of his diagnosis of motive could possibly lie, he ascribes the whole resistance to the surrender of our independence, to political feeling. The fact that the Southern people still have some political attachments, still remember and weep for their dead, still look back amid their poverty and the enforced loss of advantages to their children, to happier days—still remember with proud sorrow the time when their government was a government of their own will and not of force—when the Negro was a harmless and useful member of this social state—when plenty reigned and all the dark history and consequences of war were not—the fact there are still political passions and affections in Southern hearts is counted all-sufficient to account for resistance to the project of fusion with the Northern Church. It is true—beyond all question it is true, that there are still deep political affections in the Southern heart. Thanks to God, the iron of subjugation has not entered so deeply as to touch the life of all convictions of truth touching our past, and all attachment to it. It is true that there is still feeling at the South that they were wronged in the Union, and had a right to retire from it, just as it is, true, there is still feeling at the North that they had a right to coerce them back. The convictions on both sides were sincere; the feelings on both sides were passionately honest. To require either to sacrifice their unalterable convictions is both foolish and impossible. Let it at once be understood then that there is no effort to conceal the fact that there is still the same honest conviction—the same sense and feeling of the past facts which can never change, and

If once truly apprehended, can never be construed in any other way. But while this is true, it is not true that the Southern people are not true servants of the United States. It is not true that they cannot meet the people of the North with cordial kindness in the privacies of social life, where there is personal congeniality. It is not true that they cannot co-operate cordially in business schemes, in public celebrations, in literary and in religious exercises, in the thousand and one things which constitute the busy and varied life of American society. It is not true that they are hindered from cordial co-operation in all political measures. How does this come about? Is it because there are no political differences, no political passions seated on the ruins of the happy past? No; but it is because these passions are kept as far as possible from passing into these interests. Sometimes warmly expressed, they are yet held under control when they touch the actual interests of the hour. It is true in reference to this matter of organic union. The living devotion to the grand and sorrowful part is designedly kept down and out of this question as far as may be. There is one feature of it which compels the upspringing of reluctance to allowing Northern men to have the control of it—our relations to the negro race. But so far as the issue touching the Scripture teaching on Slavery is concerned, Dr. Baird is wholly mistaken, when he says that our demand for a testimony on slavery necessarily involves politics. It no more involves the politics of America than the politics of Rome in the days of Cæsar. The command, "these things teach and exhort," was on record for fifteen centuries before there was any American politics. It is simply a question whether the Church will obey that command. We obey it; and this Church proposes to unite with us; we simply ask if they will obey the command as we do; for if they refuse, there is another plain command which *we must obey*—"from such withdraw thyself"—obedience to which will, in that case, annihilate organic union, or else leave us to accomplish it in defiance of the Holy Ghost. There is no use in flinching; we must obey or disobey; that is the whole of it. Politics has no more to do with it than our obligation to teach the doctrine of justification and the necessity of holiness.

But to return: While it is true that our Southern political feeling towards the past is the same, Dr. Baird ought to know, *it is allowed no conscious intrusion* into this question of union. Just as it is not consciously permitted to intrude into the business and social intercourse of Northern and Southern men when they meet on the business or social arena, so it is not consciously permitted to control this negotiation. There are religious, moral and prudential considerations enough in all conscience to control it. It may not be possible to prevent its influence or some manifestation of it, at all times; but surely Dr. Baird is at once too intelligent and too just, to ascribe the totality of motive, or even a controlling part of it, to feelings *deliberately held under restraint*. The opponents of this dangerous measure are entitled to credit when they avouch religious considerations alone as determining their position, even if they are still so unfortunate as to be possessed with Southern feelings, because they admit no

other considerations to enter the question. This political sentiment is not one whit more operative on the minds of Southern Presbyterians, than it is on the minds of Northern Presbyterians. They are not so reluctant to the fusion, because they will enlarge their ecclesiastical boundaries and dominion by it, while we shall lose all control over our own affairs. One thought we could suggest to Dr. Baird's deliberate consideration; the constant imputation of political animosity as animating this conflict, will be very apt to produce it. We all want to keep it out as far as possible; there is no use in provoking it. He must remember that to us our political feelings *are not wrong*—to us they are intensely righteous.

Now, on the other hand, is there no political feeling—no regard for interest, purely temporal—perhaps even directly pecuniary in some instances, animating this desire for organic union? Is it not felt by many that it would exert a happy influence in healing the political animosities between the sections of the country for the fusion to take place? Is it not advocated by many as facilitating the introduction of capital into the South? If this be so, there is political feeling on that side as well as on ours—with this difference—that on one side it is resisted as an illegitimate consideration to enter into the settlement of a religious question; but on the other approved as a wise and patriotic motive. Any one conscious of such feeling has no right to except to political feeling on our side.

III.

We had intended to comment at length on Dr. Baird's view of the Walnut Street Church case, but we refrain. To continue this rule as a just and valuable recognition of the independence of the Church strikes us as strange beyond measure. To make the definition of doctrine by the highest Court of a Church the inflexible guide of the decisions of the secular Courts, when the issue raised is *that every question, whether its definitions are correct*, and as such, competent to carry property, is to our poor view very extraordinary. Assemblies may err in the definition of doctrines; the Assembly of 1836, endorsed Barnes; the Assembly of 1837, condemned him. How could the rule in the Walnut Street case apply under such circumstances? One party before the Court would appeal to the decision of 1836; the other, to the decision of 1837, and the Court would be compelled to compare the two decisions with the historical creed of the Church before it could adjudicate the case. A Court of Justice is compelled to investigate matters of medicine sometimes in order to administer the law. It has to investigate theology sometimes, to do justice to ecclesiastical property. To allow one of the litigants, or a virtual party in the case to guide the decision, is not to administer but to mock justice.

Finally, we protest sternly against the disposition so frequently displayed in this controversy by the advocates of organic union, to represent the resolute resistance to that measure as an unwillingness "to soil our hands with our Northern brethren"—to be "an assertion of our own excelling virtue." It is inexcusable to make this repre-

sentation. It imputes a measure of self-conceit and self-righteousness to the opponents of organic union which would make them at once ridiculous and hateful if it were true. Would our resistance to a fusion with the Episcopal or the Methodist branches of the Kingdom imply the assumption of any personal superiority on our part to those noble bodies of Faithful Christians? Could not the advocates of fusion see any question of religious principle involved in resistance to such a union, without imputing an odious character to those who would resist it? We say again, once for all, we have high regard for the Presbyterian Christians of the North; they are the peers of any body of Christians on the face of the earth; and no one shall impute want of respect to their character to us, and make it the ground of our resistance to the surrender of our whole ecclesiastical life into their hands. This method of dealing with this question must cease, or we shall deal with the imputation in a different fashion from what we have hitherto done. It is to be hoped no element of personal bitterness will be allowed to deface this controversy. But the opponents of the measure in issue have some sense of personal character and they mean to maintain it. The imputation is as cruel as it is unfounded.