

THE

COVENANTER.

AUGUST, 1855.

REVIEW.—MEMOIR OF DR. M'LEOD.

Memoir of Alexander M'Leod, D. D., New York. By Samuel Brown Wylie, D. D., Philadelphia. 8vo., pp. 535. New York, 1855.

This book has been long looked for. Twenty-two years have elapsed since the decease of Dr. M'Leod and the appointment of Dr. Wylie to prepare his biography. A large part of the generation that knew him, and wished to be fully informed regarding his career, have themselves passed away. No reason is assigned for this long delay, nor can any be found in the work itself—a delay the more singular from the fact that the greater part of the work, so far as it is a memoir at all, was prepared, as itself states, as early as the year 1837. Great expectations, founded mainly upon the distinguished character of the deceased, but partly upon the acknowledged scholarship of the writer, have been entertained regarding it. In addition to these were all the interests arising from Dr. M'Leod's long and very influential connexion with the history of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in this country. In these expectations we shared with others. The name of Dr. M. is among the earliest of our recollections. We were ever taught to regard him with the utmost respect as one of earth's great and good men. We saw him often, and, notwithstanding his faults, loved him. We hoped to see a biography worthy of his intellectual greatness, and yet honestly at least hinting at his weaknesses and errors. How it may be with others we cannot tell; but, for ourselves, we say, distinctly, that *in every respect*, we have been disappointed.

We know how difficult it is to prepare an interesting biography of a pastor or man of letters, whose life has passed in an even tenor—varied with few incidents, but particularly when he has not been called upon to take part in any very wide-spread or far-reaching ecclesiastical or political movement. And hence, as a general rule, the wiser method, in such cases, is merely to prefix a condensed notice of his life to some issue or re-issue of his works. We regret that this course was not taken in this instance. As it is, the work, as a memoir, is an entire failure. It falls short both of its subject and its author. It is at once defective and redundant in matter, as to order a chaos, and as an exhibition of the real character of the deceased, most inadequate.

It is “defective in matter.” We find here no proper portraiture

of Dr. M'Leod as a man, as a parent, as a pastor, as a preacher, or as a philanthropist and public-spirited member of the social community. We get glimpses of him now and then, in some of these aspects, but no attempt even is made to draw a full-length portrait. Nor is the defect supplied by letters from his pen. The materials even are not furnished, except partially by an analysis of his works, from which the reader may form a just estimate by his own reflections. We have no account of his congregation in New York. Its early history is not even touched upon. Nor its growth: nor where it was located—except very incidentally far on in the work. We learn nothing from this volume of the state of the city, or of the character of the times when he became a pastor there. In short, there is nothing by which a judgment can be formed of the materials on which he had to operate, of the difficulties with which he had to contend, or the actual results of his labours. These are capital defects. Of his published works all could judge. What we wanted was a history of the man and of the minister, as well as of the ecclesiastic and the author.

It is "redundant." Indeed, so much extraneous matter is introduced that we constantly lose sight of what should be the principal subject. There is so much of this, that the work might rather be entitled "A cursory, and very partial and one-sided history of the Church in the United States, prepared with the design of furnishing a special plea for the New Light defection." For example, on pp. 30 and 31, we have a kind of history of *all* Dr. M's. fellow-students in theology; where they came from, and a regular array of reasons why they came to this country. Again, on pp. 58 and 59, we have an account no way connected with the subject of the book—of Dr. Wylie's visit to Scotland in 1802, interspersed with other matters equally irrelevant. Eight pages—from p. 145 to 152—are occupied with an account of a call presented to Dr. M'Leod in the year 1813, by the 1st Presbyterian Church, Wall street, New York. Some of this is appropriate enough; but when we find the call given at length, with the signatures and then the minute of Presbytery sustaining the call, and some letters from others urging his acceptance, we ask, What is all this for? Is it want of taste in the writer?—is it to swell the size of the book?—or is it to let us know in what way Presbyterians then made out calls? The event deserved to be recorded, and we admit the same of a call previously given him by the Garden street Dutch Reformed Congregation, and afterwards by Princeton College to be its Vice-President; but, surely, it was not necessary to furnish us with so many details and documents as absolutely to mar the effect of the entire narrative. The more to be regretted, inasmuch as no part of the history of Dr. M'Leod is more creditable to his fidelity than this. He was, at the very time when these offers came, absolutely labouring under pecuniary embarrassment arising from inadequate support; he was yet young; but he nobly refused high salaries and prominent positions, rather than compromise his principles. This part of his life ought to have been told briefly and manfully, with very little display of mere formal documents. Then we have the Constitution of the New York Ministerial Association, occupying three pages, (69—71,) and a report of the examination of students in the Seminary, p. 162. What in the world had these to do with a biography of Dr. M'Leod?

But the great exemplification of redundancy is in the long and tedious analyses of his works furnished by Drs. M'Master and Black, and by the author himself, occupying more than one hundred of the five hundred pages of the book, and the long argument near the close of the volume in vindication of the New Light views and practice. As to an analysis of the Doctor's works, we are aware that in case a student or writer has made discoveries in science or in art, it is altogether right that his biographer show from the previous history of the science, &c., and by an examination of the productions of the deceased, what discoveries he has really made, and the importance of them. A life of Sir Isaac Newton would be fatally defective which would omit to do this in reference to his great discoveries and inventions. But this is the first time that we have ever known a *mere* analysis of any man's works introduced into his biography. Had the author of the analysis of the Lectures in the Revelation given us a short sketch of what is *new* in that work, and true as well, comparing this with the views of preceding authors, and then proceeded to show how Dr. M'Leod's researches have influenced, more or less, such investigations since, or how far they have been confirmed by the event, all would have been well—at least, as to plan. But to go over the chapters seriatim, and give us a kind of *table of contents* somewhat enlarged, is intolerable. It is an imposition upon the reader, and an act of injustice to the deceased, thus to abridge and mar his greatest work. To the analysis of the "War Sermons" by Dr. M'Master, we shall advert again. But what can be said in defence of a long sketch of the sermons on "True Godliness"—a book in the market, and actually in the hands of a large part of such as may reasonably be expected to read this volume! This whole proceeding is, eminently, New Light.

But, finally—and this is deserving of the most pointed rebuke—no less than thirty-five pages, from 451 to 486, are filled with a re-vamped edition of Dr. M'Master's Four Letters—a set vindication of the position of the New Light body. Now, had Dr. M'Leod been the author of the defection of 1833, or even an active leader in it, there would have been some semblance of propriety in this defence of those who abandoned, in making an acknowledgment of the United States Constitution, the long-fixed and known principles and practice of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. And, surely, the least that could have been expected in the way of apology, would have been some decisive evidence that the deceased did actually take sides, *on this subject*, with Dr. M'Master and his followers. Such evidence is by no means furnished in this volume. Indeed, we have found little here that was not known before regarding his views. Quotations are freely given from the Doctor's letters addressed to "his friend in Philadelphia," meaning Dr. Wylie; and from them it appears, clearly enough, that the intercourse between them, as correspondents, was quite familiar and confidential. *Not a word*, however, appears that bears at all upon this matter. And hence, we infer irresistibly, that no approbation of the United States Constitution, or of the course of those who were seeking to break down the church's testimony against it, can be found in Dr. M'Leod's correspondence, or indeed any where else in writing. Had there been, neither the author nor the editor would have let it remain in concealment. They try to show, by indirect methods, that

he agreed with them. If they had had even a mite of positive proof, they would have been most happy to produce it. True, his "Philadelphia friend" says, (p. 449,) that

"He," Dr. M., "was not opposed to naturalization. He was himself, long before his death, a citizen of the United States; and on his visit to his native land, he had the protection which the American government affords and extends to its citizens."

But if by this it is meant that Dr. M'Leod had sworn the oath of naturalization, we do not hesitate to pronounce it directly false. This *could* not be true. If it had been, we would have had the evidence produced, as it could have been at once, from the records of the New York courts. This is not said, however, and we take the whole to be an unworthy play upon the word "citizen," which is used sometimes in a loose sense to designate a person who, in strictness of law, is a mere "denizen." As to "protections" furnished in going abroad, a question might perhaps be raised regarding them; but it is not even said directly that Dr. M. procured a formal protection. If he did, it would be far from proving him to have been a citizen in the restricted sense of that term. Again it is said by his biographer, pp. 323, 4:

"About this time, (1825,) a communication was received from the Doctor, involving most profound reflections on parties, men, things, schemes, policy, &c., showing an acquaintance with the machinery of society, and the latent springs of action, evincive of the closest observation, and most acute sagacity. But these, however just and valuable for private perusal, must sleep till the next generation."

Now, this is just one of the things we wanted to see. And any other biographer, instead of loading and overloading his pages with long tables of contents of published volumes, would have brought to light just such documents as this which Dr. Wylie has so studiously kept hidden. If "valuable for private perusal," it would have been equally "valuable" for the public. Where persons are mentioned, some omissions would have been allowable; but on what ground reflections so creditable to the deceased, and so important, are consigned to the sleep of a generation, we cannot imagine, unless it be—which we presume is the fact—that this communication contains matter which would tell unmistakably *against* the New Light views. We call for that paper.

The most that can be made out of the evidence brought forward is, that within a short period before Dr. M'Leod's death—when his mind had lost its former tone—he was willing to leave the question of the moral character of the United States Constitution as a matter of forbearance. Nor do we wonder that in his frailty—pressed by his old friends, and soured because his plans for the settlement of his son in New York had failed—he should have so far yielded to their importunities. But let that be as it may, it stands as a remarkable fact that there cannot be produced—has not been, at any rate—a word from his pen taking back any thing that he had ever said or written against the moral character of the Constitution.

With what face, then, does his biographer finish off his volume with an array in vindication of that Constitution? How plain the object—to shelter his name and that of his coadjutors in a course of defection,

under the wing of Dr. M'Leod's reputation, *dragged* over them. Other redundancies could be easily found. On pages 331-2, we have the following:

"Mr. Guthrie had been lately licensed, and had, according to rule, returned for the last season to the seminary. This young gentleman possessed fine talents, was an industrious student, a graduate of the Western University of Pennsylvania, and much respected. He is now a highly esteemed minister of the gospel, in the neighbourhood of Pittsburgh. He went on to New York at Dr. M'Leod's request, and preached with much acceptance, as the Doctor thus states, on March 7th, 1826.

"Dear Brother,—I thank you for sending us Mr. Guthrie, as I thank him for coming on. He has been exceedingly acceptable to my congregation. All speak highly of him.

"As I depend on Mr. Crawford for next Sabbath, and the intermediate time, I depend on you, to do the entire work of the pastor, on the communion day. My love to the family. Forget us not in your prayers, &c."

What has this to do, we ask again, with Dr. M'Leod's "memoir?" Nothing at all. But it is introduced, notwithstanding, with a design—a design that, as we have intimated, runs through the whole book; viz., to strengthen the New Light cause. Mr. G. went with them, and hence he must be puffed. For the same reason, the introduction of such men as S. W. Crawford and the Messrs. M'Millan to Synod is carefully noticed, while there is no room for such men as Dr. Willson, Mr. Chrystie, S. M. Willson, W. Sloane, Robert Wallace, &c. The reason is apparent. Even Dr. Willson is not named, after his license, except by a quotation from one of his letters, in which, from having heard him once, he expresses a favourable opinion, just after his licensure of the Dr's. son—the editor of the present volume! This is pitiful. It is contemptible. And could only have happened in the case of a man naturally generous and chivalric as Dr. Wylie by the *jaundicing* and belittling influence of a sad, and yet *unacknowledged* defection from his former position as a covenanting witness.

If this book is faulty in the matters we have alluded to—and we have not at all exhausted the notes we have made upon it—it is still more so in the character of its contents, so far as they have some connexion with a history of Dr. M'Leod. It might be supposed that a memoir of the writer of the Historical Part of the Testimony of our Church would contain some full and clear account of so important a document. It is passed with the most cursory notice possible. Again, as the design of the book before us is to defend the New Light views of the Constitution, and their course as ecclesiastics, it would have been at least desirable to quote what had been said in regard to the moral character of that instrument in this part of the church's Testimony. This is omitted, as it has been in the late history prepared by the New Light body. This is an act of gross injustice to the readers of this volume, as well as to historical truth. We supply in part the defect, for the sake of such of our readers as may not have seen the unmutilated Testimony. Thus says Dr. M'Leod:

"There are moral evils essential to the Constitution of the United States, which render it necessary to refuse allegiance to the whole system. . . . This Constitution is, notwithstanding its many excellencies, in many instances inconsistent, oppressive, and impious."

Had all this been laid before the readers of this volume, they would have known how to appreciate the statement which we find made by the editor on p. 511, as follows:

"That Dr. McLeod ever entertained the extreme opinions held by some of his brethren respecting the government of the United States, and which led them to assume the attitude of dissent from it as a whole, we have no evidence." Have we not? What could be plainer than the language of the above quotation? And did not the editor *know* when he penned this statement, that this and much more in the same connexion, and to the same effect, was from his father's pen? Let him not lay the flattering unction to his soul. Whatever hard things Dr. Willson may have said, Dr. McLeod was before him in the same path. If Dr. Willson was a fanatic, Dr. McLeod was one too. The biographer is still disturbed by this Historical Testimony—these "acts" which it records. They haunt his pen. And, among other allusions, we have the following on page 129:

"It is to be regretted, that at the time of the publication of the Testimony, designated REFORMATION PRINCIPLES EXHIBITED, more enlarged and correct views had not been entertained respecting the relations of the church to the United States government. In the historical narrative prefixed to the Assertatory part, there are published statements on this subject which, to say the least of them, were indiscreet. The legislation was premature, and all subsequent attempts to amend, only mystified and embarrassed it, because *plasters* were employed, instead of the *knife*. One judicious act *was* passed, viz.: "Hold no communion with Church, or State, or any society whatever, when said communion will involve in it immorality." Had this sensible decree repealed all other acts on this subject, that were before it, the legislation would have been complete. But a false shame of confessing blunders—and yet every body makes some blunders—and of correcting them, and a strange disposition rather to continue in error than to acknowledge fallibility by reforming, together with a fear of incurring the imputation of being 'given to change,' did for some time, prevent their expunction. These obnoxious acts were finally ordered to be expunged from the narrative, in the second edition of the Testimony published in 1824."

In what conceivable sense was this legislation "premature?" Seventeen years had elapsed since the Constitution was formed, giving time enough certainly to read and understand it. And, besides, we had supposed that the nearer to the period when any such document has been framed, and the easier the access, of course, to the framers, the more favourable the situation for ascertaining its character. But not so thinks this writer. He thinks the older it gets, the more intelligible it becomes! The fact is, the older it gets the easier it is to mystify its true meaning, as the New Lights and Free-soilers are trying to do now. He admits, however, that "this legislation" was never repealed: "Had this decree repealed," &c. And then admits, on his part at least—we are not aware that he is entitled to speak for any others—a series of very unworthy motives which prevented this repeal. Whether all this is true, even as it respects the writer himself, we shall see when we come to consider the act of 1812. But look at the last clause: "obnoxious acts," "expunged in 1824." Is this the truth? Does it state the fact as it was? It does not. What is here called "an order to expunge" is in the following words, as any one may see who will procure the edition of the Testimony issued in 1824:

"It is deemed proper by Synod, in this edition, to omit the insertion of these acts, and to reserve them, together with the act abolishing slavery in the church and other acts since passed, for publication in a statute book hereafter to be prepared."—P. 125.

Is this expunging as "obnoxious?" Far from it. For—1st. It recognises them as acts *yet in force*. 2d. In the body of the Testimony the following paragraph is retained: "In the course of this session, (1806,) two acts were passed by the Presbytery, *which are* important as containing *practical* directions for the conduct of individual members of the church—an act respecting giving oath when summoned before the constituted authorities of the nation, and an act respecting serving as jurors in courts of justice." So Synod, in 1824—and we hope this will be remembered, we shall recur to it again—recognised these acts as "important" and "practical." Is this like "expunging?" 3d. They were left out of the history for the *avowed* purpose of being "inserted in a *statute* book." Is that "expunging?" 4th. If these acts are "expunged" in any sense that would affect their standing authority, then are the act on slavery and these "other acts" expunged also! Even this author would not have said so. But, certainly, what is true of "these acts," must be of all the "others" referred to in this note. Alas for truth, fairness, and honesty, even in high places!

We cannot bring ourselves to notice the feeble sophistry by which it is attempted to be insinuated that these "acts" had lost their validity by the lapse of time, nor the still more singular insinuation that these "acts" were the "milk for babes" with which the wise fathers of 1806 intended to prepare the minds of the church for the "strong meat" of 1833! Such talk is beneath notice! But we must advert to the manner in which this book treats the early Covenanters in this country. In a brief sketch of Mr. M'Kinney, we find that

"He was rather stern in his manner, and uncompromising in his *sectarian* principles."

Again, p. 256:

"He was a strict and steady adherent to the whole doctrine and system of the covenanted reformation. But it ought not to be overlooked, that as he had been habitually applying those doctrines to the existing immoralities of the British government, which he was daily exposing and impugning, he frequently neglected to make that allowance for the difference between it and the government of the United States, which a just discrimination demanded. He sometimes attacked the constitutions and laws of the American Republic, with all the severity which might have been legitimately applied in Great Britain, where the covenanted constitution had been completely subverted, but which was to a great degree inapplicable to the republican institutions of the land of his adoption."

Again, of *all* the early Covenanters:

"But, be this as it may, having been in the constant habit of opposing and testifying against the British government, previously to their emigration, they generally arrived in this country with a conviction that there is something wrong in the United States government, if not to such an extent as in the old country, yet quite sufficient to induce them to stand aloof from it. That such views and feelings should have been entertained by some of them, when they came hither, and even for some years after their arrival, is nothing more than might have been expected."

Now, why all this? Evidently to represent the founders of the church in this country as a sort of fanatics—as men who could not distinguish things that differ, and so to impair their character for the purpose of attacking more readily their deeds. But what kind of philosophy is this? In one breath we are told that they fled from the oppression of Britain, and found an asylum here; and in the next, that they brought here their prejudices against the British Constitution, and so rejected that of the United States! But as to the facts of the case. Is it not well known that the ardent republicans of the old world—such as Mr. McKinney was—are far more likely to overlook the evils of this country in their zeal for republican principles and their attachment to the republican elements of the constitution? Nothing but intelligent and fixed principle would have led such men to discard the institutions of this country. And, finally, had they been led by “prejudice,” they would have sought to fasten upon this constitution some of the evils of the British. But they do not. They fix upon its own evils and sins. They were thoughtful men, who had not drunk of the intoxicating cup of popular applause, or of the poisonous draughts of modern liberalism. They judged, righteous judgment, and all the efforts of New Light sophistry will fail of bringing upon them the reproach of mere bigotry and vindictiveness.

Having opened the way by these omissions and insinuations, we are brought to the act of 1812. It is quoted; and we are then treated to a large share of Dr. McMaster’s “Inquiry,” given out as gravely and as innocently as if its Jesuitry had never been exposed and impaled. This is the stronghold of the New Lights; and, of course, it is made much of in this “memoir.” And hence, we are obliged to dwell on it a little, notwithstanding we did, not long since, examine it with some care, and, we think, set aside the New Light version of it. We quote it, as we find it in this volume, including the minute appointing the committee to prepare the act. We have italicized some clauses:

“Pittsburgh, August 12, 1812.

“Messrs. Gibson, Wylie, and McLeod, were appointed a committee to inquire, what security the members of this church can give to the constituted authorities of the United States, *consistent with their avowed principles*, that they are not to be considered, whether aliens or citizens, in the character of enemies; and report thereon?”

“August 14, 1812.

“The committee to whom was referred the above question, report as follows:—

“1. That this Synod, in the name of its constituent members, and of the whole Church, which they represent, declare that they approve of the Republican form of the civil order of the United States, and of the several States; that they prefer this nation and its government to any other nation and government; that they will support to the utmost, the independence of the United States, and the several States, against all foreign aggressions, and domestic factions, and disclaim all allegiance to any foreign jurisdiction whatever.

“2. That believing it to be the duty of nations, formally to recognise the sovereignty of Messiah over all persons and things; and to construct their system of government upon principles which publicly recognise the authority of that divine revelation which is contained in the Scriptures, as the supreme law, their disapprobation of the presently existing Constitution is with them a matter of conscience, and *wholly* founded on the *omission* of this duty.

“3. That emigrants from foreign nations, lest they should be considered as

alien enemies, be instructed to give to the proper organ of this government the following assurance of their allegiance to this empire, each for himself, when required.

"I, A B, do solemnly declare, in the name of the Most High God, the searcher of hearts, that I abjure all foreign allegiance whatsoever, and hold that these States and the United States are, and ought to be, sovereign, and independent of all other nations and governments; and that I will promote the best interests of this empire, maintain its independence, preserve its peace, and support the integrity of the Union to the best of my power.

"4. That a delegation be appointed to proceed, so soon as they shall deem it eligible, to the seat of government of these States, and confer with the government upon this subject, with a view to obtain the protection of the laws, in *maintaining their present testimony*."

Now, it is to be remembered, that the circumstances which suggested this movement were very trying—that stringent legislation was apprehended against all aliens, and possibly against all who stood aloof from the government; and hence, that the Synod would naturally be inclined to go as far as possible to allay any evil intentions that might be formed against them. But with all this pressure upon them, what do they, after all, do?

In the first place, they assert that they have certain "avowed principles," on account of which they fear lest they should "be considered in the character of enemies;" and they wish to give some "security to the constituted authorities" that this is not the case. Now, if they had regarded it "consistent with their avowed principles" to swear the oath of allegiance prescribed by the government, what ninnies they must have been to be disturbed on the subject, or to attempt making one of their own! This minute is a very unfortunate one for the New Light view of this act; it does, by the most direct and clear implication, assert that to swear to support the constitution, is "INCONSISTENT WITH THE AVOWED PRINCIPLES" of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. What additional "security" *could* be required of them if they would take that oath?

But, still more, in the second place, the 4th section expresses the design of the act, "to obtain the protection of the laws in maintaining their present testimony." "Testimony" against what? Of course, against the Constitution. It can mean nothing else. For, in the third place, they are very careful to avoid any reference to the *Constitution*. They use the word "empire," meaning the country. Had they been free to swear to the Constitution, they would have said so. This they could not do; for, in the fourth place, they frankly avow their "disapprobation" of it, on the express ground that it is not "constituted" "upon principles which recognise the authority of the Scriptures as supreme law;" a very large and comprehensive ground of disapprobation. And, in the fifth place, the acts to which they engage are just such as all Covenanters admit to be binding upon them as orderly members of the community where their lot may be cast. We add, that no Covenanter, after all, ever made this declaration.

Now, how does the "memoir" treat this act? We are ashamed to say, yet we must give some attention to its enormous sophistries and Jesuitical evasions. 1st. It introduces the matter by saying "that many of the adherents of the Reformed Presbyterian Church were, from conscientious scruples, aliens. Yes. *All* who had come from fo-

reign countries, though the writer seems to have meant to insinuate that only a *part* of the church had these "scruples." If he meant this, he intended to insinuate a known falsehood. 2d. It calls this act an oath of allegiance, as if it gave some pledge to the Constitution, while this it studiously avoids. And it is the most barefaced sophistry to attempt to drag in the Constitution under the phrase "integrity of the Union;" for, we repeat, if the oath to the Constitution *could* have been taken, what nonsense all this ado about additional security! 3d. It insinuates that the Synod regarded the oath of naturalization as "too weak, defective, and not sufficiently comprehensive." Yes. It absolutely says this. We have given its own words. That is, "Some conscientious persons could not take this oath—perhaps because it was 'weak,' " &c., so the Synod undertakes to form a stronger one for their "weak consciences!" Was there ever any thing equal to this in any Jesuit's production? 4th. It quibbles about the word "states," as if, in using that term, the constitutions and laws of the several states were all recognised. Of course, then, the Synod meant to acknowledge and support the constitutions and the laws of the slaveholding states. Theirs, if any, certainly. 5. It says that this is still "statute law." Did Dr. Wylie, when he swore the oath in 1832, swear this? Or did he take the oath as "Uncle Sam" prescribes it? We rather guess the latter. His conscience had lost its objections to a "weak, defective" oath by that time. But we must pause, and leave this matter with three or four remarks. 1st. When Dr. M'Leod penned that section which represents an "omission" of national duty as the ground of disapprobation, it could not have been with the design to exclude objections on account of slavery; for his own sermons, *afterwards* published, make this one charge against the Constitution. This fact is conclusive. Had the "War Sermons" been published before August, 1812, it would not have been possible to suppose that he had changed his views in some few weeks, however unlikely; but his War Sermons" coming after the meeting at which this act was adopted, there can be no sort of question that Dr. M. had no idea of leaving slavery out of view in that section. 2d. If the Synod designed, as this "memoir" says, to repeal the old act of 1806, (see pp. 138, 139,) its members must, without exception, have been the most consummate hypocrites that ever cursed the church or the world; because, for years after, they continued to hold these acts as obligatory, and in 1824 recognise them as statutes to be placed in a "statute book." We cannot so charge them. We leave that to the author and editor before us. 3d. And this we have in substance stated before, if the oath of naturalization is weaker than that of the Synod, it must, at least, have been something very different, or a body of sensible men would not have laboured—setting it aside—to frame a new "security" that might "be consistent with their avowed principles." Hence—4th. This act of 1812, is an Old Light stronghold; it fixes the position of the church up to 1812, as the note to the Testimony of 1824 does to that date. And finally, this brings us to the eve of New Light movements, and makes it unnecessary to advert to other matters, as the act of 1821.

We had designed to review Dr. M'Master's Review of the War Sermons, but have room for but two remarks. 1st. We need only quote

the reviewer's own language to show that the deceased did condemn the constitution on account of slavery. He says—and mark the style:

“If under the circumstances in which he was placed, a language was employed by our departed friend, as it was by many others, too strong, as regarded the relation of slavery to the Federal Constitution, it is not to be deemed strange. Had he then, in this case, as we know he did at a subsequent period, carried out in detail, his own view of the federative and limited character of the Constitution of the Union, his expressions, without any change of principle, would have been modified.”

2. Will our readers peruse the following? It will be plain from it in what light Dr. M'Leod regarded the constitution, and how hard a task, even the practised pen of his reviewer had to make any thing else but Old Light discourses out of these “War Sermons.”

“Some of the language of the preamble to the treaty with Tripoli, in 1797, was, perhaps, neither happy, nor altogether true. That treaty has however been, it is believed, since modified. (!) What was exceptionable was in the preamble only, and an inspection of the treaty itself will show that it embraced no improper or immoral stipulation. The doubtful declaration, that the government of the United States has in itself no character of enmity against the laws or religion of Mussulmen, must be confined to the subject of the treaty—mere commercial relationships. And to say that the United States government is not *founded on Christianity*, is so near the sentiment and language of the whole Reformed Church, which declares ‘that civil government is not founded in grace,’ (!) that we must ascribe some part of the remarks made upon it to a momentary inadvertence.”

Yes, of course. Any man that believes the United States Constitution infidel and slaveholding, *must* be either narrow-minded or fanatical: or, if he could be neither, then it must be a mere “inadvertence!” Pretty cool this, considering that Dr. M'Leod had been long in the ministry, and had, years before, expressed the same view in the acts of 1806.

Upon the whole, we regard this book as a lamentable evidence of the decrepitude and disingenuousness which defection works. It will do no honour to Dr. M'Leod. He was a great man, and had he been proof against temptations, very abundant in his day, would, we do not question, have remained to the end a burning and a shining light. He had many most amiable qualities. Reserved, unless with familiar friends, he still knew how to win and keep a very ardent attachment for his person. He was ambitious; but, in his best days, his was a high and generous ambition. In general society he conversed little; but when he did speak, it was words well considered and weighty. Opposition he could not brook: and towards the last, he became rather too much accustomed to regard any unwillingness to second his measures, as nothing better than rebellion. In the pulpit he was in his element: sensible, strong, at times vehement, occasionally too metaphysical, he still took rank with the first of his day. He was much and deeply tried. Death made many breaches in his family circle. He felt them most keenly. Troubles arose in other quarters, and during the last years of his life thickened around him. He died leaving a testimony behind him of his adherence to *all* that he had previously written. And with all his faults, and notwithstanding a partial yielding to the pressure of friends and kindred, we do not believe that he ever altered

in his judgment—so long as his mind remained vigorous and healthful at any rate—in regard to the constitution of this country, and the rightfulness of the position of the church respecting it as fixed in the Testimony of 1806. His writings will put him in the next generation, at all events, among the conscientious dissenters from the existing constitutions, and we think justly, after all.

Some may think that we have spoken too sharply of this volume; that as the author, as well as the subject, has gone to his long home, we should have cast rather the mantle of charity over errors and defects. We think differently. This book relates to public matters. It is no mere biography. Under the cover of biography, it drags in and treats of questions and occurrences of high moment. We have not followed it into all these. We have selected those in which it required special notice. Justice to the living and to the truth required that even the tomb should not cover the published defects and errors of the author. He died holding nearly the views of the Secession on the subject of existing civil governments.* And now we leave this volume, shot as a Parthian arrow, against the position and Testimony of the church. It will recoil harmlessly from her armour. We have dealt leniently with him. We have said nothing of the literary character of the work—little of its trifling incidents—nor much of its bitter spirit. Let all these pass. We sincerely regret them. We predict for this volume a brief and noiseless life.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF HEAVEN.

“The principal notion which the Scripture gives us of the state of heavenly blessedness, and which the meanest believers are capable of improving in daily practice, is, that faith shall be turned into sight, and grace into glory. We walk now by faith and not by sight, saith the apostle. 2 Cor. iii. 7. Wherefore this is the difference between our present and our future state, that sight hereafter shall supply the room of faith. 1 John iii. 2. And if sight come into the place of faith, then the object of that sight must be the same with the present object of our faith. So the apostle informs us, 1 Cor. xiii. 9—12. ‘For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face.’ Those things which we see now darkly, as in a glass, we shall then have an immediate sight, and full comprehension of; for that which is perfect, must come and do away that which is in part. What, then, is the principal present object of faith as it is evangelical, into whose room light must succeed? Is it not ‘the manifestation of the glory of the infinite wisdom, grace, love, kindness, and power of God in Christ, the revelation of the eternal counsels of his will, and the ways of their accomplishment to the eternal salvation of the church in and by him, with the glorious exaltation of Christ himself?’ Wherefore, in the full, satisfactory representation of these things to our souls, received by sight, or a direct, immediate intuition, of them, doth the glory of heaven principally consist. We behold them now darkly as in a glass;

* See pages 455-6.