

THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

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ARTICLE I.

OUR ECCLESIASTICAL RELATIONS TO FREEDMEN.

The history of the following document is this: The General Assembly which sat at Macon, in 1865, appointed a Committee to take into consideration the relations of our Church to the Freedmen, and to report to the next Assembly. Upon corresponding with the Committee, the chairman discovered that it would be impossible to secure a meeting. He then wrote to each of the members, discussing the question in all its aspects as they occurred to his own mind, intimating his own opinions, and inviting from the Committee an expression of their views. Upon the reception of their replies, he found so great a diversity of opinion existing between the members of the Committee as to make it impracticable to frame a report which would embody the views of the majority. Ascertaining that some of the Committee would be present at the Assembly at Memphis, and being hindered from going himself, he drew up the paper which is subjoined, and sent it to those brethren in the hope that they might adopt it, for substance at least, as their report, and present it to the Assembly. This they did not do; but having kindly informed the Assembly that this paper was in their hands, it pleased that body to permit it to be read, and subsequently to order that it be offered to the Editors of this REVIEW for publication.

The Committee to whom was referred the subject of our relations and duties, as a Church, to the Freed People in their present altered condition, beg leave to present the following report:

They confess that they have been greatly embarrassed by the extreme difficulty of the questions which have encountered them,

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ARTICLE V.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT MEMPHIS.

This Assembly was the fullest representation of our Church which has yet been held. There were present fifty-four ministers and forty-three ruling elders; in all, ninety-seven members. Only two of our forty-five Presbyteries, namely Georgia and Potomac, (now Rappahannock,) failed of being represented at all; and all but eleven were represented in full. Considering the troubles of the times and the great scarcity of money, this is a noteworthy and very encouraging item. One of the commissioners present was our missionary brother Copeland, from Indian Presbytery. The Assembly was largely made up of men past middle age. It was a most laborious Assembly, as the number and importance, the extent and the difficulty of the various matters of business taken up, patiently examined, maturely considered, and harmoniously determined, must make manifest. The sessions continued through eleven days of the closest and most industrious application. There was no disposition to speak for mere show. Great directness and brevity of utterance characterised all the debates. Several of the most useful members were ruling elders who manifested great zeal for the welfare of the Church, and a lively interest in all the affairs of the body. A most delightful spirit pervaded all the proceedings. We believe not a word was spoken that gave pain to any member. It was manifest that every man had confidence in every other man upon the floor. One new arrangement of the devotional exercises was adopted with very happy effect. Instead of the customary half-hour of worship at the beginning of business, there was only the usual opening prayer by the Moderator. But the last half-hour of the morning session was always occupied in prayer and praise. As Dr. William Brown well expressed it, from whose Synod (Virginia) the idea of this new arrangement was taken: "We take a precious old hymn and a

precious old tune, and when the whole Assembly join in, it makes a grand swell of praise that does the heart good." Yes! it was better music than "Jubal, the father of all such as handle the harp and organ," ever made. And the prayers were so refreshing after the toil of our work was done; for there is no more exhausting labor that we ever knew, than that of sitting for hours together, earnestly taking part in all that an earnest body of church-representatives are saying and doing. And then, ordinarily, all the Assembly were present, and so also the congregation was full. No man who was in the Memphis Assembly, and may happen to be at Nashville next fall, will be apt to favor a return to the old order for the daily devotions.

· VISITORS OF THE ASSEMBLY.

We were gratified with the presence and conversation of several well-known and beloved brethren, not commissioners, as Dr. Waddel, of the Synod of Memphis, Dr. Lyon, of the Synod of Mississippi, Dr. Ross, of the Synod of Nashville, and Dr. B. M. Smith, of the Synod of Virginia. And we had the satisfaction of meeting again our good friend, Dr. Anderson, of St. Louis; and also that "mighty man of valor" in our former ecclesiastical ranks; that earnest and able defender of the Church's freedom of the State; that eloquent and edifying expounder of the redemption revealed "at sundry times and in divers manners;" that large-hearted and open-handed dispenser of needful relief to so many of our suffering ministers and people all over this famine-stricken region, STUART ROBINSON, whose name shines and must ever shine brightly without any title. It has been said that "his enemies find him a hard man to kill." He has gone through labors and conflicts for six years past enough to wear out any ordinary constitution. But his noble physical frame, fit tenement of his great intellect and his big heart, shows no signs of exhaustion. God bless our honored and beloved brother, and spare his invaluable life for long years to come!

PEOPLE AND PASTORS OF MEMPHIS.

The good people of Memphis gave our Assembly a royal reception. Their hospitality seemed to know no bounds. What a thriving and growing city it is! Our brethren Stedman, Witherspoon, and Sample, have a field of labor whose importance can not be overstated.

OPENING SERMON.

In the first Presbyterian Church, Memphis, on the 15th of November, 1866, our sixth General Assembly was opened with a sermon by the Rev. George Howe, D. D., from Zechariah iv. 6, 7, 10: "This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it. For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven: they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth." The discourse was not only very appropriate to the occasion, but very instructive and comforting. The points considered were, first, Jehovah's love to his people, which in no circumstances we are permitted to doubt; secondly, the all-wise and almighty providence of God which is pledged to sustain the Church he has founded upon the earth; and thirdly, the power of the Spirit which works in the kingdom of nature, but exerts itself peculiarly in the kingdom of grace. It was a most affecting parallel the preacher drew betwixt the Hebrew captives returned to Jerusalem and called on to rise and rebuild, and our desolated land, our impoverished people, our dwellings burned with fire, our Rachels weeping for their sons slain in battle, our destitute widows and orphans in hundreds and thousands, our church edifices in ruins, and our public charitable endowments scattered to the winds; and yet we, called also to educate our youth, to train a ministry, to replant and reëstablish the Church amongst our people without distinction of race, and at the same time to

bear some humble part in propagating the blessed gospel abroad. Blessed is the privilege of being co-workers with God, great the responsibility of it; but cheerful is the hope and unfailing the trust with which we may and must rise and address ourselves to the work before us. Not despising the day of small things; not appalled by the great mountain of difficulties that rises before our Zerubbabels, high and broad and rugged; not ceasing to build because we feel poor and weak; but hoping in God and trusting in his Spirit's power, he shall in his good time by his blessing bring forth the headstone with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace, unto it.

ORGANISATION.

Dr. Howe took the Moderator's chair, with the Rev. Drs. Joseph R. Wilson and William Brown, the Stated and the Permanent Clerks of the body, one on each side of him. Nominations for the new Moderator being called, Dr. John B. Adger, of the Presbytery of South Carolina, and Dr. A. H. Kerr, of the Presbytery of Memphis, were named. The former begged to decline the nomination, and moved that the vote for Dr. Kerr be taken by acclamation, which was carried. In like manner, the Rev. William Flinn, of the Presbytery of Hopewell, and the Rev. J. R. Graham, of the Presbytery of Winchester, were nominated for Temporary Clerk; but the name of the latter was withdrawn, and the former was elected by acclamation. And so was the Assembly very speedily and very happily provided with its new officers. We have never attended an Assembly more favored in its Moderator than the one at Memphis. Dr. Kerr presided with ability, impartiality, diligence, and dignity. He must have endeared himself to every member of the body, and when immediately upon the dissolution of the Assembly, and before many of the members had left the city, he was suddenly called to see an only and beloved boy lie down on the bed of death, there was not one heart, we know well, amongst all his brethren that was not melted in sorrow sympathetic with his own.

REPORTS OF THE DEBATES.

The reports made of the discussions in the Memphis Assembly were extremely unsatisfactory. We have read none in any of the religious papers that constitute any considerable improvement upon the representations of the secular papers on the spot; although we are willing to acknowledge that they do leave out all their ridiculous, if not all their erroneous statements. At the close of the sessions, on motion of Dr. Adger, it was

“*Resolved*, That it be referred to the next Assembly to consider the propriety of appointing a Reporter with a salary of \$—, whose duty it shall be to attend all the meetings of the body and report its proceedings.”

We consider this a practical measure of great importance.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON REVISION.

The Chairman presented, first, the revised Rules of Parliamentary Order; next, the revised Canons of Discipline; and lastly, the revised Form of Government. They were taken up in this order, and, after emendations, adopted, and sent down to the Presbyteries, each part as a separate overture for their adoption, the Committee being allowed first to make verbal changes in it. The Executive Committee of Publication was directed to publish an edition as early as practicable for the use of the churches, and to send a copy to the stated clerk of each Presbytery. The thanks of the Assembly were tendered to the Committee for their fidelity and ability. As we understand the case, the Presbyteries can only vote to accept or to reject each of these documents. At the same time, where a Presbytery is favorable to either of them generally, and desires to accept it with emendations, it appears to us desirable that such Presbytery should overture the next General Assembly to send down the book again, *so amended*, to the Presbyteries for another consideration. It likewise seems to us that instead of ordering the publication of these documents by the Committee at Richmond, and their sale to all who will take the trouble to be at the expense of sending for them, it would have been a wiser, more economical,

and more successful arrangement, had the Assembly requested the publication of these books by our different church papers. Not one of them would have declined; and in this way the Report would have gained access, not only to every minister, but to every ruling elder. As it is, we fear many of both classes will neglect to send for and make themselves acquainted with these documents in time to vote intelligently concerning them at the autumn meetings of Presbytery.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE REPORT.

The history of this revision, as reported by the chairman, is as follows: Just ten years ago, namely, at the Assembly which met at Lexington, Kentucky, the Book of Discipline was committed to a committee of which Dr. Thornwell was chairman, and much labor employed upon it by several of the ablest men in the undivided Church. At our own Assembly in Augusta, a committee was appointed to revise both the Form of Government and Book of Discipline. It consisted of J. H. Thornwell, R. L. Dabney, B. M. Smith, J. B. Adger, E. T. Baird, ministers; W. P. Webb, T. C. Perrin, W. L. Mitchell, Job Johnstone, and J. G. Shepherd, ruling elders. Death having made sad inroads upon their number, the Committee was reorganised at the Assembly of 1863, and made to stand as follows: Jno. B. Adger, R. L. Dabney, B. M. Smith, E. T. Baird, T. E. Peck, B. M. Palmer, ministers; and W. P. Webb, T. C. Perrin, W. L. Mitchell, J. G. Shepherd, and W. P. Finley, ruling elders. The Committee met at Charlotte, N. C., and first revised the General Rules of Order, classifying them under heads for convenience of reference by moderators and by members of the courts. Afterwards they took up the Book of Discipline, as it came to them from the hand of the lamented Thornwell. They introduced into it a chapter of the discipline of the baptized non-communicating members, and they stated more fully and completely the doctrine of censure in its various forms of admonition, suspension, excommunication, and deposition. After this, they began to work upon the Form of Government, agreed upon the character of the whole work, blocked out several of the chapters, and

then committed the writing of it to Dr. Baird. He wrought upon it with his accustomed energy, industry, and ability; wrote and rewrote it five several times; and when the Committee met at Union Theological Seminary, in the summer of 1866, the MS. was there with its author, and formed the groundwork of the Committee's Revised Form. Drs. Dabney and Smith, Dr. Baird, Professor Peck, with the chairman, and also, by invitation, the Rev. Dr. Atkinson, President of Hampden Sidney College, were present. They went *de novo* and with great care and labor over the whole ground previously traversed. In every case, their conclusions were unanimous. They adjourned to meet at Memphis. There they took pains to induce all who felt any interest in their work to meet at the Committee's room for the purpose of suggesting improvements. This effort was much facilitated by the printed copies of the report as agreed on at Prince Edward, which had been furnished to every member of the Assembly. Many brethren availed themselves of this opportunity of assisting the Committee in perfecting their report upon the Form of Government before it should be finally submitted to the Assembly. Many precious hours of the Assembly's time were thus saved, because it was easier and better to discuss difficulties with brethren privately than publicly. Generally the result of these private conferences was either that the Committee adopted the suggestion of their visitor, or convinced him that they ought not to adopt it. Constant and assiduous labor was thus devoted to the work at every interval of the Assembly's meetings. Not less than five hundred emendations, counting them all, great and small, were made at Memphis, but nearly all in this private way. The result was that in the Assembly, there was comparatively no debate upon the report. And thus perhaps not less than twenty brethren, from first to last, made substantive contributions to the preparation of this report, as finally presented to the Assembly.

We think it was a feature in the proceedings of the Memphis Assembly very much to its credit, that the body was so faithful in the examination of this report. Not one murmur of impatience ever broke, so far as we know, from the lips of any

member. Day after day, when the business came up in its turn, every minister and every ruling elder drew out his copy of the report as printed; listened carefully to every word read by the chairman; considered with attention the reasons offered for any changes made; followed him with the keenest eyes and the sharpest ears as he proceeded from page to page; the rustling leaves of their numerous copies seeming to warn him, as he went along, how many close observers were taking note of every turn he might make; until at length the immense labor was completed to the satisfaction of all, and the work adopted with almost complete unanimity.

THE PROPOSED FORM OF GOVERNMENT.

Taking up this part of the report, to examine it a little in detail, we notice that the whole of chapter i. of present Form is omitted. Dr. Baird said well, the reason of this omission was that the chapter was nothing but "an apology for our being Presbyterians." Moreover, whoever will look carefully and candidly at this chapter must discover that it smacks in sundry places very disagreeably of Congregationalism, and also that the principles of value which it does hold forth, are all contained in the other parts of the Form.

The first chapter of the proposed Form presents us with a statement of the *doctrine* of church government, under five heads, which appears to exhaust the whole of it. The various paragraphs of this chapter give precise definitions of each of these five heads, viz.: 1. The Church; 2. Its members; 3. Its officers; 4. Its courts; 5. Its orders.

The second chapter gives us, in four sections, our Presbyterian doctrine in full respecting the first of these heads. From the Westminster Form is borrowed that sublime scriptural statement of the kingship and headship of Christ. The *jus divinum presbyterii* is distinctly declared. The Church, considered in the threefold aspect of universal, denominational, and particular, is defined. Church power is set forth according to its nature and limitations as presented in the Scriptures. And the congrega-

tion (as the proposed Form uniformly styles a particular church, for the sake of distinctness,) is fully set forth.

The third chapter, we think, will strongly commend itself to the Church generally, for the manner in which it deals with the little ones of the flock.

The fourth chapter treats in full of teaching elders or ministers of the word, whose office is the first in the Church, both for dignity and usefulness; of ruling elders, who are (as well as ministers) true scriptural presbyters; and of deacons, whose jurisdiction is not over persons, but only over things, who are not charged with the government of the church, or the care of souls, but of ecclesiastical goods and tables, viz., the table of the Lord, of the minister, and of the poor. It is a common impression with those not well acquainted with these subjects, that to serve the communicants with the bread and the wine is the business only of the elders. In fact, many suppose that is the chiefest part of their service. On the contrary, it is no part whatever of the elder's office, *as such*. To the minister alone belongs the administration of the sacraments. Any hand may pass the bread or the wine after they are delivered to the communicants by the minister. In the Church of Scotland, elders and deacons both assist at the table, as Pardovan tells us, Book I., Title viii; Book II., Title iv.

We do not understand the proposed Form as exclusively affixing this service to the office of the deacon. We should oppose any such view of the diaconate. But we believe that deacons may serve the Lord's table as well as the other two tables named. And we like any measure that will help to set before the Church her teaching elders and her ruling elders in their true positions—the former charged with that highest of all offices—*preaching* both in the word and in the sacraments; and the latter charged with ruling the Church, and not with serving tables any more than the other class of presbyters.

The appointment by the sessions of godly women to the diaconal functions, is allowed under the proposed Form. We rejoice at it. Protestants greatly need such an institution. The Scriptures, we believe, call for it.

The fifth chapter treats of the courts of the Church. The proposed Form defines the quorum so as that the presence of both classes of elders is necessary in every court. We believe this is right. It accords with the genius and spirit of our whole system. At the same time, let it be observed that no one could maintain that the proceedings of any court would necessarily be invalidated in any case where the ruling elders might all be absent. The definition of the quorum is designed merely to set forth what is needful to constitute a *regular* Church court, but irregularity and invalidity are not the same thing.

The proposed Form adopts very fully the idea of ecclesiastical commissions, with certain wise and wholesome limitations. We believe our Church is prepared to adopt very cordially this feature of the proposed Form.

There are sundry minor regulations proposed in this chapter differing from the arrangements of the present Form, which will commend themselves to our brethren.

The same may be said of chapter six, which relates to orders. We have observed nothing in this chapter which we suppose can rouse any opposition, except the imposition of hands by the session in the ordination of ruling elders. But the proposed Form sets forth ordination in its true scriptural light as the act of a church court, and it also sets forth the church court in its true scriptural right as composed always of presbyters of two classes. All the rest is just a matter of logic. We feel confident that the necessary conclusion will be admitted generally, and the Church will agree that the ordination of ruling elders ought to be by the session. Even deacons were ordained with imposition of hands by the apostles; and why should this ceremony be omitted in the case of elders? Moreover our doctrine on this subject is not that of Rome. We do not make orders in any sense a sacrament. It does not belong to ministers *as such*. It always is an act of *government* by the *rulers* of the Church.

The proposed Form closes with such provision for changes in the constitution of the Church as we must say appears to us wise and reasonable and safe.

THE CANONS OF DISCIPLINE.

There are only three points in this document, so far as we have observed, to which the attention of the Church has not been already sufficiently directed. One of these is the exclusion altogether of common fame as an accuser. Dr. Baird said well: "This book is the constitution of God's kingdom." There are two parties in every trial: the injured party and the offender. Who is the injured party? Always the kingdom of God, the Church. She is therefore always the accuser, and every indictment must be in her name. The prosecutor may be a voluntary or an appointed one, but he always represents the Church. He never pursues the accused as having injured himself; for personal offences do not come before the Church in any private or personal aspect, but only and always as sins against God, and as offences against the peace of the Church and the honor and majesty of her king. Besides, as Dr. Baird expressed it, "Common fame is a fiction;" and he might have added she deals very much in fictions. But the Church is a reality, and can do and ought to do her own accusing just as the State always does. Whenever the occasion arises, if there be no voluntary prosecutor, the court, moved by injurious reports affecting the Christian character of any one subject to their authority, must appoint a prosecutor. Here all is substantial and all is plain. "Common fame," said Dr. Baird, "has always been a hindrance to the Church and a disgrace. I believe there was no man on the Committee who was not desirous of getting it out of the book."

A second point is the provision for *involuntary* demission of the ministry, eldership, or deaconship. It is carefully distinguished from the voluntary demission which is also provided for in certain cases.

The third point is that while the new Canon prescribes that the members of inferior courts, when a case goes up to the court above, shall not lose their right of voting, yet either of the original parties may challenge any member of the inferior court. The question arising thus, is to be determined by the vote of all

those members of the superior court who are not members of the inferior. It is an excellent rule and commends itself.

RULES OF PARLIAMENTARY ORDER.

The new book classifies these rules. This is a great improvement. It also abolishes "*the previous question*," and gives us instead "*the question*;" which is perhaps another improvement.

We have endeavored to direct the reader's attention to the main points of supposed improvement in these documents. If he be only a member of the Church, but still more if he be an office bearer, let him procure and study the book for himself. How can any minister or elder who may be at the autumn meeting of Presbytery and be required to vote, neglect so sacred an obligation? But apart from this, and in whatsoever way the question is then to be decided, let the transmission of this overture from our highest court, become the occasion to every minister, elder, deacon, and member of our Church for a fresh investigation of the principles of Presbyterian Church Government as must be presented clearly before him by a careful study and comparison of the present Book with the one proposed for adoption.

DOMESTIC MISSIONS.

The Report from the Executive Committee, presented by the Rev. Dr. J. Leighton Wilson, is a document that must live in our Church's history. Dr. William Brown says of it: "Happening to look over the Assembly, I saw the tears flowing down the cheeks of many of our dear brethren, ministers and elders and others in the congregation, as the trials our brethren and people are called to pass through were recounted." But the pathos of the report was not its sole power. It was instinct with humble faith and lively hope. There was wisdom and courage and zeal in every paragraph. The work assigned to the Committee had been three-fold: to support the pastors in our impoverished churches; to repair or rebuild houses of wor-

ship; to send the gospel to destitute sections. The first was the most urgent; for many of our churches were completely prostrate and their ministers in extreme destitution. The Synod of Virginia was altogether the greatest sufferer at that time; South Carolina, or perhaps Georgia, stood second; North Carolina was fourth on the roll of destitution. Alabama suffered little from the direct effects of the war, but had its full share of the poverty resulting from the general prostration. The Synods of Mississippi, Memphis, Nashville, and Arkansas, were greatly distressed in the early periods of the war, but were restored to comparative comfort and strength before its close. Texas suffered least of all; but its churches had always been feeble—most of them mission churches.

But by the blessing of God, through the oblations of our own people, and the unsolicited but most generous aid of kind friends in Kentucky and Baltimore, every known case of pressing want amongst our brethren had been so far relieved as to enable them to stand at their posts. The sums of money furnished were from \$50 to \$300, and the whole amount thus employed was upwards of \$23,000.

The Committee next addressed themselves to aiding to repair or rebuild churches. Between ninety and one hundred church edifices had been either seriously injured or entirely destroyed—about one half of them in Virginia. Sixteen of these Virginia churches, three in South Carolina, six in Georgia, and one in each of the Synods of North Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi, Memphis, and Arkansas—in all thirty—had been aided by appropriations varying from \$100 to \$1100, and amounting in all to about \$8000. Every application for aid had been granted, except the two latest; and in all but one case, to the full amount asked. Many of the congregations had rebuilt their own houses, or got aid from sympathising friends at the North. Many more, however, have yet to commence the work of rebuilding. At least \$6,000 is needed in Virginia, and at least \$12,000 for the whole of our territory.

In the third department of their work, the Committee found themselves unable to proceed more than a very few steps for the

want of funds. In the Synods of Mississippi, Arkansas, and Texas, are many vacant and feeble churches that must be supplied with the word. The Committee, through Dr. Wilson, presented a doleful picture of the consequences of drought and other causes upon many sections of our territory. It was a dark future that spread itself before us. Impoverished and depressed churches and starving ministers presented themselves to view all over our land. What was to be done?

1. The most rigid economy and the most self-denying labors must be practised by our ministers, and they must resort for the present emergency to every kind of lawful and suitable "tent-making." And our congregations must all make sacrifices for the common good. And our ruling elders must do in and for our vacant churches what the Book prescribes. And Sunday-schools both for whites and blacks, and other measures of like character, must be employed to alleviate as far as possible the general religious destitution.

2. Proper efforts must be made to raise the requisite funds. We need \$50,000 to sustain feeble churches, and erect houses of worship. Poor as we are, we can raise this amount. A very small sum from each church-member would suffice. Let us have collections every Lord's day in every Church. Let us have a special annual collection in all the churches. There is no ground for despondency. Our Master's resources are boundless. If we are but true to ourselves and to our Head, the same Providence will bring us out of these straits which brought us into them. Our afflictions are only tokens of our Father's love.

The report of the Standing Committee on Domestic Missions, presented by Dr. W. M. Cunningham, was altogether responsive to these earnest and cheering views.

DR. J. LEIGHTON WILSON'S MEMORIAL.

The object of this memorial was to have a central Sustentation and Advisory Committee substituted by the Assembly for its Executive Committee of Domestic Missions.

Dr. Wilson urged, 1. That the present Committee had no definite and fixed character in the apprehension of the Church.

Some looked upon it as merely a financial agency for aiding the weak from the contributions of the strong Presbyteries; others regarded it as having both ecclesiastical and financial functions. 2. That no Committee of the Assembly could carry on the whole Domestic Missionary work in our wide bounds. 3. That the Assembly really had no field for such a Committee regarded as an aggressive evangelistic agency, for the whole ground of our domestic territory is covered by the Presbyteries. 4. That for the present at least, our great work is rather to sustain our present churches than to establish new ones.

The functions of the Committee which he proposed, were to be strictly financial and advisory. To the Presbyteries must be reserved the entire absolute control of all missionary operations within their bounds. There would be upon this plan but one treasury, to be used under the direction of the Presbyteries for the good of the whole Church. The object is to unite the whole body in one close compact brotherhood. The Presbyteries must appoint and direct the missionaries, and to the Presbyteries alone must these missionaries be responsible. But the Committee must decide what amount can be appropriated for each Presbytery out of the common fund. It would be expected, of course, that the older and stronger Presbyteries would always contribute more than they could draw out. The chairman of the respective Presbyterial Domestic Missionary Committees must be a connecting link between the Presbyteries and the central Committee. He must be a corresponding member of that central agency. That Committee must have a code of by-laws, to be altered or amended from year to year by the Assembly whenever necessary.

Such is the plan proposed by the Memorial. Its author urged it upon the Assembly by various considerations. It was committed to the Standing Committee. Dr. Rice, from that Committee, presented its report. It represented the Presbyteries as having complete original control of their own bounds, but the Assembly as the common bond of union and life betwixt them all. This function demanded some executive agency. It recommended the substitution asked for by the memorialist, and

provided for the new Committee a constitution agreeable to the principles he had set forth.

Objection was made to some of the grounds upon which the respected and beloved Secretary had urged the adoption of his plan. It was also insisted that our present machinery was good enough—the deficiency amongst us being simply of *life*. It was admitted that the rights of Presbyteries were fully acknowledged in the constitution prescribed, but that a central agency to whom all Domestic Missionary contributions in our Church must be made, would provoke objections, and divide us without any necessity. We ought to act together. There was no need of rousing the opposition of the Presbyteries, some of which would insist on doing their own work entirely. Having got rid of the incumbrance of the old Boards, and being furnished with that simple executive agency which we all agree in, what we have to do is just to *objectify* Domestic Missions as we have done Foreign Missions, and set clearly before the Church's eye this part of her duty, and she will come up to the work.

Subsequently, Dr. Rice introduced an amendment to the effect that the Assembly would not enjoin upon the unwilling Presbyteries to send all their funds to the central Committee, but only to take up in each church a collection for that Committee, and also to report their doings to the Assembly through the Sustentation Committee, with a view to an exhibition at once of what the whole Church is accomplishing. Thus amended, the Standing Committee's Report was adopted.

We believe the Master's blessing is crowning the efforts of his servants. There seems to be a general determination all over the Church to *sustain* the Sustentation Committee. It has thus far been enabled to do all that has appeared to be necessary. What with the contributions of our own churches and the generous help bestowed on us from our good brethren outside, our treasury has been adequate thus far to every reasonable demand. We believe the tone of principle and of feeling upon this subject never has been so high in our Church at large as at the present time. As a specimen of the prevailing sentiment, let us state that one Presbytery in the Synod of South Carolina, *which is now*

very poor, has resolved that it will still prosecute the cultivation of its own field and not ask aid from the central Committee, but that to realise the communion of saints, it will henceforth of its poverty send *one-tenth* of all its Domestic Missionary collections to the Sustentation Committee; while another taking the same general ground, resolves to send to the central treasury *one-fifth* of all its receipts for this object. Both these appropriations are to be in lieu of the collection in every church for the central Committee. And the large majority of the Presbyteries—more than four-fifths of them—have cordially and fully adopted the Assembly's plan.

EDUCATION.

Dr. Baird presented the Fifth Annual Report on this subject. The Committee had been much embarrassed by the doubts which successive Assemblies had thrown around the question of continuing this as one of the permanent agencies of the Church for systematic evangelisation. He went into some detail exhibiting the causes, which, in connexion with the course of the Assembly, had operated to hinder the Committee from accomplishing what they had hoped and desired. He pointed out sundry evils which must result from our continuing to have no central agency to act for the whole Church and harmonise its educational efforts. And disclaiming for the Committee any purpose of urging on the Assembly their own continuance as an agency, he surrendered on their behalf the trust committed to them into the hands whence it had been received. His report was referred without discussion to the Standing Committee on Education.

To the same Committee was also referred a report on Beneficiary Education from a Committee which the Assembly meeting in Columbia, 1863, had appointed, with some resolutions thereto appended. Of that Committee, the Rev. Dr. Joseph R. Wilson was the chairman, and he presented the report. The same Committee had reported through the Chairman to the Assembly at Charlotte in 1864, upon the general subject, favoring the continuance of the Executive Committee on Education, and insisting that the Church is bound to educate her candidates,

not as a charity to them, but a matter of justice to all concerned. The Charlotte Assembly had adopted the report, and "earnestly recommended that it be published by the Committee of Publication for general circulation, and as one of their permanent tracts;" and continued the Committee with instructions to consider the question whether the support of candidates ought to be provided by the Assembly or by Presbyteries, or in what other way. In 1865, at Macon, this Committee reported; but their report after discussion was recommitted, with instructions to report to the next Assembly. The reason for recommitting appears to have been that the report favored the *Presbyterial* scheme in preference to the present one.

The report presented to the Assembly of Memphis pointed out four objections to continuing the Executive Committee: 1. The expense. 2. The responsibility which its constitution might be so interpreted as to throw upon a body having no ecclesiastical power. 3. Its liability to deception by unworthy candidates. 4. The history of the Board of Education in our former church connexion. These and other objections might seem to prove that it is best for the Presbyteries to manage the whole business of educating candidates. And this was the plan which our Church in its early history sanctioned. Experience, however, seems to have made manifest that it does not develop the full resources of the Church. And thus it came about that our fathers resorted to the expedient of the Board of Education. The great, the solemn, the binding duty of recommending and of watching over candidates for the ministry, must be kept in the hands of Presbyteries. To the Executive Committee, however, may be intrusted with advantage the simple charge of the Church's funds for education, that it may equalize in a measure the weak and the strong Presbyteries. Accordingly, the resolutions offered were designed to continue the Executive Committee, and to provide for it a constitution which empowers it simply to act as a disbursing agent, the whole power of recommending candidates, and directing and controlling them, being retained for the Presbyteries. It was also provided in these resolutions, that, if any Presbytery should insist upon

managing its own Education funds, it should be enjoined nevertheless to take collections in all its churches for the central Committee, and also to report to the Assembly its doings in full. The resolutions, after considerable discussion, were adopted with almost entire unanimity.

FOREIGN MISSIONS.

The Executive Committee's report lamented the fact that their work is still so contracted in its reach and dimensions. Receipts from all sources had been only \$9,732. 99, of which \$100 was from an aged minister and his wife in New Jersey, and \$350 from the Rev. Stuart Robinson's church in Louisville. Only one-eighth of our churches had contributed anything at all. It is questionable if they had ever had the opportunity presented to them. If this be the fact, pastors and sessions have assumed a responsibility they will not be able to bear. Our funds have not been sufficient to meet our Indian Missions; and our brethren have prosecuted their work under great pecuniary embarrassment. They are, the Rev. Dr. Kingsbury, now eighty years old, the founder of the Mission, and the Rev. Messrs. Hotchkin, Copeland, Reid, Wright, and Fisk, the last two being native Choctaws. These six constitute the Choctaw Mission. The Rev. Henry Balentine is our missionary to the Chickasaws; and the Rev. Stephen Foreman, our missionary to the Cherokees. The Rev. Cyrus Byington, who labored among the Choctaws for more than forty years, has been compelled to retire from active labors. He will devote the remainder of his life to completing the Choctaw Bible. The Rev. Mr. Stark, who labored for nearly twenty years in that field, has removed to Texas. There are therefore eight missionaries still representing our Church amongst these tribes. They call earnestly for two new missionaries to take up the work of Father Byington and Mr. Stark, and for more men to reinforce the aged and worn laborers that still cultivate that field. Who amongst our younger ministers will freely consecrate themselves to this service?

The Rev. Elias B. Inslee, of the Presbytery of Mississippi, for many years resident in China, has been appointed our mission-

ary there. He was formerly in the service of the New York Board, but had some misunderstanding with them. He arrived in this country just before the meeting of the Assembly. He will shortly return to China.*

The Committee recommended, 1. United prayer all over the Church on the first Sabbath of every month, and that collections be then taken up. 2. That it be enjoined upon Sabbath-school superintendents to endeavor to interest the children in this work. 3. That Presbyteries be enjoined to appoint some one of their members to represent this cause in their bounds.

The Standing Committee's report, presented by the Rev. Henry C. Alexander, was an earnest response to this document.

With reference to an overture from the Synod of South Carolina touching a mission to Brazil, the Standing Committee reported that any action in that direction would be at this time premature.

We have a very few observations to offer upon this subject. In the first place, it seems very strange that it should be found necessary for the Executive Committee to recommend the Assembly to enjoin upon Presbyteries that they appoint some one of their number to *represent the cause* in their own bounds. Shall we never rise to the position where every minister will feel personally responsible for his share of duty to the heathen world, and when every session will be alive to the idea that their particular church is a society for missions? Alas! alas! How far off we are now from any such conception of our high calling. Blessed be the Master's gracious name that our Church is not denied some little share in the sublime enterprise of Foreign Missions! It is unspeakably encouraging and comforting in the midst of our trials that we are permitted to bear a humble part in this work, both among our Indians, and now in distant China, and in Italy.

And in the next place, we are of those who firmly believe that it is all-important for the prosperity of our Church that she rise up now in the very midst of all her distress and weakness,

* Mr. Inslee sailed for China June 11.

and attempt great things for her Lord. If one half of all the young brethren in both our theological schools were to offer themselves for the Foreign Missionary work, we should not only wish the Committee to undertake to support them, but we should hail it as the brightest sign that our Lord is with us of a truth. No little measures, no narrow spirit, no weak faith, no ordinary zeal, will answer for a Church situated like ours. Our *life* is in high though humble heart and hope. Expecting great things, and attempting great things, we shall with God's blessing effect them, but in no other way and by no other course of policy. We are in many respects situated just like those of whom the prophet said, "But the people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits." If our King and Head shew us favor, we shall rise and be valiant for him.

PUBLICATION.

The report on this subject was very cheering. Dr. Baird had, with the consent of the Committee, assumed the duty and labor of Publishing Agent, (for which his former life well qualified him,) as well as those of Secretary of Publication and Editor, devolved on him by the Assembly. The *Children's Friend* has an issue of 10,500 copies for every number. A large supply of the tracts, tract volumes, and hymns, issued during the war, and supposed to have been consumed when Richmond fell, have been recovered. Three cases of Bibles, imported from England during the war, which did not reach Richmond previous to the surrender, have also been found. A debt due to the British and Foreign Bible Society of \$2,500 in gold, had through their liberality been cancelled. A claim of the Presbyterian Board of Publication, nominally against the Rev. W. J. Keith, of Georgia, but really against this Committee, had been adjusted finally and satisfactorily.

"It was manifest," says the report, "that our first duty was to make a selection of works suitable for our wants from existing sources. The plan adopted was to obtain the use of existing stereotype plates and to have our editions struck from them. One hundred different works have been issued in this way, the

stereotyping and cuts of which publications would have cost not less than \$20,000. Of the various publications the aggregate issue has been 62,200 copies." There are several original works by our brethren in course of preparation for the Committee's use.

On the subject of Branch Depositories, the Committee recommend that each Presbytery induce some bookseller within reach of its bounds to keep our books on hand, for the convenience of the churches. Make it the interest of booksellers to circulate these publications, and there will be no difficulty on the subject.

Books and tracts suitable for our unlettered freed people are a pressing necessity. "Of all that has been done [for Sabbath-schools] nearly the half has been for the benefit of schools organised among our former servants. Our constant regret has been that we have not had the means of doing more for them. It behoves us as a Church to be awake to this question, to make special exertions to reach them, and to publish books for their special good."

The Treasurer's report shows that, for all purposes, the receipts were \$18,171.15, and the balance on hand, Nov. 1, 1866, \$2,296.79.

The Standing Committee's resolutions were such as might have been looked for concerning so encouraging a report, and were unanimously adopted. The cheapness and beauty of the publications, as well as the judgment evinced in the selection of the books, were especially commended; the publication was urged of works designed expressly for the freedmen; and the remarkable success vouchsafed to this Committee made the special subject of thanks to God.

THE REVISION OF PSALMS AND HYMNS.

Majority and minority reports were presented. In accordance with the recommendation of the special Committee on the subject, which reported through its chairman, Prof. Woodrow, the minority report and other papers were referred to the Committee on Revision, and they were directed to incorporate in the Book of

Psalms not less than fifty from the version used in the Scottish churches. They were empowered to add or omit particular psalms or hymns, and make changes of phraseology at their discretion; the psalms or hymns to be added might be one hundred or more, provided that the whole number published should not be made greater than in the present Book. And the Committee of Revision were directed to send forth the work as early as possible.

The Rev. C. S. Dod, author of the minority report, but not a member of the Assembly, was, on motion, allowed to speak. He had bestowed three or four hours daily for a long time upon the collection he presented. He thought we needed a book larger and not smaller than the present. Only one hundred and ten hymns have been added from the rich stores in existence, while many more than that number had been left out.

Dr. Howe moved to strike out the hymn beginning "Oh thou that driest the mourner's tear," being the production of a very licentious man, Tom Moore.

Dr. Palmer would regret very much parting with this hymn, even if the devil wrote it. It is a favorite hymn in his church.

Dr. Howe's motion was lost.

Dr. Hutchison (ruling elder) moved that the whole of the Psalms (Scottish version) be incorporated. It might be the means of bringing about a union we all desired to see of two great Presbyterian families.

Professor Woodrow sang those songs in his boyhood; he loved them; but he thought fifty of them would be sufficient for the purposes of our Church. The motion was lost.

We confess to a strong sympathy with Dr. Howe in his wish that Tom Moore should have no hand in guiding the devotions of the sanctuary of God amongst us, and to some surprise at the sentiment uttered by Dr. Palmer. It must be felt to be shocking by every Christian heart, that Satan or any of his servants should be accepted by us as the ministers of our worship. Unfortunately we have churches where the service of song is managed and controlled by wicked men and ungodly women. But this is generally acknowledged to be a lamentable abuse. Yet here a

licentious poet is declared by the Assembly's vote to be an altogether acceptable leader of God's praise in our churches, and the idea is expressed from favorite lips that if he were many time more wicked and ungodly, even if he were as much so as the arch-fiend himself, that circumstance would constitute no objection to the production in question. And this, whilst there are hundreds of hymns, the utterances of truly devout hearts, and admitted by all to be every way desirable additions to our book, that cannot be introduced for want of room.

SYSTEMATIC BENEVOLENCE.

This subject came up in two ways: the first, in a resolution offered by the Rev. D. E. Jordan; and secondly, in the report of the Standing Committee. The resolution was as follows: "*Resolved*, That our Presbyteries be directed to make it a standing rule to inquire at their spring meetings of all their ministers and congregations if they have had contributions taken up within a year for all our stated objects of benevolence, and to take such measures as will secure such contributions." This resolution was adopted.

The Standing Committee, through their chairman, Dr. Woodrow, complained that only one Presbytery had obeyed the injunction of a former Assembly requiring from them all a report on this subject. That Presbytery so distinguished was Lexington. Every year since 1861, a similar complaint had been made. There was good reason to fear that a very large majority of our churches had made no contributions to any one of the four leading objects. The cause sometimes assigned, viz., *impoverishment*, is not the real one, because the churches which suffered most from the ravages of war are in many cases the most in advance. The true cause is the negligence of ministers and sessions. A few of our churches contributed very liberally—a single church (Augusta, Ga.,) had given one-twelfth of our whole receipts for Domestic Missions and Sustentation; another (Government street, Mobile,) nearly one-fourth of the whole for Publication. If all would contribute, the treasury would be

filled. It was recommended that the Assembly enjoin annual collections in all our churches upon the following plan:

For Sustentation: On the first Sabbath in January.

For Publication: On the first Sabbath in March.

For Foreign Missions: On the first Sabbath in May.

For Education: On the first Sabbath in November.

In case these days should prove inconvenient, then the collection must be had as soon as possible thereafter; and weekly collections must be also taken up according to the apostolic plan.

Accordingly, all this the Assembly by adopting the report did enjoin upon the churches. And how many of them will ever hear anything about the injunction from either minister or elders, or do anything concerning the matter?

There is no more crying evil in the Presbyterian Church than this. Can nothing be done to bring it to an end? Continually are our superior courts, Presbyteries, Synods, and Assemblies, enjoining and directing, and the enjoined and directed treating it all with perfect indifference. Can any body wonder that so many of our church-movements prove to be miserable failures. Whose is the fault? It lies in various quarters; but one of them, and a leading one of them, is that quarter where the *jus divinum* is denied. One potent remedy for all this negligence and sin, would be the general conviction that church courts are really clothed with authority by Christ; that their decisions, *whenever accordant with his word and Spirit*, are binding; that these courts by *such* decisions can and do bind heaven and earth; that every *such* resolution and every *such* act of theirs is invested with the sanction of the Master himself; and that none can disobey but at his peril. What we need is more life, spiritual life; and one way in which this is to be manifested and exercised is by acknowledging Christ as the ever present King and Head of his Church, acting in, and by, and through these courts which he has himself ordained for the government of his spiritual kingdom.

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARIES.

The Standing Committee's report, presented by its chairman, Dr. Baird, brought to the attention of the Assembly sundry items of interest upon this subject.

Union Seminary was attended by twenty-four students the preceding year; its professorships were full; the professors had, through the liberality of friends, received payment of their salaries; and the permanent funds, worth about \$98,000, had been increased by some \$50,000. Of this sum, \$30,000 was from C. H. McCormick, Esq., of Chicago, and \$10,000 from a Christian lady of Baltimore.

Columbia Seminary was attended by five students; had two professorships vacant; its professors had been nominally paid chiefly in unavailable coupons; its endowment of \$262,000 had been reduced by the war to about \$95,000. But unsolicited donations had been made by three friends, not connected with our Church, to the amount of \$13,000.

The Assembly expressed their sense of the goodness of God towards our seminaries in the midst of their difficulties and privations, and returned thanks to the friends who had manifested so much liberality. It changed the name of a professorship in Columbia Seminary, so as to make it the professorship of "Pastoral and Evangelistic Theology and Sacred Rhetoric." And it resolved to fill at this meeting both the vacant chairs in that institution. This resolution was subsequently reconsidered, and only a professor of Didactic and Polemic Theology elected. The professor elect, the Rev. Dr. William S. Plumer, accepted the position without delay, and entered immediately upon its duties with all his characteristic energy and zeal. It is believed that he will, by God's blessing, accomplish a great work for our Church in this chair. He brings to its duties a large and very successful experience in another similar institution, and also a reputation as wide as this broad land for piety, learning, and eloquence.

On the subject of the transfer of the Columbia Seminary, the papers furnish the following sketch of the debate, which is perhaps substantially correct:

The order of the day having now arrived, the Rev. Dr. Rice moved that the Assembly appoint a committee to make arrangements for the removal of the Theological Seminary at Columbia to some point west of the dividing line between Georgia and Alabama.

Col. Estes moved to amend by substituting Memphis or some neighboring point for the locality of the Seminary.

The Rev. Dr. Baird said if it be the sense of the Assembly that it ought to be removed, a committee should be appointed to obtain the consent of the Synods that own the property. Then they should see what propositions will be made by those who want it located near them, and where it can be located with the smallest loss. If it be moved, he would have it moved as far west as practicable.

Col. Estes thought probably his motion to amend was precipitate, and asked leave to withdraw it, which was granted. He thought the committee proposed should report before we took any action.

Dr. Rice thought we did not need another seminary for our Church, but the brethren of five or six States would not be willing to have both seminaries away over towards the Atlantic seaboard. The interests of the southwestern Church required a theological seminary in this southwestern country. The alternative then would be either the removal of that seminary, or the establishment of another—a third seminary.

Dr. Howe said that he would be glad to hear all the arguments the brethren have to offer in favor of the removal.

Dr. Rice assigned the following as reasons why the removal of the seminary was desirable: He believed in the unity of the Church, which required a harmonious development of every part. The Church, he said, is a full, rounded orb, radiantly lighted from every part. But *our* Church is like a comet with its head away in the east, and a thin, nebulous tail stretching out to the southwest, giving us very little light or warmth.

There are in the eastern part of the Church both of the theological seminaries, all four of its executive committees, its quarterly review, four out of five of its papers, and if we

count the *Children's Friend*, five out of its six papers, while one solitary paper is the only institution in this great region. The existence of these agencies there makes its influence felt there and felt here. Our committees know a great deal more about the wants of the field in South Carolina than they do of this great southwestern field. When he heard the Secretary of Publication read his report, he knew from the very air and tones he came from Richmond, though he was but a very little while ago among us. Yet, Dr. Rice added, the Virginia way is a very good way. But, he continued, this region is not like Virginia or South Carolina—but a conglomeration. A large proportion of its population are emigrants from the east. They have not yet been with us long enough to have a home feeling with us; and the want of this home feeling is one of the great obstacles we have to contend with. And as our young men go away over there to the seminaries, if they are men of mark, they are very likely to have persuasive hands laid upon them, and they are induced to remain there. This was the state of things at Princeton, when that was the great seminary of the Church. The acquaintance of the professors with the fields within their bounds was such that they introduced their best students to the fields there. Now, we have to contend not only with this tendency, which always exists, but it is more formidable because of the want of a home feeling sufficiently strong to bring our young men back to us. Then, again, the existence of opportunities for education near at hand is one of the means God uses for turning the hearts of young men to the ministry. Were it not for the danger of unduly multiplying institutions, he would urge the establishment of a new and third seminary. But the two now existing are sufficient for the wants of our Church. Columbia Seminary has, as it were, to be rebuilt anew. He was, therefore, anxious for its removal.

The Rev. Dr. Howe remarked that the subject of a removal is a new, fresh one to the minds of the professors of the Seminary at Columbia; they have not fully considered it. He would offer an argument from a Carolina standpoint, and the Assembly could compare it with the argument for removal. He would

speak of the strong attachment to that institution on the part especially of the Synod of South Carolina and that of Georgia. The Presbytery of South Carolina conceived of it, but, finding it too great an undertaking for itself alone, yielded its control into the hands of the Synod of South Carolina. At that time the churches of Alabama were in connexion with that Synod. Subsequently, the Synods of Georgia and Alabama became associated with it in the management of the Seminary, and Mississippi had an interest in it by virtue of the princely endowment of Judge Perkins. It was his judgment that, if we take away this munificent donation, two-thirds of the funds of the institution have been raised by the Synod of South Carolina. Those Synods had tenderly nurtured it, until, at the beginning of the war, it was in a flourishing condition, and had sixty-two students. During the war, it had, necessarily, a very small number of students. They were in the army, and some of them laid down their lives in the service of their country. When these Synods gave it to the Assembly, it was designed to give it with a pecuniary foundation on which it could live and flourish without being a burden on the Church. Besides the buildings and a very fine library of eighteen thousand volumes, it had a fund of about \$262,000, or, according to the Treasurer's report, \$270,000. Two reservations were made in transferring it to the Assembly: first, that the funds of the Seminary should not be commingled with those of the Assembly; and second, the location should not be changed.

Columbia is a healthy town, and in that respect a desirable location. A large portion of the endowment has been lost, but the buildings remain, and are admirably fitted for the purpose, and they are there. And there remains of the funds of the institution, according to their present value, about ninety-five thousand dollars. Yet these investments are not now yielding income. In addition, the Seminary has received thirteen thousand dollars recently; so we have over a hundred, perhaps over a hundred and twenty thousand dollars; as much, perhaps, as we had in all ten or fifteen years ago. So we do not commence anew, as has been alleged.

Now, what is a good location for a seminary? It should be in an intelligent community, and where there are literary advantages. Columbia is rebuilding more handsomely than before; the State University is there; the Legislature and Supreme Court meet there. The University has a costly and a valuable library of twenty-five thousand volumes, accessible to the professors. He knew, therefore, of no place where there are so many literary advantages.

Columbia is in the line of the stream of emigration to the southwest, and with this stream of emigration goes a stream of ministers. A statement of the present residence of its alumni shows that they generally move off towards the south and west. The location of the Seminary does not prevent it from furnishing the southwest now with very many ministers. It is not true that the students from the southwest settle in the vicinity of the Seminary. He had inquired, and knew of two only, one of whom was a member of this Assembly, and was prevented by the war from reaching his home in the far west. There were, when we last examined into this matter, thirty-eight of the alumni laboring in Georgia; twenty-eight in Alabama; twenty-eight in Mississippi; eight in Tennessee; and six in Arkansas. Besides Dr. Palmer, he counted three others, only one of whom was from the southwest, in the single city of New Orleans. We have given to this region of country many more than we have received from it.

The Doctor further inquired if the number of students would not be diminished by the removal. It is a mistake to suppose that the mere presence of a seminary in any place or quarter increases the number of students from thence. There had never come from the church of Columbia more than two ministers of the gospel, while more than twenty had entered the Presbyterian ministry from one congregation in Liberty county, Georgia. The older churches and regions, and perhaps the less prosperous and wealthy, are those from which our ministers mostly spring. It was a question worthy of thought why one church furnished ministers of the gospel more than another. He asked, Is it important with our present modes of travel that a seminary

should be central in its location? So far as the student is concerned, there is no great difficulty in his going hundreds of miles. Princeton Seminary is on the very Atlantic edge of the Church, yet it has more students than any other Old School seminary. So too, Andover, which supplies New England and the northwest with ministers, is in an obscure town on the edge, not in the centre of New England. Again, rolling stones gather no moss. Institutions, to be useful, should be stationary and not roving about. These considerations will no doubt influence our brethren in South Carolina.

Col. G. J. S. Walker thought we should act with the most unwise precipitation if we were to take steps *now* to remove the Seminary. He was not prepared to say we ought to do it. He thought so many affections cluster around that old institution that it would be sustained where it is. And, if need be, let the wealth of this community endow another institution.

The Rev. Dr. Cunningham was not prepared to vote either for or against the removal. The one might result in the breaking down the institution. The other might seem like indifference to the interests of the people in this vast region. He wanted a committee to consider the subject and to report to the Assembly next year.

The Rev. Mr. Flinn proposed that a committee be appointed to represent all the rest of the Church, and confer with the Synods having the Seminary under their immediate care, and report to the next Assembly.

The Rev. Dr. Rice thought we in the southwest ought to decide speedily whether we will help to reëndow Columbia Seminary, or set to work and build up a new seminary here. But he did not wish to precipitate action.

The Rev. Dr. Adger was ready to acquiesce in whatever decision might be reached. He saw arguments on both sides, but he was apprehensive great injury might be done to the Seminary by the agitation of the question; those who entertained benevolent intentions might be deterred from putting them into execution. He would have the arguments in favor of the removal brought forward now. But he questioned very much

whether they were ready in the southwest to take hold of this matter. Dr. Adger further stated that it was not the policy of the Church to locate its committees in the east. One of them was located at first in New Orleans, and another in Memphis, but the contingencies of the war rendered their temporary transfer necessary.

The Rev. H. H. Banks said the great call for ministers would be from the west and southwest rather than the east. But in view of the poverty of the west, the people of this section had better depend for the present upon the ministers who come there from the east, than to endeavor at this time to move the Seminary from Columbia.

Mr. Israel Spencer, of Mississippi. The founders of that institution, whose money built and endowed it, ought to be consulted before we take any steps about changing its location.

The Rev. George Hall rose as a southwestern man to say that he thought we ought not now to act, and moved the indefinite postponement of the whole matter.

The motion prevailed, and the subject was indefinitely postponed.

NARRATIVE OF THE STATE OF RELIGION.

Revivals of religion were reported in some churches of almost every Presbytery, but the work was very special in North Mississippi, Montgomery, Flint River, Cherokee, South Carolina, Concord, Fayetteville, Winchester, and Lexington Presbyteries. More than two thousand souls were added to our communion. In Flint River Presbytery, a number of young men are looking forward to the ministry.

Sabbath-schools are generally sustained, but it does not appear that the Shorter Catechism is taught as diligently as by our fathers of old.

There is great neglect of family worship, and much parental unfaithfulness in general. Instead of the excuse that secular matters are now urgent, necessities, sufferings, and providences, ought to impel us all to reverse the language of the Jew in the

days of Haggai, and exclaim with one voice, "The time that the Lord's house should be built *is come.*"

From many Presbyteries, no reports; from four, unfavorable; and from fifteen, very favorable and exceedingly gratifying ones, have come relative to the religious instruction of the blacks. They are coming back to the old folds from which they strayed.

Much wordliness prevails in the Church. Many ministers receive no adequate support.

It is recorded amongst the most encouraging evidences of God's presence in some Presbyteries that the ruling elder has been roused to a clearer sense of his duty.

The elements of a great working Church exist amongst us, if they can only be properly combined. If the people have a mind to work, our desolations can soon, with God's blessing, be repaired.

JUDICIAL COMMITTEE.

Dr. John H. Rice, the chairman of this Committee, reported that no case had come into their hands;—evidence, it was to be hoped, either that the Church has had great internal peace, or else the lower courts great success in disposing of cases coming to them for trial.

CHARTER OF THE TRUSTEES.

Ruling elder B. M. Estes presented the report of the Committee on the Charter, recommending that the terms prescribed by the laws of North Carolina be submitted to, and the charter granted under the same be accepted. The report was adopted.

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE.

The Rev. Dr. Charles A. Davis, from the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and the Rev. H. L. Murphy, of the Associate Reformed Church, were present and addressed the Assembly. The former intimated his belief that an extensive and growing desire prevailed for a union of the two bodies; and the latter also expressed his conviction that many in his connexion were ready for a similar consummation. The subject thereupon was

referred to the Committee on Foreign Correspondence, B. M. Palmer and J. M. P. Atkinson, ministers, and George J. S. Walker, ruling elder, being added to the same. The Committee subsequently reported, and the Assembly adopted the report, that we are quite ready for a union with the Associate Reformed, and that we invite the Cumberland Presbyterian Church to consider the subject of a union by their adopting the time-honored standards to which we adhere. The report urged the desirableness of uniting in one homogeneous body all those different branches of the Presbyterian family who feel called "to reassert Christ's royal supremacy in and over his spiritual kingdom, the Church." The scattered testimony of separate and individual witnesses would deepen in intensity if gathered into one volume "against those who would place the crown of Jesus upon the head of Cæsar." The Rev. Dr. Lyon (with the Rev. J. N. Carothers as his alternate,) was appointed delegate to the Associate Reformed Synod, and the Rev. T. D. Witherspoon (Rev. D. H. Cummins his alternate,) delegate to the Cumberland Presbyterian General Assembly. And it was further resolved, that a committee of five be appointed to confer with any similar committee on the part of the Cumberland Church to ascertain how far the way is prepared for union on the basis of the Westminster standards. This committee consists of the Rev. J. O. Stedman, D. D., Rev. T. D. Witherspoon, Rev. J. N. Waddel, D. D., Rev. James A. Lyon, D. D., Rev. John H. Gray, D. D., and the Moderator, Rev. A. H. Kerr, D. D.

There was also appointed, in the spirit which prompted our first Assembly at Augusta to express its desire to hold fellowship, so far as practicable, with the true disciples of our common Lord in all the world, a deputation to bear our salutations to such Christian Churches and societies in Great Britain and Ireland, and on the continent of Europe, as Providence may designate, to explain to them the character, condition, work, and prospects of our beloved Zion, and to receive such contributions as may be voluntarily offered in aid of our general schemes of evangelisation. Drs. Hoge, Palmer, and Girardeau, were appointed to this service.

UNION WITH THE ASSOCIATE REFORMED IN ALABAMA.

The Alabama Presbytery of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, regretting and disapproving the action of their Synod in suspending negotiations for union with our Church, proposed a union of the two Presbyteries to our Presbytery of South Alabama. The proposition was joyfully accepted, and the Assembly was overtured to authorise the union. The Assembly replied that the uniting of Presbyteries is committed to Synods in our constitution. But it proceeded to authorise the Synod of Alabama to receive into union with itself the Alabama Presbytery of the Associate Reformed Church, provided it should adopt our standards wherein they might differ from their own; and to ordain that this Presbytery should be received as coördinate with the Presbytery of South Alabama; and that the Synod should then dissolve both and form a new Presbytery out of their elements. The Assembly also recognised the right of our members to use Rouse's version of the Psalms. And it ordered the same method of procedure to be observed in the reception of organised Presbyteries of the Associate Reformed Church within their bounds, if need so require, without further action of the Assembly.

We consider this very good *unconstitutional* action, under our present Form. Under the new Form, if adopted by the Presbyteries, the Assembly will be invested with the power to do such a good thing as this undoubtedly was.

VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS.

Dr. Baird, chairman of the Committee appointed on this subject in 1864, reported that no action was now required, inasmuch as the Assembly had adopted the new Form, which declares that the Church, in its organised capacity, with its officers and courts, is the sole agency which Christ hath ordained for its own edification and government, and for the propagation of the faith. The Church, therefore, is God's Bible and Missionary Society.

With reference to the American Bible Society, the Committee holds that it ought to be composed of representatives of the

different churches appointed through their constitutional forms. Yet as there is nothing in its constitution to prevent the free action of every Church in carrying forward the work, and it is simply an organisation to print and circulate the Scriptures, the Committee recommend that the Assembly encourage all our ministers and churches to give to it their confidence and support. Adopted.

RELATION OF CHURCH AND STATE.

In addition to the reiterated testimony respecting the entire mutual independence of these two jurisdictions given by the Assembly in its action relative to foreign correspondence, there was a separate deliverance uttered in reply to an overture from the Presbytery of East Alabama. This deliverance was read by Dr. Howe, chairman of the Committee on Bills and Overtures.

The particular point referred to the Assembly was the duty of observing days of fasting, etc., designated by the civil magistrate. The Assembly affirms again the perfect independence of both Church and State, the one of the other. But the Church of Christ, as it is visible in any country, is divided among many denominations. And when upon occasions of national calamity, the civil power, which alone can reach them all, invites to acts of national humiliation, "it is right for those who bear rule in the visible Church to consider whether Christ their Head, who as Mediatorial King rules over the nations of the earth as well as over his Church, does not himself invite them to these acts of worship. He is their Lord. And to their own Master they stand or fall. The act of the civil power does but secure that concert of prayer, praise, and worship, that would be wanting without it. And we cannot condemn the civil magistrate who thus furnishes the opportunity of united religious acts, so consonant to the hearts of a Christian people and to the religion they profess."

"We do not enjoin the observance of such days in all cases, nor would we dissuade from such observance, but remit the determination of the question in each case to our church sessions."

Yet again, the Assembly adopted the following resolution offered by Dr. Palmer:

“In view of the great controversy now pending in this country upon the spirituality and independence of the Church as the visible kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the earth; and in view of the fact that the Assembly did, at the time of its organisation in 1861, plant itself firmly upon the ground that the Church is a spiritual commonwealth distinct from and independent of the State: Be it therefore

“*Resolved*, That the Rev. Messrs. T. E. Peck, A. W. Miller, and George Howe, D. D., be appointed a committee to prepare, and report to the next General Assembly, a paper defining and limiting this whole subject, for the instruction of our people, and suitable to be adopted by the Assembly as a full and public testimony against the alarming defection manifested in so many branches of the Protestant Church in this country.”

TIME AND PLACE OF THE NEXT MEETING.

A memorial was offered by Drs. Rice and Adger, requesting the Assembly to fix the time of meeting in the month of May in each and every year. The Committee on Bills and Overtures recommended that the Assembly concur in this request, and fix the time for the third Thursday in May in each year. This was adopted. Subsequently the matter was reconsidered, and the third Thursday in November was fixed for the next meeting, with the proviso, that, should any emergency in the meanwhile render such a step necessary, the Moderator might call a meeting in May. The first Presbyterian Church in the city of Nashville was chosen as the place.

RELATION OF THE CHURCH TO FREEDMEN.

The order of the day having now arrived, viz., that of hearing the report of the Committee on the Relation of the Church to the Freedmen, the Rev. Mr. Alexander, a member of the Committee, said the last General Assembly had appointed Rev. Messrs. J. L. Girardeau, D. Wills, J. Leighton Wilson, Alexander Martin, C. A. Stillman, John N. Waddel, and himself, a committee to take into consideration this subject. Of this committee, there

had been present at this Assembly only Drs. Wilson, Waddel, and himself, and they were thus left without a quorum. The Committee had also been unable to meet during the year, and they had not therefore been permitted to prepare a report upon the subject under their consideration. Though unable to meet, however, he (the speaker) was acquainted with the views of the Committee as made known by correspondence, and he had in his possession the draft of an elaborate report, blocked out by the chairman of the Committee, and also a series of resolutions drawn up, in connexion with the same.

The Rev. Dr. Rice moved that the document in the possession of the speaker be received as the report of the Committee.

Mr. Alexander replied, that as a majority of the Committee could not and did not endorse the grounds taken and the views set forth in the paper drawn up as a report by the Rev. J. L. Girardeau, he would submit as the report of the Committee the resolutions which were appended thereto. He also read an interesting letter from Mr. Girardeau, touching the subject considered in the report, after which he further stated that the Committee do not feel called upon to adopt any particular scheme, but rather to leave the whole matter with the Presbyteries. He paid a high compliment to Mr. Girardeau for the interest he had taken and the labor he had performed on the subject; and yet he added that the members of the Committee regretted their inability to agree with him in his policy. The Committee were only willing to send the matter down to the Presbyteries without instructions.

The report of the Committee, an elaborate document of about thirty pages of closely-written paper, was then read to the Assembly by the Rev. Dr. Wilson, the Stated Clerk, together with the resolutions appended thereto.*

The Rev. Dr. Atkinson moved that the report of the Committee be received, and the resolutions passed upon *seriatim*, which was carried. The first resolution being read and put to a vote,

* The reader will find these resolutions on pp. 15-17 of the present volume of our Review.—EDS. S. P. R.

was adopted. The second resolution was read, when the Rev. Dr. Atkinson moved to amend by striking out the words "as heretofore," and stated that his reason for so doing was based upon the conviction that though efforts had been put forth by the Church in the past, they had not been sufficient, and it might occur to the minds of some that it was not the intention of the Church to advance.

Dr. Adger suggested that there are many who doubt that any thing has been done in the past.

Dr. Atkinson continued that there might arise an apprehension that the Church is satisfied with what she has done, whereas he did not believe such to be the case.

Mr. Alexander remarked that the amendment proposed by Dr. Atkinson was tantamount to a confession that nothing had been done. He would suggest as a substitute for the amendment the insertion of the words, "and even more abundantly."

The Rev. Mr. Sherrill said that he was forced to regard Dr. Atkinson's amendment as at least a confession that the gospel had never been furnished to freedmen. He was further of the opinion that the whole value of the article rested upon the clause which it was proposed to strike out.

The Rev. Dr. Baird offered as a substitute for the amendment the insertion of the words, "continue to give;" which upon being put to a vote, was carried, and the resolution, as amended, passed.

The third resolution was read.

The Rev. Mr. Sherrill said that his judgment and feelings were both against a separate organisation, and he could not but regard such a course as calculated to be productive of evil.

Dr. Baird desired an explanation of the purport of the resolution. He would inquire if it was equivalent to bidding the freedmen farewell.

Mr. Alexander replied that it was the intention of the Committee to be non-committal upon the subject, leaving it entirely with the courts below.

Mr. Sherrill objected to the last clause of the resolution; he could not see that any good could be accomplished by it, and he would therefore move to strike it out.

The motion to strike out being put to a vote, was carried, and the resolution as amended passed.

The fourth resolution was read.

The Rev. Mr. Miller thought that the passage of the resolution would fail to secure uniformity, which is so desirable in the Church, and he would therefore move to erase the whole article, or at least that portion after the word "leaving."

Mr. Bartlett remarked that the Presbyteries were looking for some expression from the Assembly upon this subject.

Dr. Baird said that from what he had heard of the foregoing debate, he was convinced that the Assembly were not prepared for action, and he would, therefore, move to refer back the whole matter to a special committee, of which Mr. Alexander should be made the chairman.

Mr. Alexander opposed the motion upon the grounds that the matter had already been in the hands of the committee for over a year, and now it was desirable that it should be sent down to the Presbyteries.

The Rev. Mr. Grasty said: Moderator—I yield to no man North or South, in my desire for the elevation and salvation of the colored race. Many of the tenderest associations of my early days are connected with this people. They nursed and cared for me in infancy and boyhood, and many happy hours have been spent in their humble cabins. Every sentiment of magnanimity and gratitude therefore would rebel, were I to utter one word of disparagement of my colored friends. But, sir, no man on this floor is to be guided by personal considerations. Our sole aim now should be the Church of God, its welfare and unity. The question before us is a very large one. We ought therefore to regard with peculiar care the time-honored maxim, "*Festina lente.*" Can we not, without great injury to any interest, wait at least one year? In this time, every Presbytery could discuss the matter, and give us its maturest thoughts. It certainly is the desire of every member of this body to do right. But at present some brethren are perplexed. A few months of conscientious investigation might bring us all to the same conclusions, and then the *unanimous* voice of a venerable court like

this would strike the world's ear with incalculably more power.

But it may be asked, in what consists the difficulty. Why, Moderator, society in this land is at present in a state of excitement and every thing seems to be unsettled. We cannot yet, for very bewilderment, measure to its fulness the significance of that storm which for six years has been sweeping over us. But the same God who works in "unfathomable mines" will by-and-by make "darkness light and crooked things straight." And when the divine purpose in regard to the black man is fully revealed, no person is worthy to be a member of this body who refuses to acquiesce and coöperate. In the unsettled condition of many minds that are nevertheless anxious to do right, let us remand this whole subject back to the Presbyteries in the hope that discussion in these lower courts and in congregations and communities shall direct us to such final action, at no distant day, as to ensure "unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace."

But it may be asked, Moderator, if we are prepared to ordain the colored man to the full work of the gospel ministry. My reply is this: About the abstract principle there is no dispute. No man on the floor of this Assembly has even so much as hinted there is anything in our standards or in the word of God that prohibits the introduction into the gospel ministry of *qualified* persons of any race. The whole debate in the present instance turns upon the word qualification. Before *any man*, black or white, can be inducted into the sacred office, the church courts must inquire into his fitness; and this fitness extends not simply to color or race, but to the man in all his relations and capabilities. When an individual presents himself for ordination, the question should be asked, Can this candidate edify the body of Christ? If the Presbytery lay their hands on this applicant, whether negro, Chinaman, or Anglo-Saxon, will the influence he is likely to exert be hurtful?

Moderator, all things may be lawful, but all things are not expedient. It is sometimes better even for the righteous claimant to adjourn his claims for a season than to insist, at every hazard, upon an immediate adjustment. No wise man writes

homilies upon injured minors because their interests are placed for a period in the hands of governors and guardians. When the Assembly makes the admission that there is nothing in our standards or the word of God to prohibit the introduction of a person of any race into the gospel ministry, it assuredly is no hardship for a candidate of *any color* to wait for a reasonable period for the concurrent voice of Presbyteries, to settle upon uniformity of qualifications which shall be acceptable to the great body of the believers. No friend of the colored man need dread such an appeal. For the church courts will advance just as fast as congregations and communities are prepared. No good can possibly result, either to the freedman or Church of God, by adopting force where *love* should be the only law. It is true, Moderator, that we are all one in Christ Jesus. But in what does this oneness consist. Not surely in the doctrine that every *white* person, even, can be a minister of the gospel. If so, who shall exclude woman from the pulpit? For is it not also said that in Christ Jesus there is neither *male nor female*. This oneness, therefore, must consist in our relations, as redeemed fallen creatures, to Jesus Christ, the great Redeemer. The New Testament does not step aside, to break down violently all social relations. It touches the things of Cæsar very lightly. Even Paul, when writing to one whom he might have been bold to enjoin in such matters, simply uses the words of entreaty.

Moderator, we have been told that it is competent for legislatures to decide upon the qualification of their own members, lest by the introduction of unsuitable persons, constituencies should be injured; but how much clearer is the law, and how much deeper the obligation, when the person is a candidate for the highest position this side of heaven, and the tribunal to decide is a court of Jesus Christ, and the interests involved, the peace of the Church and the eternal destiny of souls.

Once more, Moderator, the question of social equality and intermingling of races has perplexed the minds, it may be, of certain weak brethren. But if any are strong at this point, let them disseminate their strength. For it does appear difficult to a practical common sense mind to draw a distinction between

ecclesiastical and social equality. Every man who sits in a court of Jesus Christ, according to Presbyterianism, sits as a peer. No one has a right *ecclesiastically*, that does not pertain to every other member. When Presbytery, composed of black and white, meet in any community, they are an assembly of peers; and whatever of courtesy, entertainment, or immunity, is conferred upon one member of this court, as such, cannot, without inconsistency, be withheld from another. The black man comes up as an ecclesiastic, and in this capacity is entitled to all the benefits which accrue to the white Presbyter. Upon what principle can you entertain one peer in the parlor and the other in the kitchen? How can you separate between the man and the church officer? To do so in this case would be to stultify your constitutional declarations. But if you entertain, on terms of social equality, the ecclesiastic, then the colored man must be thrown in to the bargain. Now, some men may have ample acuteness to see a legitimate line of distinction between social and ecclesiastical equality; but it does not follow, therefore, Moderator, that communities can exercise such discrimination. Let me introduce a colored brother into my house as only an ecclesiastical equal, and is it not probable that persons in the family, younger and less given to distinctions than myself, will in a short time inaugurate other equalities, which may be very fruitful in their consequences.

But, Moderator, to all this it may be replied that we ought to take the truth in all its length and breadth. Prejudice has too long held its sway over Southern minds. This Assembly should arise at once to the height of this great argument and utter a decision which would electrify with joy the hearts of all good men. Let the following, therefore, be adopted as a fundamental deliverance of the Presbyterian Church in the United States:

Resolved, That nothing in our standards or in the word of God prohibits the introduction into the gospel ministry of any qualified persons of any race, and neither do the said word nor the said standards interdict or discourage the intermarriage of persons of African descent with individuals, male or female, of an opposite color.

Surely if we should make haste to adopt and inaugurate one of these propositions, aside from expediency, simply because nothing in the word of God forbids, your speaker cannot see why the same line of argument will not at once precipitate us into miscegenation. If the argument that we are all one in Christ Jesus, all of one blood, etc., proves that we ought, at once, and without regard to expediency and "offence," to ordain colored men to the full work of the gospel ministry, it also proves that we should give him his peerage in the social circle and in the family as well. How can expediency and "the categorical imperative" be deduced from one and the same root?

Now, Moderator, without dealing in censure or praise, I would respectfully ask, if the Assembly is ready to make a deliverance on this perplexing subject that shall satisfy the consciences of the lower courts and the congregations they represent? Let it be granted that the rights of freedmen are very large, (and the speaker would not abridge them one iota, intentionally,) are there not others whose rights are also to be respected? If Paul could adjourn a distinct privilege, for a whole lifetime, lest the exercise of it should offend or destroy a brother, who shall deny to a church court the liberty of making haste slowly in a matter where hurry might seriously impair her peace and unity? The colored man's abstract and prospective rights may be scriptural and indisputable, but does it not become him to await with meekness the developments of providence? Whatever of truth underlies his claims, will be victorious in the end. About this he need not have the shadow of doubt. But would the introduction of a few colored persons at present into the ministry, and the good they would be likely to accomplish, at all compensate for those heart-burnings which are almost inevitable?

And this course, Moderator, commends itself to all parties, for the reason that time *must* elapse before colored men can be qualified according to the requirements of our book. The intervening period can be employed by both parties in thoughtful prayer for the guidance of the great Head of the Church. In the meantime also, our congregations and communities will travel

onward to some settled position, and thereby the Church of God, in this Southern land, be saved from schisms and convulsions.

I would close, Moderator, as I began, by an expression of my deepest solicitude for the welfare of our former servants. In this sentiment, the entire Assembly, as I verily believe, most heartily concurs. A Macedonian appeal comes up from this impoverished and unfortunate race. In their present situation, for which we at least are not responsible, they are rapidly perishing from the earth. The heart of every good man feels for them; and I am persuaded, Moderator, that there is no class of men in this "wide, wide world," who would go farther, or venture more, to serve and save the colored people than the honored members of this Assembly and the communities which they represent.

The Rev. Mr. Flinn suggested that if the Assembly would adopt the fifth resolution there would be no necessity for erasing the fourth as was proposed. No separate church could be formed for the freedmen without a disruption for the organic laws.

The Rev. Dr. Atkinson addressed the Assembly at great length upon the subject under discussion. He said that there are dangers overhanging the Church if they proceed too hastily in this matter. All that he could ask was that with as little prejudice and as much humility as possible, the Assembly proceed to the consideration of the subject. It was not for the sake of the white members of the Church, but for the sake of the freed people, that immediate action should be taken by the Church. It was for the sake of saving souls. The Church had already seen evidences of the danger of the freedmen relapsing into heathenism. Before the war, and the changes that were wrought by its results, it was possible for the master to require his servants to attend divine worship, and it can now be said, to the credit of many of them, that they exercised this authority for good. Now the condition of things is different. We are no longer permitted to require it, and it becomes the duty of the Church to induce, by every possible means, the freed people to the performance of religious duties. He ignored the idea that the sons of Ham were intellectually an inferior race and incapable of filling the offices of

the Church. He also dissented from the view that the descendants of Ham are incapable of rising; in proof of which he cited the instance of Roberts and others who had distinguished themselves for their literary attainments and erudition. The present difference and social distinction between the races is not greater than that which in the days of our Saviour existed between the Jews and Gentiles. We have but one appeal, and that is to God's word—and here we find no discrimination. He was as much opposed to the abolition of social distinctions as any one, only when such distinctions stood in the way of the gospel. The relations between the Southern Church and the freedmen were of a peculiar character. They were associated with a thousand recollections of the past, and it behoves the Church not to forget them now.

Dr. Palmer felt that it is far more important that we should arrive at a wise decision than that we should come to an immediate conclusion. He therefore suggested (but did not move) an addition to the resolution under discussion, that the whole subject should be remitted to the Presbyteries, with instructions to them to send up their opinions to the next General Assembly.

Dr. Baird said the objection he had to this suggestion and to the resolution, is, that they do nothing. The Presbyteries have been waiting a whole year to hear from us; it is now proposed to wait and hear what they say. The consequence will be, that during the coming year nothing will be done, as the Church will await the action of the next Assembly. Meanwhile, there are four millions of perishing souls in the midst of us that will practically be uncared for by us as a Church; and, so far as we are concerned, left to perish. The subject has already been postponed one whole year. Shall we postpone it till the next? Of all the important questions which come before this Assembly, this is one of the most important. He had no special plan to propose on the subject; but he thought almost any plan was better than no plan; and, undoubtedly, extraordinary measures must be adopted to reach the case. We stand much in the same position that the Reformers occupied; who did not hesitate to adopt temporary expedients in the circumstances by which

they were surrounded. Dr. B. agreed with Dr. Atkinson that there was neither Jew nor Greek in the Church of Christ—that we are all one in Christ Jesus. But so also the apostle declares there is neither male nor female, nor bond nor free. Hence the emancipation of this people does not affect their relation to the Church; but the question is left still, What is it to be one in Christ Jesus? The difficulty we have to confront, however, is not that they were *once slaves*, nor that they are *colored* people; but that they are *ignorant* people; destitute of the requisite knowledge and learning, and who, from their previous condition of bondage, are not capable of *self-control*, and who do not possess *the independence of character* required of those who should bear the heavy responsibilities of ordained officers in the Church. These difficulties undoubtedly confront us; but he hoped the Assembly would address itself to their consideration, and that the subject would not be postponed.

The Rev. A. W. Miller moved that the further consideration of this subject be made the order of the day for ten o'clock tomorrow. Adopted.

On the next day, Dr. Baird took the floor, and addressed the Assembly at much length. He said he considered the question of reaching our destitutions, white and colored, as one; and in his mind, the subject was not capable of separation. That is, whatever provision is made for reaching the religious destitution prevailing among the whites, the same provision ought to be made to reach the blacks. So far as we are concerned, they are just so many immortal souls, looking to us for the bread of life, multitudes of whom will perish unless we carry the gospel to them. There are about five millions of whites; there are about four millions of blacks; and among both classes the destitution is wide-spread and appalling.

The preaching of the gospel is an ordinance of God; but it is not the only ordinance which he has established in his Church. The lack of ministers of the gospel among us renders it impossible to send the living teacher. But we have too much neglected other ordinances, and have allowed our destitute congregations to neglect the assembling of themselves together, under the

guidance of their eldership, for the worship of God. This duty, enjoined in the Scriptures and in our standards, ought to be impressed on our elders; and, in like manner, they ought to assemble the colored people of their respective congregations for religious instruction and social worship. Moreover, evangelists, in the proper scriptural idea of that office, ought to be appointed to take the pastoral oversight of the vacant congregations, and to carry the gospel to the ignorant and perishing of all colors. Where this is impracticable, presbyteries might accomplish much by dividing out the vacant churches among their members, so that all parts of the field should be regularly and statedly cared for.

Dr. B. said our duties to the colored people are exactly the same as to the destitute whites—no more, no less. We must increase our efforts to instruct them in Sabbath-schools; we must preach to them to the extent of our ability, and ought to bring into exercise the gifts of our eldership in the work of their evangelization. Wherever they can be persuaded to do so, we ought to urge them to continue to worship with the white congregation.

As to conferring office upon them, there were great obstacles in the way: 1. Introducing them into our courts would present a show of equality, but none would exist. Our colored brethren would not feel at home among us, but would feel very much out of place. 2. Besides the fact that they are ignorant, almost universally, their previous condition of bondage has unfitted them for the independent exercise of official functions. 3. There is a doctrinal difficulty arising from the nature of a call to bear office in the Church. Days of miracles are passed; and now, God calls men by his Spirit through his Church. But in the present providential structure of society, it is not possible to see how any colored man can bring a call from the Church. A call from a congregation, technically so called, is the final evidence of the divine vocation of a candidate; but independent of that, the presbytery must have evidence of the general acceptability, and a prospect of the wide usefulness of the candidate in the Church at large. It is impossible to see how, in the present

condition of things, any colored man can produce such credentials as these. All that it is necessary for us to do at this time, however, is to make temporary provision to meet the present exigency. It is possible to find colored men, in various parts of the Church, who might be useful by exercising the gift of exhortation. This is the common duty of all Christians, under the law of charity; and the Church ought to organise and bring it into exercise. Hence, our presbyteries and church-sessions should seek out colored men possessed of suitable gifts, and license them to exhort among their colored brethren. He was not sure we might not go farther; and after the example of John Knox, license local preachers, with authority, under the guidance and direction of the superior courts, or of an evangelist, to administer sealing ordinances. Dr. B. was not sure it would be wise to allow this right, but he was not very certain of the contrary.

So far as Dr. B. was able to learn the wishes of our colored brethren, what they wanted was a separate, subordinate organisation of themselves into congregations in connexion with the whites. They did not want officers of their own color to be ordained over them; but they preferred that the power of jurisdiction should be lodged in the hands of the white officers, where it now resides. In some cases, they are not wholly satisfied with the session as it now is; but desire the right of choosing a board of white elders from contiguous congregations to exercise authority over them. If we make some such arrangement as this, and then authorise the appointment of boards of superintendents from among themselves, who shall take charge of the general interests of these congregations, and act as the organs of communication between the colored people and the church-session, Dr. B. believed we would have done every thing the colored people desired, and that they would be entirely satisfied with our action.

The great thing to be done is to develop the energies and resources of the Church; to draw out the gifts of our elders; to encourage our discouraged brethren, who, for the sake of bread, are turning aside to secular pursuits, to enter with renewed zeal

on their sacred calling. Dr. Baird, in closing, offered a minute embodying the views he had presented in the course of his remarks.

Elder Marye suggested that we were in danger of being drawn off by this *series* of propositions from the consideration of the subject that is the order of the day. He therefore proposed that this paper be docketed. Lost.

The Rev. Dr. Atkinson was very glad the Assembly seemed determined to do something, and that Dr. Baird had presented these suggestions, though he thought their adoption would lead us into error. The plan of having the ruling elders conduct religious services for the blacks he considered impracticable.

The experiment had been tried. The Synod of Virginia urged its elders to preach to them, but their labors were inoperative. The great difficulty is, not to get the ministers, but to get the congregations. After Northern ministers obtained access to them, congregations and Sunday-schools that were large before the war were broken up. Dr. A. adduced instances of it. The Assembly must consider how the negroes are to be gotten together. If they will not come to hear the ministers who are ordained to preach to the whites, will they come to hear ruling elders talk to them?

As to Dr. Baird's second proposition, he would go just as far as the Bible allows, no farther. In this resolution he saw the germ of Episcopacy. It creates the bishop, priest, and deacon of the Episcopal Church.

Dr. Baird explained that he had said his mind was not clear as to these licentiate administrators of the sacraments.

Dr. Atkinson continued:

These colored preachers would be very nearly the Episcopal deacon. The licentiate, under our standards, is a probationer, soon to be admitted to the full exercise of ministerial work, if he develops the proper qualifications. But these licentiates are designed to be permanently such. Even if John Knox proposed it, he replied that among the early reformers there were most hazy notions as to church government. After illustrating this fact by historical references, he argued: This is a dangerous

plan, as experience had shown. It may be urged that evil consequences would not result, as it is proposed that only negroes shall be thus licensed: but he considered it dangerous. We know not to what irregularities it would lead. The plan, too, of having a session performing the duties of a session among the blacks, under another session of whites, is unpresbyterian, and not as attractive to the colored race as the plan in use among the Baptists, which places them more nearly on an equality with the white man.

Dr. B. had referred to the constitutional objection—he could not be ordained because unacceptable. Why, the test of incompatibility was the judgment of the congregation that gave him the call. He must be such a minister as a church is willing to call. And now he would impress upon the Assembly the transcendent importance of prompt action that will be acceptable. The powerful appeals that have been made to alienate them from us had been only partially successful. He was utterly opposed to advancing them to a position of social equality, but he wanted us to take such steps as would attach them to us. The speaker then presented a series of resolutions embodying the ideas set forth in his remarks.

He thought if we were ever to obtain a stronghold upon them it must be by coming to these positions.

The Rev. Dr. Adger hoped that Dr. Baird's paper would be adopted, but not as a substitute for the Committee's paper, which he would amend and also adopt. He could not accept Dr. B.'s construction of the *acceptability* of a minister. He favored the establishment of day-schools for the blacks; but he saw no reason why the Church, as such, should establish schools for their secular education any more than for the secular education of the whites. He liked, too, the assertion of the principle that there is nothing in the Scriptures or our book that prevents a man becoming a servant or minister of Christ because he is a black. But he would have this principle presented in and limited by the fifth resolution reported by the Committee. The standard of qualifications ought not to be lowered because the skin of the applicant is black. Again, his difficulty was not

from any inconveniences to arise from admitting them on the floor of the presbytery, but it was that they have not any men even as well qualified to become ruling elders as to become mere preachers. Many of them can talk well who are not competent to rule the Church. If they could produce the men having the gifts and graces requisite, all his difficulties would vanish.

It is no argument that an experiment has been tried, and failed. There may be local causes which prevent even learned ministers from holding the congregations of the blacks. Dr. B. calls for pastoral superintendency over this home missionary field. What is this more than the work of the evangelist? We can authorise a man to ordain in China with his sole hands as he could not do here; but this is not Episcopacy. Nor could he see any confusion of principles or departure from our principles, if we license preachers with permission to administer or not to administer the sacraments. We can license them, and then their license can afterwards be taken away, or their office may continue, as may be expedient.

The Rev. H. C. Alexander said this debate had satisfied him that it was impossible for us to take action now that would be generally acceptable to the Presbyteries. He called attention to the apparent inconsistencies in Dr. Atkinson's resolutions. But his object in rising was to urge that this subject be referred to a committee to suggest a paper which would harmonise the views of the Assembly. A motion was therefore made to recommit the whole subject to the Committee, to which Dr. Baird, Dr. Atkinson, Dr. Palmer, and Elder Marye were added.

On the same evening, Elder Marye, on behalf of the special committee to which was referred the papers upon the "Relation of the Church to the Freedmen," submitted as their report the following resolutions:

Resolved, 1. That this Assembly entertains for the freed people the sincerest sentiments of good will and affection; that it earnestly desires and prays for their salvation, and would encourage the employment of every legitimate means for the promotion of their spiritual good; that this Assembly believes the present condition of the colored race in this country to be one of alarming spiritual jeopardy, and that it is binding on us,

as Christians, to do all that lies in our power to save them from the calamities by which they are threatened, and to confer on them the rich blessings of the gospel.

2. That it be recommended to all our ministers and churches to exert themselves to the utmost of their ability to continue to give the gospel to these people; to church sessions to urge upon parents among them the duty of presenting their children for baptism, and of bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and especially to pastors, evangelists, and missionaries, to devote a portion of their labors to the promotion of the salvation of the freed people.

3. That in the judgment of the Assembly, it is highly inexpedient that there should be an ecclesiastical separation of the white and colored races; that such a measure would threaten evil to both races, and especially to the colored, and that therefore it is desirable that every warrantable effort be made affectionately to dissuade the freed people from severing their connexion with our churches, and to retain them with us as of old. Should they decline this fellowship of ordinances, and desire a separate organisation, then our sessions are authorised to organise them into branch congregations. In such cases, the Assembly recommends that such congregations shall be allowed, under the sanction of the sessions, to elect from among themselves, every year, such number of superintendents or watchmen as the session may advise, who shall be charged with the oversight of such congregations. These superintendents shall report to the sessions, for their action, all matters relating to the welfare of said congregations.

4. Whenever Presbyteries may find it necessary to organise separate colored congregations, they shall appoint a commission of elders who shall discharge the functions committed to the sessions in the preceding resolution.

5. That whilst nothing in our standards or in the word of God prohibits the introduction into the gospel ministry of duly qualified persons of any race, yet difficulties arise in the general structure of society, and from providential causes, which may and should restrain the application in the Church of this abstract principle. Holding this in view, the Assembly recommends that wherever a session or Presbytery shall find a colored person who possesses suitable qualifications, they be authorised to license him to labor as an exhorter among the colored people, under the supervision of the body appointing him.

6. That the Assembly recommends that, wherever it is practicable, Sabbath-schools for the benefit of the freed people,

especially the young, be established in connexion with our churches, and that the sessions of the churches take these schools into their charge, and provide suitable teachers for them.

7. That the heads of families are exhorted to encourage the freed people in their households to attend upon family and public worship, and that they provide for them, as far as possible, catechetical instruction in the doctrines and duties of the gospel.

8. That the General Assembly earnestly desires the intellectual and moral improvement of the colored race, and hereby tenders to all persons suitably qualified, who may labor in this work, its hearty encouragement and support.

The above resolutions were adopted *seriatim* without debate.

The Rev. Mr. Alexander moved that the elaborate document relative to the freedmen, presented by the Rev. Mr. Girardeau, be published in the appendix to the proceedings of the General Assembly.

Prof. Woodrow moved, as a substitute for the motion offered by Mr. Alexander, that the document be published in the *Southern Presbyterian Review*. Adopted.

We have been at some pains to present as full and correct a report as possible of this discussion, not so much because of the uncharitable criticisms of the Assembly which some Northern religious journals have indulged in, as because of the interest which belongs to the subject. Dr. Baird's, Mr. Grasty's, and Dr. Adger's remarks, are corrected by themselves. We wish it had been in our power to obtain those of Dr. Atkinson and others thus corrected.

The Assembly has been charged with voting "that no black man shall be allowed to become a minister or a ruling elder within the limits or under the jurisdiction of the branch of the Church which they represent;" and also with having "effectually shut the door against the organisation of a single church among the four millions of emancipated blacks or even among those who were free and intelligent before." And the editor who ventured thus to traduce our Church as represented at Memphis, undertook to pronounce "the verdict of the Christian world" against us for this deliverance.

It would be very easy to turn upon such critics, and demand what their Presbyteries and their Church are doing for the colored

man amongst themselves. We do not see black men and women in their churches and congregations; nor Sunday-schools for black children collected in their houses of worship, nor intelligent ladies and gentlemen giving their time and labor to instruct such children. These things have long been common all over the South, but we doubt if there are presented in either New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, or Chicago, or any where else at the North, many such spectacles. There are thousands and thousands of that race at the North, but the Old School Church appears to have given them over to the other denominations or their own organisations. Some insignificant doings, and some mean and dishonorable doings, are chronicled of them amongst our freedmen; some suspicions and jealousies respecting their white brethren have been stirred up amongst these poor people, and some foolish pride, and office-seeking, and carnal ambition, been excited in their minds; some disaffected Southern ministers, (of whom we wish the Northern Church much joy,) have been enticed away from us; but if we ask what is done for the negro at home in the North by those who have been so shocked at our utterances, it is very certain our critics would rather be excused from replying.

But it is neither the *argumentum ad hominem* nor the *argumentum ad invidiam* which our feelings prompt us to employ. We are perfectly satisfied that the Assembly acted in the fear of God and up to its light. We doubt not, that we see some things now more clearly than we could see them then. We were then, as we still are, in the midst of a great revolution. It was, and it is still, a transition period with us. The Assembly undoubtedly fell into the error of deciding a great and difficult question *in thesi*. But that it decided against any race of men that they could not have churches amongst them, or become office-bearers in the Church, is not true. There are expressions in the resolutions adopted by the Assembly which we could amend. There are some such in the report which appears in this number of the Review, and which was written by that eminent minister and that humble Christian and that earnest and zealous lover of the black man, the Rev. Dr. John L. Girardeau, of Charleston.

But the editors of our Northern religious journals would look very pretty in giving themselves out as better friends of the negro race than this man of God who has given them so many of the best years of his life, and who still regards himself as their servant. They do look very pretty in carping at and finding fault with arrangements proposed by the Assembly, and carried into actual practice in various parts of the South, *always, so far as we know, (having good opportunity of knowing,) to the entire satisfaction of our colored membership themselves.* It is simply preposterous for these gentlemen to set themselves up as our judges, or as our teachers in this matter. It is not their wisdom that can guide the Southern Church through the difficulties of this subject. That she will be guided, we do not doubt; for we feel sure, that, whatever may be true of others, her ministers feel their own ignorance, and look up humbly for the Master's direction and guidance. Nor have we any doubt that she has a great work to do amongst these people. We do love the black people. We cannot forget our early associations, nor the kindly relations of the days of slavery. The present generation of Southern Christian people cannot be made enemies of their former slaves, let foreign emissaries, religious as well as political, sow ever so much dissension betwixt the races. And our hope is that before the coming generation shall take our places, all this present fever of hate, which outsiders are so much exercised with, may have cooled down, and the Southern Church be left, aided by good men outside of her borders, to do the great work which her Master sets before her; which by his grace she feebly and imperfectly endeavored to do under the former dispensation, but which she must now take upon her with a new zeal, and a wisdom answerable to the great lessons of that fiery discipline under which she has been passing.

SUPPLY OF DESTITUTIONS.

The following minute was introduced by Dr. Baird on the day following the discussion respecting the freedmen. It formed part of the paper which he offered to the Assembly during that discussion, and it was adopted as an *addendum* to the action

taken on that point. The recommendations it contains are vital to the prosperity of our Church.

Resolved, 1. By the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, that every Presbytery under the jurisdiction of this body be enjoined to seek out and set apart a minister to the work of the evangelist for its bounds, to take the superintendence of its vacant congregations wherever practicable. These evangelists shall be authorised to act as moderators of the sessions of the vacant congregations; to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments to them at stated intervals; to counsel the sessions in holding social worship in the absence of ministers; to encourage the organisation of Sabbath-schools and Bible classes, and the making of oblations for systematic benevolence; and, in general, to take the pastoral supervision of the vacant congregations, both white and colored. But when a suitable evangelist cannot be obtained, then the Presbytery is enjoined to apportion such congregations among its ministerial members for the same object, so that every congregation and all our freed people shall enjoy the pastoral oversight of some minister in their assemblies.

2. That every Presbytery be enjoined to require the sessions of the vacant congregations to come up to the discharge of the duties devolved on them in the twenty-first chapter of the "Form of Government," in the assembling of their respective congregations for the worship of God, to which it may be proper to add exhortation. And in order that this duty may be performed to the greater acceptance of the worshippers, it is further required that the Presbyteries do seek out those elders who have the best gifts, and do especially appoint them to the performance of these duties.

3. That our ministers who are not now engaged in their sacred calling be exhorted to come up to our help. If they do not find fields of labor in their present localities, they are exhorted to seek other places of abode and fields of labor where they may be useful in their appropriate work. And that the Presbyteries be enjoined to examine their rolls and require all ministers who are not thus employed to give an account of themselves, and to proceed against those who are found to be habitual neglecters of their vows of ordination.

4. That every Presbytery be enjoined to take this whole minute into consideration, and act upon it at first meeting after the rising of this General Assembly; that the Synods inquire into the fidelity of the Presbyteries; and that both Presbyteries and Synods give a report of what they have done or failed to do, in the premises, to the next General Assembly.