

✦ A DEFENSE ✦

— OF —

TRUE PRESBYTERIANISM

AGAINST

TWO DELIVERANCES

OF THE

AUGUSTA ASSEMBLY,

MAY, 1886.

Prefatory.

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

The author of this pamphlet is a minister in the Southern Presbyterian Church. He withholds his name for two reasons:

1. Because the public is interested to know *what* he says, not *who* he is.
2. Because what he says needs to stand on its own merits, without any help or hindrance that might come from a knowledge of who he is.

If, however, any personal grievances are to be redressed, or any "facing of the music" before his Presbytery is to be demanded, his privacy may be easily penetrated through the columns of any of our church papers, and all responsibilities thus met, to whomsoever they may be due, either on personal or ecclesiastical grounds.

GILLESPIE.

Two Deliverances at Augusta,

EQUITABLY CONSIDERED.

The late Assembly at Augusta must ever be a memorable one to all Southern Presbyterians. Meeting after just a quarter century at the very place where our church began its separate career, it is remarkable that it should have fallen into an error similar to that by which our Northern Presbyterian brethren, in 1861, forced us out of their communion. That General Assembly of 1861 assumed to decide the political question of Secession; our General Assembly of 1886, the scientific question of Evolution. Both questions, of course, have *relations to morals and religion*, but both are equally *undetermined by Sacred Scripture*, and therefore, equally outside the sphere of Presbyterian church courts. Of that error, the effect was to divide the Presbyterian church in the United States of America. This one will, of course, not divide our church, the circumstances surrounding the two cases being very different; but many faithful and loyal souls are grievously wounded, and there is left a stain on the reputation of the Southern church. Dr. Palmer, in his Quarter Centennial Address at Augusta, pointed out how, in 1787, our fathers revising the Westminster Standards, eliminated every expression that blended church and state. Yet he brought to view the wondrous fact that seventy-five years of Presbyterian training did not prevent the Northern Presbyterians from violating the express law which forbade the church to handle, or conclude anything not ecclesiastical. Alas, only twenty-five years have passed since we, whose complaint for our being unlawfully cast out, Dr. Palmer so eloquently reiterates, are found just like our brethren in 1861, "annulling

in our practice the principles imbedded in our constitution," and under "a bewildering excitement," similar to that which prevailed in their Assembly at Philadelphia, forgetting, forsaking, and trampling under our feet our "differentiating principle," "the very reason of our existence,"—"the historic basis upon which stands this dear church of our's,—the special feature by which she is distinguished from others," her "peculiar testimony," that "our King is to reign supreme and alone in His church," and that "the conclusions of men"—(yes, even of Presbyterian General Assemblies) "cannot be injected into the Scriptures, to assign a meaning which cannot be legitimately deduced from their own language." It is very easy to say that a Professor at Columbia "holds views repugnant to the word of God," and quite as easy to deny it; but our late Assembly did, undeniably, *inject* the word *immediate* into the Scriptural account of man's creation, and did *assign a meaning* to the word *dust*, which cannot be "*legitimately deduced* from the language of the Bible."

Accordingly, the question is no longer as to the hypothesis of Evolution, whether true or false; it is whether our General Assembly can add to the word of God; can set up the church's opinion at this time as a new rule of faith which we must accept or be cut off; can overturn our whole system of appellate courts. The question is, as to the honour or dishonour of our beloved church—as to the standing she shall henceforth possess and enjoy amongst other portions of the household of faith. The question is, whether we can afford to have her good name blotted and blurred, and her reputation for justice and due regard to law and order made to suffer.

But what was the occasion of the Augusta Assembly's being led to make these additions to God's word? It was the alleged errors put forth by a Theological Professor, which demanded, as was claimed, an authoritative deliverance for their condemnation. What had the Professor said? Appointed by our church more than twenty-five years ago to study and set forth the connection between Science and Scripture, he had said

that he had found it to be that of non-contradiction. And, in particular, he had said that while God had certainly created man and all things else, the Bible did not teach explicitly *of what* God made the body of Adam, nor whether it was *immediately* or *instantaneously* formed. He had not invented any hypothesis of his own on this subject, but had come to believe that the theory of Theistic Evolutionists as to man's body might probably be true, and had said that he saw no contradiction therein to the inspired record. When asked to explain how *Descent with Modification* could consist with *Creation* he had said: "It matters little what we may suppose to have been used by the Creator in making man's body, it was not Adam's body till the Creator made it a human frame and breathed into it the breath of an immortal spirit. God may have used what we call *dust*; or He may have employed red clay; or He may have constructed a human frame from some animal frame, either suddenly, or through a series of generations. If this last be the true supposition, then, of course, that animal frame was born of its own ancestors and descended from them, but the Almighty modified it into proper shape and form to become the body of Adam; so that here is Evolution,—descent with modification, and here too is creation by the Almighty hand."

Nothing worse than this or different from this has ever been said by the Professor, although, after the vicious fashion of bitter personal controversy, many very different and worse things have been unjustly ascribed to him;—inferences drawn by opponents to suit themselves and then charged on him as his accepted ideas. Similarly some of the editors of our church papers, claiming for themselves a competent acquaintance with scientific matters, have often said that he held an utterly *unscientific* hypothesis. But the reader will please understand what we have just now observed, that the Professor never did put forth any hypothesis concerning man's body, but simply acknowledged that he saw no contradiction between the hypothesis of Theistic science, as to the body of Adam, and the Scripture account of creation. And, accordingly, you hear the Professor declaring over and over again before the Synods and

before the Assembly, that he regarded evolution as a matter of very small importance and that all he cared for was to maintain that, if true, it did not contradict the Scriptures. Yet the Augusta Assembly solemnly declares that the Professor "holds views repugnant to God's Word," and decides that the Almighty must needs have created man instantaneously, and must needs have created him out of what we call *dust*.

But is not God as much the creator now as He was in the beginning? Does not our Father work hitherto? And are not all things that come into being at the present time the work of His creative power? But does he now create men immediately? And how can the Assembly, the Bible being silent, pretend to know that He so created Adam? And as to the question whether He may not have used for His materials some animal frame modified to suit man's body, who dare say that he knows God did not employ such *dust*? Does the Almighty now create man in any different way from that in which He creates every beast of this day? And why then, if our Maker sees fit to ally us as to these poor bodies, with the mere animals around us, which not only science but our own observation declares, why should theology be so inflated with pride as to deny the relationship thus established of God?

FIRST DELIVERANCE.

Let us now subject the first deliverance of our Assembly to a fair and dispassionate examination. Here is what was first adopted by 137 votes to 13:

"To the several overtures on the subject of the evolution of man sent up by the Presbyteries the General Assembly returns answers as follows:

The church remains at this time sincerely convinced that the Scriptures, as truly and authoritatively expounded in its Confession of Faith, and Catechisms, teach that Adam and Eve were created body and soul by the immediate acts of Almighty power, thereby preserving a perfect race unity.

That Adam's body was directly fashioned by Almighty God without any natural animal parentage of any kind out of matter previously created from nothing.

And that any doctrine at variance therewith is a dangerous

error, inasmuch as by the methods of interpreting Scripture, which it must demand, and in the consequences which by fair implication it will involve, it will lead to the denial of doctrines fundamental to the faith."

The reader will please observe the first statement, viz: "The church remains at this time sincerely convinced," etc. It is of course *our* church that is referred to here. But who is meant by the term *church*? Possibly the meaning was, the *Augusta Assembly*, as representatives of our church and its highest deliberative body, the Presbytery of the whole Presbyterian Church in the United States. If so, what is the value of the testimony thus given us? Of course, it deserves great respect both on account of the character of the Presbyters who from time to time compose the body, and because of the position and authority accorded by our system to the General Assembly. Yet is every such body liable to err, especially when under great excitement. The Assembly's decisions are final in all judicial cases, although they may be utterly erroneous and unjust. Its other determinations; its *in these* deliverances; its testimonies against error in doctrine and immorality in practice; its decisions of controversies respecting doctrine and discipline; its advice and instruction in conformity with the constitution in all cases submitted to it;—all these are quite liable to be erroneous and therefore all these are proper subjects of examination, revision, objection and contrary testimony by every Synod and every Presbytery. According to our book "every court has the right to resolve questions of doctrine and discipline," and "to condemn erroneous opinions" wheresoever and by whomsoever uttered. Who are they that compose the General Assembly, but fallible and frequently very weak men, commissioned to go there by the Presbyteries, but from whom there is always required a report on their return when their conduct and vote are to be approved or condemned? But not only every Presbytery and every Session may censure the commissioners and may also utter its testimony to the contrary of the Assembly, but every individual office-bearer and church member has a perfect right to review, and if needful, condemn and oppose any erroneous opinions which a General Assembly

may utter. For, our Confession says, that Synods and Councils are liable to err and very often do err, and very sacred amongst Presbyterians is the right of private judgment.

But more probably the deliverance under examination was designed to express the idea that our church *in its whole membership*, office bearers included, "remains at this time sincerely convinced, etc." Of course, the intention was not to affirm that our whole membership and all our office bearers are agreed on this point, but merely that a majority, and perhaps a large majority was so convinced. This being so, what is the value of the statement? Who does not know that majorities are very apt to be on the wrong side, and minorities on the right? Who has not observed how truth, in all its departments, has ever had only a small minority on its side, and how the mass of mankind are and always have been in the wrong? Who knows not that "*the church*," in the sense of that expression which we are now considering, has very often been sincerely convinced that the Scriptures teach, what they do not teach? "Fifteen hundred years ago the church taught that the idea was not only ridiculous, but contrary to the Scriptures that the earth was round. In the sixteenth century the mobility of the earth and the fixedness of the starry system was condemned by the christian church. The law of gravitation was also condemned by the church as taking away from God His power to control the universe." What value, then, attaches to the opinion of all the members and all the office bearers of our church put together, in any matters respecting which they are not previously thoroughly well informed?

And what did the Augusta Assembly accomplish by declaring what the church remains sincerely convinced of at this time? The Word is infallible—the church is and always has been and to the end will be very, *very fallible indeed*. It is of exceedingly small importance to us, whether as Presbyterians or as Protestants, what our "church remains at this time sincerely convinced of" unless she is able to produce for the authority and ground of her conviction a "*Thus said the Lord*." This is what the Augusta Assembly did not and could not

produce. Neither the Bible nor our standards warrant the statements which our representatives at Augusta took it on themselves to set forth. And seeing that they have affirmed what the Scriptures do not declare, their deliverance may be safely set aside as just another proof how very liable all Synods and Councils are to err.

The rule of faith for all Protestants is the Word of God, and we Presbyterians accept our Confession and Catechisms as standard expositions of the Word. We have agreed to be bound by what those expositions declare, because we hold them to be the true meaning of the Word. But do we always and necessarily take the Word, or these standards, in the sense which *the church* gives them? Do we pin our faith to the church interpretation? God forbid! It is not what the church, as she may be represented or *misrepresented* in any particular Assembly, shall at any time declare to be the meaning of the Word, which we have bound ourselves always to accept, but it is what the Word does really mean, and what is the real meaning of our standards. Many a time has the church, in her Assemblies and Synods, departed from the true meaning of the Word and her standards; and particular Presbyteries and individual men have had to stand up for the truth against erring Synods and Councils. For long periods together the General Assemblies of the church of Scotland departed from the faith, and she herself was unsound, but when reformed again and restored to spiritual health, she took care that her History should record these bodies as "unfaithful Assemblies."

The Augusta Assembly's first statement seems like a resurrection of that unfortunate hypothesis about the *two senses of Scripture*, which we supposed was both dead and buried. In order to convict Dr. Woodrow of dangerous error, there was devised the distinction already emphasized in these remarks, between the Bible in its highest and absolute sense—the sense which was intended by God, its author—and the Bible, as interpreted by our church.* It was freely acknowledged, and even earnestly urged by the respected inventor of that unhappy, and indeed unscriptural and Popish distinction, that Dr.

*Dr. Girardeau's Speeches on Evolution, p. 31.

Woodrow did not contradict the Bible in the former sense, and so was not guilty of any heresy, but nevertheless, that he contravened "*the church's prevailing and recognized views,*" and deserved censure on that ground. And now the statement is not, that the Word of God, or the standards, teach that Adam was created immediately; because they do not so teach. It is not said that the Word, or the standards, teach how the Almighty fashioned Adam's body, and what precise materials He did, or did not use, because the Word and our standards do not decide these points. So, knowing well that the Word and standards do not teach us these things, the Augusta Assembly dared not affirm that they do. It was content, therefore, to have recourse to that unhappy theory of two senses of Scripture—of "two senses" not agreeing with each other, for that would constitute them one—but two *separate* senses, yet both binding our conscience; one, the sense God intended His Word to bear, and the other a different sense, invented by the church! The Assembly did not dare affirm that the Bible uses any such words as "*created immediately,*" or "*directly fashioned,*" or that it tells us precisely what materials the Almighty did, or did not, use in creating Adam; and all it could do was to tell us what, at the present time, are the prevailing opinions of a majority of our Ministers, Elders and Members. And again I ask, of what value, of what binding force are these mere popular,—and in the case of multitudes, these mere ignorant,—impressions?

Let the reader next observe how the conscious weakness which pervaded the Assembly at this early stage of its proceedings manifested itself in the expression, "*remains at this time sincerely convinced.*" The majority at Augusta not only dared not affirm that the Bible teaches what any reader can see for himself that it does not teach, but they felt obliged to admit that what the church is sincerely convinced of is only *at the present time*. This was on the fourth day of the Assembly's proceedings, when a certain moderation still ruled its spirit. Not till the ninth day did the excitement rise high enough for the "heroic treatment," which a certain hot Kentuckian had said

before hand would have to be meted out to the guilty Professor. On this fourth day the body is calm enough to perceive and acknowledge that the church's convictions are a changeable quantity—one thing at Augusta in 1886, and *possibly*, another thing at St. Louis in 1887; *certainly* one thing in Galileo's day and another in our's. But of what value is a rule of faith that is so changeable as this? How hard the case of any minister, branded to-day as the teacher of "a dangerous error, which must lead to the denial of fundamental truth," and passing the balance of his days, perhaps, under this grievous censure, when the church herself acknowledges that she does not *know* that he is a heretic, but is merely of *that opinion at the present time*, and quite capable of *changing her mind*.

Then let the reader notice the singular expression which closes the first statement about "thereby preserving a perfect race unity." To our plain understanding it adds no sense to the paragraph. God certainly created Adam and Eve, body and soul, by acts of Almighty power and they were the progenitors of the one human race; but whether the creative acts were *mediate* or *immediate* we are not informed by Scripture, nor did our standards venture to decide the question. Nor, can we conceive how the perfectness of the unity of our race is made in any way more certain by the deliverance of the Augusta Assembly.

Let us pass to the second statement of the Augusta Assembly's *fourth* day deliverance. The language is remarkable, and must be quoted in full:

"That Adam's body was directly fashioned by Almighty God without any natural animal parentage of any kind out of matter previously created from nothing."

Here the Assembly is seen to inject the important word *directly*, into the statement considered as claiming to be a scriptural one, thus taking on itself the tremendous responsibility of adding to what God has revealed. After this, it proceeds to introduce the expression "without any natural animal parentage

of any kind." Let the reader carefully notice what the Assembly here signifies and implies. Dr. Girardeau at the Greenville Synod made four statements concerning his colleague which one of his critics justly characterized as "a *travesty* and a *caricature* of Dr. Woodrow's views, unfriendly and unfair representations of his opponent's idea, unworthy of an honorable antagonist, not to say of a philosopher and a theologian." The four objectionable statements were: That Dr. W. denied that Adam's body resulted from "a sudden, supernatural, constructive act of God;" that he asserted that Adam's body was born of animal parents; that he maintained that Adam's body was once an infant and grew to the stature of a man; and that he set forth that Adam's body preceded for years the formation of Eve's body. Now, similarly to these assertions at the Greenville Synod, Dr. Strickler in the Augusta Assembly, is published as representing that the Evolution hypothesis maintains that "we came from monkeys," and "our forefathers were at one time nothing but brutes." Also that Adam "was born the babe of a monkey and developed into a man."

But, the truth is, that all these representations, evidently aimed at Dr. Woodrow, are so many *slanders*. The writer is no lawyer, yet they all seem to him to be actionable libels. For, Dr. Woodrow has never said, or signified anything like what these two eminent ministers have charged. And now comes our highest court and reiterates the same unfair representations. First, Dr. Girardeau makes his own unjust inferences and ascribes them to Dr. Woodrow as being opinions held by him. Then Dr. Strickler seems to take these unfair representations on Dr. G's authority and thus repeats the slanderous allegations. Finally, the General Assembly is found gravely insinuating, that the hypothesis it is condemning makes Adam to have been born of animal parents! But the slandered Professor's language cannot in any case be tortured into our first father's having had an "animal parentage." Surely the materials out of which God made the body of Adam cannot be called his *parentage*. Surely it is of small importance what materials the creator of Adam's body employed. "It was not Adam's body till the Creator

made it a human frame and breathed into it an immortal human spirit. Then it was Adam's body but not till then. The Creator may have used inorganic dust; He may have used red clay; or He may have constructed a human frame from the animal frame either suddenly or through a series of generations. If the last supposition is the true one, we must say, of course, that the animal body was born of its own ancestors and that it descended from them, but that the Almighty modified it into proper shape and form to become the body of Adam." Here, then, as the accused Professor has said, is "evolution—descent with modification, but here too is creation by the Almighty hand." The point of importance is *creation*: it is unimportant what material God did or did not use. The Bible speaks of "*dust*," but it is uncertain what that term signifies. Theistic Evolution holds that some animal frame modified to suit God's purpose was employed by Him. Dr. Woodrow says he sees no contradiction of the Bible here, because *dust* may mean, simply matter previously created. What right has the Assembly, after the fashion of Drs. Girardeau and Strickler, to torture the opinions of the Professor into something he abhors? What condemnation is sufficient for such injustice by our grave and reverend seniors assembled at Augusta?

PREPARATION FOR SECOND DELIVERANCE.

But down to this point the proceedings of the Assembly have come very far short of what was desired by some of Dr. Woodrow's opponents. It was necessary, therefore, to devise some ground on which to base a positive and determined effort actually to eject him, without further delay, from the Seminary. That, manifestly, has been, for a long time, the one sole end aimed at by a number of individuals all over the church. It is "not the *teaching*, but the *teacher*" that has been so obnoxious. And now let us see what step the Assembly is induced to take. Its first deliverance was bad enough, for it misrepresented the question that was before it and prejudged the case that was not before it. But now the leaders of the body have set a ball rolling down hill and they cannot control its subsequent motion.

What has been said is too tame to suit some of their more ardent followers. "Heroic treatment" is what the case demands and must now be employed. The Assembly has assumed the original jurisdiction over a minister which belongs only to his Presbytery, and this while his Presbytery is just now proceeding with his case. But perhaps the Presbytery may decide it in a way that will not suit the majority at Augusta. It is necessary in the judgment of this now excited majority to get at the Columbia Professor as he sits in the Seminary and to contrive to have him hurled from his chair, out of which it has not been possible hitherto in any legitimate way to eject him. Accordingly the Committee on Theological Seminaries is called on to define the relation of the General Assembly to these institutions, and a set of resolutions is reported and adopted of which the following is the most important:

"2. That by the very genius of Presbyterianism the Assembly is bound to maintain a supervisory jurisdiction over these and all other like corporations, and also over all schemes for religious work so far as they affect the practice or doctrine of the Assembly's constituencies, and especially the office-bearers of the church."

Behold, now, what a step is here taken towards centralization in our church. Does not this deserve the careful consideration of all reflecting Presbyterians? Here is a claim for the General Assembly to maintain supervisory jurisdiction over all the Theological Seminaries organized within the pale of the church, and also all other like corporations, say colleges and all parochial academies and schools. It is also to supervise all schemes for religious work, so far as they affect the practice or doctrine of the Assembly's constituencies, viz., the Presbyteries. And especially it is to supervise the office-bearers of the church—the Ministers, Elders and Deacons in their individual capacity. Surely this is the baldest, most unblushing, and most unequivocal claim to original jurisdiction over every minister and elder and deacon, and over every affair of the church! Our Augusta Assembly stoops down past the Synods to direct and supervise

the Presbyteries and Sessions and individual office-bearers, hitherto amenable only to these lower courts!

Let the reader observe that this is the first time any Assembly of the Southern church has ever claimed such power. Our book expressly limits the Assembly's jurisdiction to that which does not belong to any Synod or Synods, but belongs only "to the whole church;" but the Augusta Assembly lays claim to supervise a Seminary which distinctly belongs, *not to the whole church*, but to *four particular Synods*. And to what extent is this new and alarming claim now to be exercised by the Assembly just the very first time it is put forth? Why, to the extent of the high-handed and violent expulsion of a Professor! What stronger feat can this new power ever attempt? What is to be the next development of this centralization? And if all the Seminaries and other schools, and all schemes for religious work, and especially all office-bearers of the church, are under the supervisory jurisdiction of the Assembly, then, of course, it must look after all the pulpits, and all the pastorates, and all the religious presses and papers—those potent organs which have so much influence over the practice and doctrine of the Assembly's constituencies. And here, then, in this nineteenth century, and in our Southern Presbyterian Assembly, is put forth something very like the Jesuit's doctrine, that "the church" must dominate over every human interest.

SECOND DELIVERANCE.

And now everything is ready for the final consummation and on the ninth and last day, some of the leaders who urged the first deliverance having, as it would appear, taken their departure, there is hastily produced and passed by 65 to 27, a resolution declaring that Dr. James Woodrow holds views repugnant to the word and our confession, and that the Assembly, in the exercise of its supervisory jurisdiction, earnestly recommends the controlling Synods to dismiss this heretic and put another man into his place!

Observe how far this action is in advance of the first deliverance. Dr. Smoot said in his speech that it could not be

claimed that, that first deliverance would injuriously affect the case below. It was merely abstract and general. And Dr. Junkin repelled the idea that the introduction of this subject would prejudice the question before the Augusta Presbytery: "Our report," he said "attacks no man. We do not name any man." But two or three days pass and the excitement keeps on rising till the Assembly concludes to usurp supervisory jurisdiction. And by this time Dr. Junkin is ready to name the man who has been aimed at all the time. He is now quite ready to call on his own Synod and the other three which control to *dismiss* this man, oblivious now altogether of any delicacy he had been feeling as to prejudicing the case below. "It is," he says, "the only manly course to follow to the fullest extent the principles we have affirmed." There was evidently great agitation in the body. There was with some, who were ready to do, what was urged, a degree of apprehension as to its propriety and lawfulness. One and another had to urge that "*we must do the manly thing.*" One and another had to profess to be ready to "face the music." And so they stirred each other up and encouraged one another to take the responsibility, which they dimly discerned in the distance.

Then, on that ninth night of the Session, hastily passing over what yet remained to be done, the Assembly at Augusta was dissolved and passed into history. Yes, it was *dissolved*. The men who figured so grandly, and spoke so loudly, so bravely, so manfully, and with such authority have come down to a level with the rest of us. Their short-lived power has all come to an end. Servants of their Presbyteries they must give in their reports and "face the music," which may or may not be very pleasant in their ears. The body itself is defunct. It floats on the bosom of the past, like a great dead whale on the bosom of the deep. And there is not one Minister, Elder, Deacon, or church member amongst us, so insignificant that he is not perfectly entitled to row his little boat along side the now helpless Leviathan and cut and slash away at its carcass. It is dead and yet its name will live in our history, a beacon and a

warning to all our Presbyteries to avoid packing an Assembly; and a beacon and a warning to all our General Assemblies to take care how they rashly assume powers not granted to them in our constitution.

PERTINENT POINTS.

1. It is pertinent now to remark that there was provided in our constitution a plain and simple way of procedure against the Perkins Professor by parties who considered his teaching dangerous, by which he might easily have been convicted, if guilty, and then, all his rights being properly allowed and the church saved from the dreadful dishonour of these unlawful proceedings, he might have been without difficulty deposed. But the Perkins Professor *was not guilty*, and could *not be proved guilty*, and that was the reason why all these illegitimate methods must be employed; and thus a stain now discolours the glorious escutcheon of our church which many long years will not efface. This wild and wicked excitement has been all of it about nothing. Personal animosities and sectional jealousies have been largely operative. Affairs have been so conducted that the Professor could not honorably resign. Weary and worn and in feeble health he would at any moment, during all these years of persecution, have gladly retired. But he, very rightly, would not take a step that could possibly be construed into an admission that he had ever been unfaithful to his trust as a Professor, or had ever violated the oath he subscribed, not to teach directly or indirectly any doctrine contrary to the Standards and the Bible. What Presbyterian is there so bereft of the devotion of our honored ancestry to truth and to duty, that he is not ready to say he would rather see James Woodrow cut up into inch pieces than have him seem to acknowledge himself guilty, when innocent, of treachery and perjury. Our highest court has now taken it upon itself to declare that he "holds views repugnant to God's Word." He must needs now stand in his lot and let that high court's fearful charge be made good, if it can be, by the authors of it.

2. It is also pertinent to enquire whether, if it was right

for the Augusta Assembly to urge the dismissal of the Perkins Professor, it was not very wrong to stop at that point. If it was the "only manly course" to advise the Synods to dismiss him, supposing they could legally do so, did not manly consistency require them to advise his Presbytery to depose him from the ministry? If he holds views repugnant to God's Word, he ought to be deposed. It is quite as harmful to have him in the ministry at all as in the Seminary. It is also just as dangerous and hurtful to let him be officially teaching, from week to week, the many thousand readers of his paper. So that it was neither *manly* nor *consistent* for our highest court to put its hand to the work of disposing of the heretic, and then doing the business by halves. And still further, the question is pertinent, what ought the Assembly to have done regarding all who sympathize with Dr. Woodrow's doubts as to what "dust" means, and as to the mode in which the Almighty created Adam's body. Surely, if the Assembly was "heroic" in its treatment of this matter, it was not heroic enough. Surely, if the Perkins Professor is a heretic, some others of our ministers and elders are heretics too.

3. It is likewise pertinent by way of reply to the accusation, that the Perkins Professor "holds views repugnant to God's Word," to formulate a number of charges of heresy more or less pronounced, and of unconstitutional acts more or less fatally dangerous, which may be fairly made by any private member, or office-bearer, or Session, or Presbytery, or Synod, against the Augusta Assembly:

(1.) That Assembly was certainly guilty of "injecting" the word *immediate* into the Scriptural account of the creation, and of "assigning a meaning" to the word *dust* "which cannot be legitimately deduced from the language of the Bible"; but which whosoever shall refuse to accept, it will be at his peril.

(2.) That Assembly did manifestly interfere with the due course of law and order in our church, by assuming to prejudge a question that is now undergoing judicial investigation in one

of our lower courts; and thus has it totally overturned our system of appellate courts.

(3.) That Assembly undeniably did, without any legitimate authority, put to ecclesiastical death, so far as its influence shall prevail, a minister who is yet in good standing with his Presbytery.

(4.) That Assembly has put up the *church's convictions at this time* as a rule of faith for Presbyterians, instead of the sole rule—God's Word.

(5.) That Assembly has thus in effect denied the right every man has to differ with "the church"—the sacred, precious, incontrovertible right of "private judgment" so dear to all Protestants and Presbyterians.

(6.) That Assembly has revived the unscriptural and popish hypothesis, that the Word has two senses—the one, what God designs us to understand as the true sense; the other and different sense, one which the church has invented, but which equally with the other must bind our conscience.

(7.) That Assembly has declared that the Confession is man's fallible work, by enacting that the clause respecting the wife's sister shall be stricken out; and it tolerates and encourages doubts expressed boldly by some men upon its floor, as to the meaning of the six days of the creative work of God, but yet, whereas one particular man has ventured to doubt what is the precise force of the word *dust*, and what was the precise *mode* of God's creating our first father's body, this high court has denounced him as holding "views repugnant to God's Word," and without the shadow of legal right calls for his ecclesiastical ruin and disgrace.

(8.) That Assembly condemned and sentenced a minister whose trial is appointed to be held next August—hanging the accused first, and trying him afterwards.

(9.) That Assembly has set forth a new and dangerous centralizing doctrine, claiming for itself supervisory jurisdiction over Theological Seminaries and other like corporations,

and over all schemes for religious work, so far as they affect the practice and doctrine of the Presbyteries, and especially the office-bearers of the church. It has thus set up an usurping claim of original jurisdiction over Presbyteries, and over ministers, which subverts our Constitution.

(10.) That Assembly advised four Synods to violate a sacred contract with their Professors, and urged them to dismiss one of them summarily, which, according to their mutual covenants, they have not retained any power to do.

(11.) That Assembly, made up of commissioners from the Presbyteries, sent by them to consult, vote, and determine on all things that may come before the body according to the principles and constitution of this church and the word of God, did ruthlessly violate both that constitution and that Word, and have justly exposed themselves to the severest condemnation.

(12.) That Assembly glorying in its own peculiar historical position, as eloquently and truthfully set forth by Dr. Palmer, nevertheless, as so often happens when men begin to boast about themselves, did actually commit a kindred error to that by which the General Assembly of 1861 drove our church into a separate organization;—the Assembly of 1861 undertook to determine a *political* question; ours at Augusta, a *scientific* question; the Assembly of 1861 went outside the Bible to decide whether the allegiance of American citizens is due to the State or to the Federal Government; our Augusta Assembly went outside the Bible to make known to men for the first time what precise materials God did or did not use in creating Adam's body, and in how much time and in what mode He performed that particular creation.

(13.) That Assembly exhibiting such a jealous and timid dread of the investigations of science has necessarily given new courage to Infidelity; and violating some of the most sacred features of the doctrine and order of our beloved church has put dishonour and shame upon her fair fame, and now holds her up to the scorn of all her enemies.

GILLESPIE.